

Consolidated Appropriations Act -- Fisheries Assistance Program

RIDEM
June 1, 2021

Introduction

- In December 2020, Congress enacted the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021.
- The Act includes \$300 million in funding for COVID-related fisheries assistance, \$255 million of which is allocated for fisheries assistance in the coastal states.
- On March 29, 2021, NOAA Fisheries announced the allocation of the \$255 million among the coastal states.

Use of the Funds

- Funding intended to address the same core issue as the 2020 CARES Act -- provide assistance to eligible fishery participants to address direct and indirect COVID-19 impacts.
- NOAA has issued preliminary guidance pertaining to the new funds. Final guidance remains pending.
- Per the Act and NOAA's preliminary guidance, the framework for the second round of funding will closely follow and be consistent with the first round.

Allocation

- NOAA Fisheries used readily available total annual revenue information from the commercial fishing, charter fishing, aquaculture, and processor/seafood sectors of coastal states and territories to proportionately allocate the 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act funding (similar to CARES Act).
- RI's allocation will be approximately \$2,929,000
 - This is the adjusted amount that accounts for NOAA's, ASMFC's, and DEM's administrative costs for the allocation and distribution of the funding to the states.

Eligibility

- Eligible fishery participants must have incurred a documented fishery-related loss in revenue during reference period, greater than 35% relative to average fishery-related revenues earned during the same reference period over the prior 5 years (2015-2019), or active portion thereof if fishery-related revenues did not encompass the entire 5-year period.
- Applicants cannot seek funds that would make them "more than whole" in 2020 relative to their average annual revenue earned across the previous five years (2015-2019).

Process

- Federal guidance has been that fewer deviations where possible from the previous CARES Act Spend Plan will result in expedient turnaround times on spend plan reviews.
- As such, RIDEM initial plans will be conduct similar processes:
 - Develop and submit spend plan to NOAA.
 - Regulation language and filing.
 - Application process and opening/closing periods.
 - Anticipating three meetings: this is the 2nd meeting to finalize allocation breakdowns and impact periods.

Feedback Received

- RIDEM held a public virtual meeting on April 28, 2021 to receive feedback on two specific aspects of the spend plan:
 - (1) Sector Allocations
 - How should funds be allocated by sector?
 - (2) Impact Period
 - How should the impact period for this round of funding be changed, if at all?
- Tonight's meeting is to present the feedback received to-date for final consensus.

(1) Sector Allocations

Feedback received is to keep allocation breakdown the same.

	Allocation (%)	CARES Act Allocation (\$) - Round 1	CAA Allocation (\$) - Round 2
Commercial Fishing	62.6%	\$1,983,120	\$1,833,706
Aquaculture	5.4%	\$171,068	\$158,179
Party and Charter	3.5%	\$110,877	\$102,524
Processors	28.5%	\$902,858	\$834,834
Total	100%	\$3,167,920	\$2,929,243

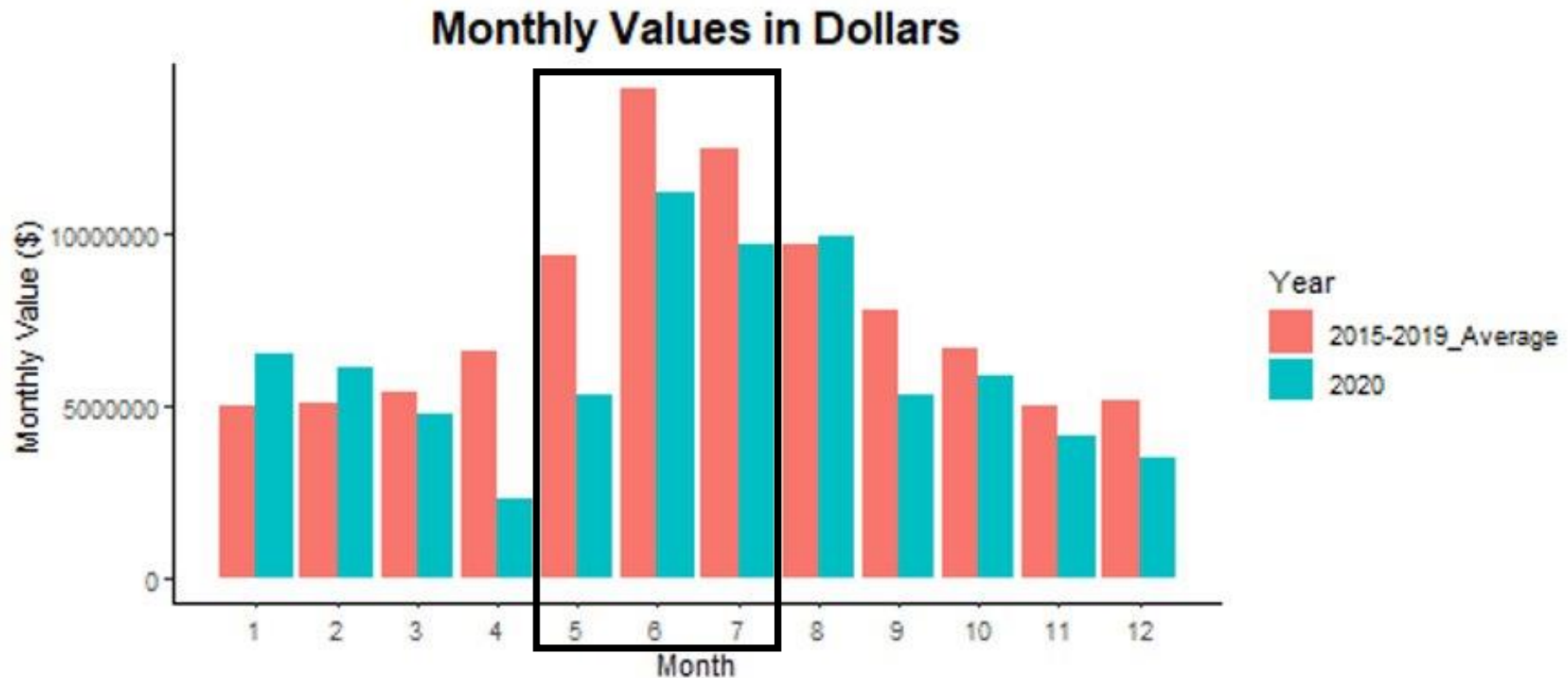
(2) Impact Period

Commercial Fishing

- Reference period for the CARES Act was March 1 – May 31, 2020
- Initial feedback indicated the need to include summer months that were not captured in the CARES Act.
- Overall, preference for May 1 – July 31, 2020.

(2) Impact Period

Commercial Fishing



(2) Impact Period

Aquaculture

- Reference period for the CARES Act was March 1 – May 31, 2020
- Initial feedback indicated preference for the same time frame: March 1 – May 31, 2020.
- Keep in mind that CFAP and EQIP money will be subtracted from claims, as will other sources of disaster relief.

(2) Impact Period

Processors

- Reference period for the CARES Act was March 1 – May 31, 2020.
- Initial feedback indicated preference for the same time frame: March 1 – May 31, 2020.

(2) Impact Period

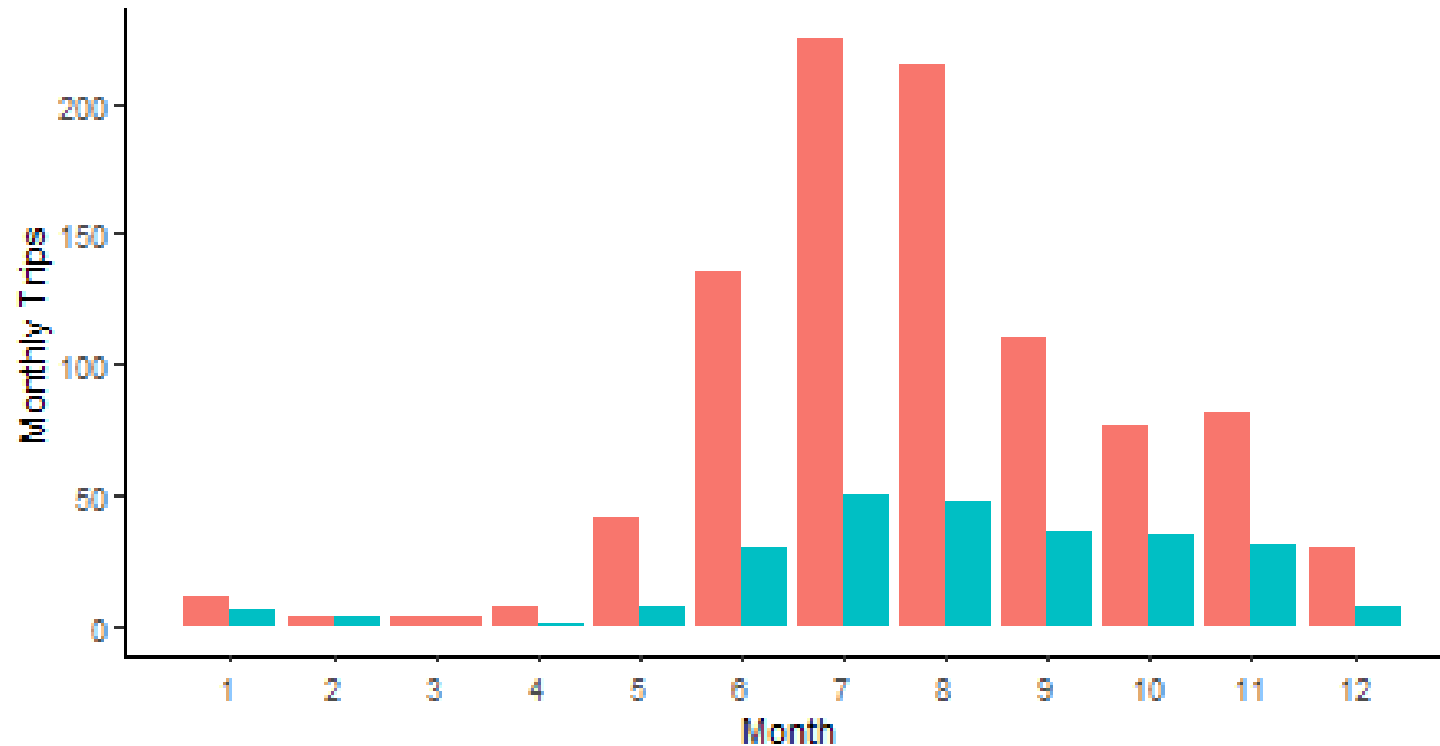
Party and Charter

- Reference period for the CARES Act was March 1 – May 31, 2020.
- Initial feedback:
 - August/September-December 2020.
 - May 1, 2020 – May 31, 2021 (covering two calendar years).

(2) Impact Period

Party and Charter

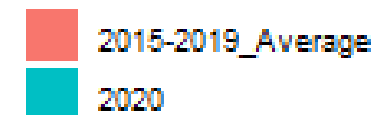
Number of Party/Charter Trips by Month



federal VTR only

RIDEM Recommendation:
May 1, 2020 – Dec 31, 2020

Year



Moving Forward

- With finalization of the impact periods, we will complete full draft of the spend plan and emergency regulations.
- Additional presentation of proposed spend plan (target: within the next two weeks.)
- Submission of spend plan for NOAA review and approval.

Presentations and relevant material will be placed on the RIDEM Division of Marine Fisheries website.