

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Sample Recruitment for a Push-to-Web Alaska Saltwater Sport Fishing Survey

Issue Date: January 15, 2025

Deadline for submission: February 28, 2025

Proposal Schedule

January 15, 2025

Request for Proposal (RFP) issued and distributed

February 4, 2025

Deadline for written questions regarding this RFP

Please email questions to Michael Arredondo at marredondo@psmfc.org
and Caren Braby at cbraby@psmfc.org

February 7, 2025

Q&A document, including the answer to the written questions posted on
the PSMFC website at: <http://www.psmfc.org/procurements/blog>

February 28, 2025

Deadline for submission of proposals

**Proposals must be submitted by e-mail in pdf or as a
MS Word document to:**

Michael Arredondo – marredondo@psmfc.org

Caren Braby – cbraby@psmfc.org

**Must include in the subject line: “Push-to-Web Alaska
Saltwater Sport Fishing Survey RFP”**

**March 7, 2025
(anticipated)**

Winning bid announced

Request for Proposals

Sample Recruitment for a Push-to-Web Alaska Saltwater Sport Fishing Survey

The Alaska Fisheries Science Center (AFSC) and Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission (PSMFC) are requesting proposals for assistance with a push-to-web survey research project that collects information to estimate the economic value of recreational saltwater fishing trips in Alaska, in order to understand the factors that affect participation in, and demand for, these trips by Alaska resident and non-resident anglers. The web-based survey will collect stated and revealed preference information to allow estimation of recreational fishing demand and to assist in understanding angler preferences for different types of saltwater fishing opportunities.

We seek proposals for this survey research project involving the pretesting and recruitment of survey participants from angler populations using mixed mode contacts (mail, telephone, e-mail). We are seeking a contractor whose main task will be to contact potential respondents and encourage and direct them to go online and complete the web survey assigned to them. It is anticipated that a mixed mode approach will be needed to optimize response following survey best practices,¹ which would include mail correspondence in combination with telephone and e-mail correspondence.

For this project, AFSC will develop the web-based questionnaires and program them in Qualtrics.

The contractor will be responsible for (a) administering the recruitment efforts in a **small formal pretest** and in the **full survey** implementation, which includes a brief non-response survey; (b) entering, cleaning, and validating data from the non-response survey/interview; (c) working with PSMFC and AFSC to maintain an updated list of those who have not completed the web survey during the pretest and full implementation; (d) delivering associated data and codebook; and (e) writing a brief summary report. The project will be managed by a PSMFC project manager and an economist at AFSC (the AFSC project manager).

Background

This project involves recruiting participants to take web surveys developed by AFSC that collect data on Alaska saltwater fishing attitudes, preferences, and behavior. Of interest are five distinct populations of Alaska saltwater anglers defined along two dimensions: residency and participation in saltwater charter/for-hire fishing trips. The five angler populations are the following: (1) Alaska resident charter anglers, (2) non-Alaska charter anglers, (3) Southeast Alaska resident non-charter anglers, (4) other Alaska resident non-charter anglers, and (5) non-Alaska non-charter anglers. Samples from these five angler populations will be assigned to distinct web surveys customized for the specific type of angler. The web survey materials will be based in part on previously-fielded mail-telephone (paper) surveys implemented in 2007, 2012, and 2017. However, the web-

¹ See, for example, Dillman, D. A., Smyth, J. D., & Christian, L. M. (2014). *Internet, phone, mail, and mixed-mode surveys: The tailored design method*. John Wiley & Sons.

based surveys in the current study will take advantage of the added functionality of the web survey platform to facilitate a more customized survey experience.

The previously fielded (paper-based) surveys followed a modified Dillman Tailored Design Method mixed mode approach with five contacts: an advance letter, initial mailing with a monetary pre-incentive, a follow-up postcard, a second full mailing, and a telephone contact to encourage response and collect basic information useful for non-response analysis. The second full mailing occurred after the telephone contact in the 2012 survey, but before it in 2007 and 2017.

Response rates to the previous mixed mode surveys were 57.3%, 48.0%, and 50.5% across sampled populations (resident and non-resident angler populations) for the 2007, 2012, and 2017 surveys, respectively. Samples were randomly drawn from comprehensive databases of Alaska fishing licenses. Mail out samples across the sampled populations were 4,000 in 2007, 4,580 in 2012, and 5,400 in 2017.

While much of the content of the data collected in this updated survey will be similar to previous surveys, notable expected departures from the previous surveys are the new survey mode (mixed mode-based push-to-web survey) and protocols (e.g., mail invitation with web survey access information rather than the survey itself), and stratifying the sample to account for charter and non-charter fishing angler types. The latter is made possible due to the existence of a database of charter anglers. Previous surveys did not utilize this database and thus did not oversample charter anglers.

Important note on the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA). This data collection requires Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval under the PRA. The clearance process commonly takes 12+ months and is required prior to the survey being fielded. As part of this process, OMB must approve the survey and recruitment methods proposed. While the AFSC is currently seeking the PRA clearance and does not anticipate any unnecessary delays (given past experiences for the three earlier surveys), the contractor may be required to provide some input and advice to AFSC to help justify the methods proposed (particularly if they involve novel techniques). In addition, delays in OMB approval may require modification of the timeline for fielding the survey. However, pending a timely OMB approval under the PRA, the final survey can be expected to be fielded in the first quarter of 2026 or thereafter (with preparations in the 4th quarter of 2025).

Task: Recruiting Participants for the Push-to-Web Survey (October 2025 – June 2026)

The contractor is responsible for contacting potential respondents and encouraging them to take the web survey through mail and telephone (and potentially e-mail) correspondence. Five strata of Alaska anglers will be sampled from the following angler populations:

1. Alaska resident anglers who charter fished in Alaska
2. Non-resident anglers (those living outside Alaska but in the U.S.) who charter fished in Alaska
3. Southeast Alaska resident anglers (those living in the panhandle region of the state that includes the state capital, Juneau) who did not charter fish in Alaska

4. Other Alaska resident anglers (those from anywhere else in Alaska) who did not charter fish in Alaska
5. Non-resident anglers who did not charter fish in Alaska

Because the survey approach differs from past applications, we anticipate that a **small formal pretest** will be needed before the full implementation to ensure the recruitment protocols are working as expected and that interaction between the contractor and AFSC is sufficient for the smooth operation of the recruitment efforts.

Sampling frame. The recruitment samples will be drawn from three sources: (1) the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) charter logbook program database, (2) the ADF&G sport fish license database, and (3) the Alaska permanent identification database. The charter logbook program database includes a list of all individuals (by license number) who participated in a saltwater charter fishing trip in Alaska during a given season. The ADF&G sport fish license database includes all individuals who purchased an Alaska state sport fishing license during the season. The license database contains names, addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mails. Some records have phone numbers and e-mail addresses, but these items have not been mandated in the past and may not be consistently reported. In addition, a supplement to the sport fish license database exists that contains the names and contact information for Alaska residents that have a permanent identification card (PIC), which acts as a permanent license to fish in Alaska for individuals meeting certain age and residential qualifications. This supplemental PIC list is updated periodically and will be added to the fishing license data when drawing random samples for this study. The databases are not expected to be available for the 2025 season until January or February 2026. *AFSC will work with ADF&G to draw random samples from each of the five angler populations for recruitment and then provide those samples to the contractor. AFSC will add web survey access credentials (survey url and password) for each sampled individual provided to the contractor.*

Sample recruitment protocols. A combination of mail, telephone, and e-mail recruitment approaches are expected to be needed. This likely includes an advance letter, an initial mailing with an invitational letter, survey access information, and a monetary pre-incentive; a postcard reminder, a second letter with survey access information, and a final contact in the form of a follow-up phone nudge and non-response interview, or an e-mail or mail contact. See the figure below for this proposed set of protocols to follow in a mixed mode (mail/telephone/e-mail) approach. Alternative mixed mode approaches can be proposed, but any proposed alternative approach is expected to follow a Dillman Tailored Design Method approach with multiple contacts and mixed modes. The contractor should provide details of the steps they propose employing.

A Mixed Mode (Mail/Telephone/Email) Approach

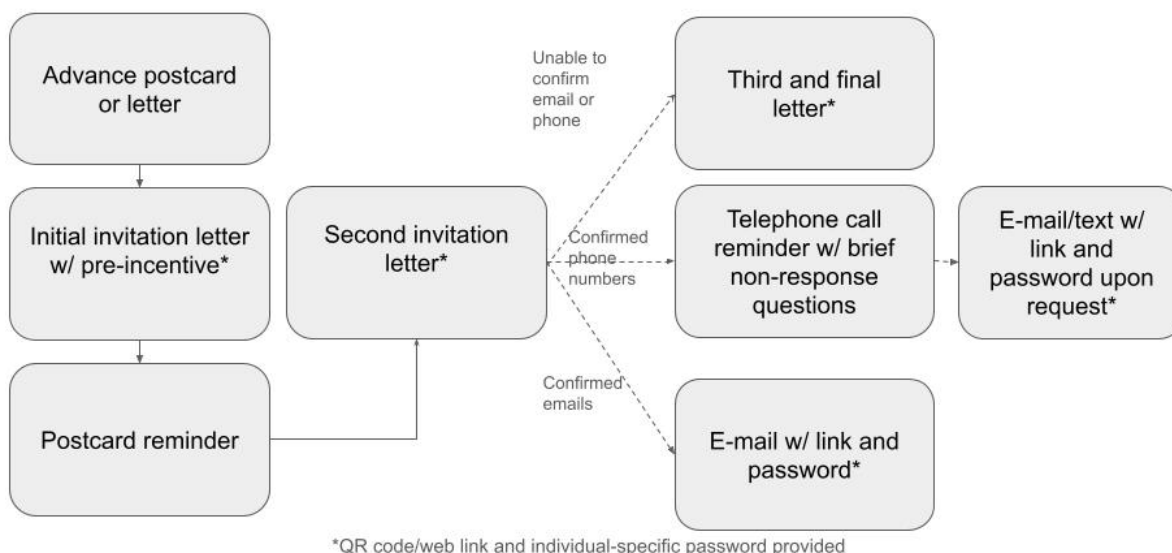


Figure 1. A mixed mode approach w/ 5 contacts

In the mixed mode approach shown in Figure 1, the following survey contacts and recruitment attempts are proposed:

- The **advance letter** will be sent approximately a few days prior to sending out the initial mailing.
- The **initial mailing** will be sent approximately a few days after the advance letter is sent. Each mailing contains a personalized letter with a url link to the survey version and a unique password for that individual to access the survey. This mailing will be sent by first-class mail and will include a token pre-incentive to boost participation (provided by contractor), anticipated to be either \$1 or \$2. Note that a \$1 bill was approved by OMB and given as a token incentive in past surveys and was believed to have worked well.
- The **postcard reminder** will be sent a few days after the initial mailing.
- The **second full mailing** will be sent to anyone who has yet to complete the survey, including those who only partially completed it. Timing for the second mailing is anticipated to be approximately 2 weeks after the postcard reminder to allow for mail delivery in hard-to-reach areas (e.g., rural areas of Alaska).
- The fifth and final contact will be a telephone, e-mail, or mail contact that occurs approximately 2-3 weeks after the second full mailing. All individuals who have not returned the survey to date will be contacted, either by e-mail, telephone, or mail, depending upon whether their e-mail and phone number can be validated or not (e.g.,

through Experian's data quality verification services, <https://www.edq.com/phone-verification/>). For those with validated phone numbers, either a random sample will be contacted that is sufficiently large to evaluate non-response or all individuals with validated phone numbers will be contacted. For the remainder, those with validated e-mail addresses will be sent an e-mail message nudging them to complete the survey, along with survey access information. Those with neither a validated phone number nor a validated e-mail address will be sent a final mailing with a final request to participate.

It is important that the contractor maintain an accurate and timely database of respondents to minimize contact expenses, avoid potential burden on respondents, and enhance likelihood of participation in the survey. Suggestions for ways to enhance response rates are welcome (e.g., certified mail, alternate timing of contacts, etc.).

Sample size. For the formal pretest, we anticipate using a sample (inclusive of survey strata across the five target populations) of 250. For the full implementation, we would like proposals to consider two overall mail-out sample sizes: 6,000 and 7,000. The selection of the sample size will depend upon the overall project budget. AFSC will provide the random sample of 6,250 or 7,250 names and contact information (w/ survey url and individual-specific passwords). About 10% of each of the samples drawn from the License data file is expected to contain invalid names or addresses. As such, the effective total sample sizes are expected to be 5,625 or 6,525 associated with the 6,250 and 7,250 initial sample sizes, respectively.

Expected response rates. The survey is targeting an overall 50% response rate of the "valid" sample size (3,125/3,875 completed web surveys from the 6,250/7,250 in the "valid" sample size).

Survey material specifications. Printing of all survey materials is the responsibility of the contractor. Choice of paper types, colors, and quality are subject to AFSC approval.

Letters. All letters will have the contractor's address displayed. These letters will be individualized by using the respondent's name, dated for the date it will be sent, and printed on letterhead using high-quality bond paper. The advance letter will be printed on NOAA letterhead that will be designed by the contractor (using a letterhead template provided by AFSC). All correspondence should include a toll-free number for the contractor that the respondent can use for questions or comments. Letters will include a signature in contrasting ink (e.g., blue ink signature, black letter print).

Envelopes. Envelopes should be printed with "Address Correction Requested" and designed by the contractor or the contractor will use the designs used in the previous implementation materials.

Incentives. Our experience is that small monetary pre-incentives help response rates and are agreeable to OMB. We anticipate that a monetary pre-incentive of \$1 or \$2 will be used in the survey.

Follow-up telephone interview. In the **telephone interview**, individuals will be encouraged to go to the web survey and fill it out. In addition to encouraging individuals to go to the survey, the

interview will involve asking several attitudinal, behavioral, and socio-demographic questions that will assist in understanding non-response behavior. Questions will also be asked to determine if the respondent is not eligible to receive the survey (e.g., the respondent did not purchase an Alaska state sport fishing license or fish in Alaska in the time period under study) and some classification questions that can be used to analyze non-response bias (e.g., income, age, gender, fishing experience, own a boat). Each respondent should be called up to 3 times before phone attempts are discontinued. AFSC will provide the contractor with a preliminary telephone script for use in the phone interview that identifies the set of questions to be asked. From this script, the contractor will develop the final script for actual use. These phone interviews are expected to last up to 10 minutes. In addition, any contacted respondent needing the survey access information can request it be sent to them via text or e-mail.

Name, address, phone, and e-mail verification. The contractor may include verification of names and contact information in the sample for accuracy using established services (e.g., Experian's data quality verification services).

Handling respondent inquiries. The contractor shall supply a toll-free number and/or web address on each of the mailings to notify respondents where to go to if they have questions or comments. The contractor is responsible for handling respondent inquiries and questions. The AFSC project manager will work with the contractor to develop answers to inquiries or questions. The contractor shall inform the AFSC project manager about the nature and number of inquiries each week during the recruitment implementation.

Data entry. The contractor should provide details of the non-response telephone survey data entry process and mechanisms that will be put into place to ensure data quality and accuracy.

Updating contact lists. The contractor will receive regular updates (weekly or more frequent) from AFSC about which individuals in the samples have responded to the survey. The contractor will be responsible for maintaining the most up-to-date contact list for subsequent contacts, discussing any implementation issues with the AFSC project manager, and devising and implementing measures to address these issues.

Progress reports during implementation. The contractor will provide a brief weekly progress report to PSMFC and AFSC by e-mail while the recruitment process is being administered. The report shall contain the status of the recruitment efforts and identify and discuss any problems or issues associated with it. It will also contain a list of the respondent questions and comments, organized by respondent identification number, if applicable.

Recruitment tracking and non-response telephone interview data sets and report. The contractor shall supply data files in an agreed upon electronic file format no later than 4 weeks after the completion of the telephone contact. The data files will include (a) all coded responses to the interview questions and (b) individual-level information about which mailings or other contacts were done and when, including final dispositions.

1. Documentation of the transferred files shall include, but is not necessarily limited to, the following:

- a. variable name
 - b. position
 - c. description
 - d. length
 - e. alpha-numeric description
- 2. The contractor shall also supply a final report no later than 8 weeks after the mailing of the final survey mailing. The final report should contain the following:
 - a. List and describe the recruitment procedures that were implemented.
 - b. Number and types of contacts made (mailings by type, e-mails, phone calls, etc.), returned surveys (e.g., invalid addresses).
 - c. A description of any issues encountered in recruitment.
 - d. A brief summary of the characteristics of the non-response survey respondents over the collected demographic information.
 - e. Other information or assessments that the contractor believes to be useful to easily identify problems with the data or that will assist in identifying the success of the survey.

AFSC will be responsible for the statistical/econometric analysis of the survey responses.

Proposal Details

Requested information. Those wishing to submit a proposal should include the following information as part of their proposals.

1. A detailed description of the recruitment approaches that the contractor would employ. Provide information about the incentives proposed and a full explanation of the methods proposed, timing and nature of contacts, and expected outcomes.
2. Specify any steps taken to verify the provided mailing addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses, if any.
3. A list of qualifications of key personnel involved in the project.
4. A brief statement of previous experience the firm has in conducting mail, telephone, and mixed mode surveys and efforts to recruit participants in push-to-web surveys. List relevant work experience regarding recreational surveys, fishery-related surveys, or conducting surveys in Alaska, if any.
5. A breakdown of costs by major category (e.g., salary and wages, benefits, supplies, other goods and services, administrative overhead (if any), and total cost). Separate budget breakdowns should be reported for the two sample size assumptions (6,250 and 7,250).

Selection criteria. Proposal selection will be based on the following criteria:

1. Cost (50%)
2. Experience, expertise, and methods as discussed above in “Requested information” (50%)

Submission deadline. The deadline for submitting proposals to PSMFC is 5 p.m. Pacific on **February 27, 2025**. It is anticipated that selection results will be announced by **March 7, 2025**.

Proposals should be submitted by e-mail to Michael Arredondo (marredondo@psmfc.org) and Caren Braby (cbraby@psmfc.org).

Information requests or questions. Questions should be directed to Michael Arredondo of the PSMFC at marredondo@psmfc.org and Caren Braby at cbraby@psmfc.org. Written questions can be submitted via e-mail by February 4, 2025. Responses to all written questions will be posted on the PSMFC website by February 7, 2025.

Contracting Schedule – It is expected that a contract for an initial one-year period will be issued, with extensions possible for up to five years depending on need and availability of funding.

Payment Schedule

The schedule for payments is negotiable however the bid should include a proposed payment schedule and payment rates based on acceptance of the work products described above.