



Application for ASMFC Tagging Program Certification

Please submit this application and any supporting documents via e-mail or postal mail to:

Jeff Kipp
Stock Assessment Scientist
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland St. Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201
E-mail: jkipp@asmfc.org

Questions regarding the certification process or application may be directed to the same person, via e-mail, postal mail, or phone: (703) 842-0740

Tagging Program Certification Procedures

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Interstate Tagging Committee (ITC) created the following certification process to promote good tagging practices and sharing of tagging information among scientific and fisheries management groups. All approved programs will be listed on the Cooperative Tagging Website and Registry (<http://www.fishtag.info/>) as a certified program that meets the criteria for scientific quality and fish safety. We encourage all registered tagging programs to apply.

1. Download a Certification Application form from <http://www.fishtag.info/>. One application per tagging program should be submitted regardless of the number of species tagged.
2. Questions regarding the application process and completed applications should be directed to:

Jeff Kipp
Stock Assessment Scientist
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
1050 N. Highland Street, Suite 200A-N
Arlington, VA 22201-2196

Phone: 703-842-0740
Email: jkipp@asmfc.org

ASMFC staff will confirm that applications are complete or request clarification where necessary.

3. Applications will be forwarded to the appropriate species Technical Committee(s) for review (e.g. tagging programs targeting striped bass will be sent to the Striped Bass Technical Committee). Each Technical Committee has a 30-day period in which to comment. The species Technical Committee will review applications for appropriate responses on tag type, tag retention studies, and evaluate target numbers of releases for each species.

4. Applications will then be sent to the certification subcommittee of the ITC for review with compiled comments from the Technical Committee(s). The ITC will rate each item (see rating system on next page) and respond in one of the following ways to the tagging program within 90 days of application date:

- A. Award certification to the tagging program, accompanied by a certificate and listing on the web site as certified program that it meets the criteria for scientific quality and fish safety.

Or:

- B. Notify tagging program of areas that need improvement for certification to be granted, such as redirecting the program goals, or putting them in contact with a local scientific or management group with which to share data. These programs would be encouraged to respond with clarifications or changes to their program for future certification.

5. After certification, each tagging program will be reviewed every five years to update any programmatic changes and ensure that certification guidelines are still being met. Certified tagging programs will be required to report proposed changes in their program to maintain certification.

**Application for Tagging Program Certification
For Submission to the ASMFC Interstate Tagging Committee**

IMPORTANT NOTES TO APPLICANTS:

- You may attach any existing documents about program (i.e. instructions distributed to participants). However your program will be scored **ONLY** on answers provided in the application.
- If you need more space than provided to complete answers on application, please attach extra sheets with any continuation of answers clearly indicated corresponding numbers and letters from application.

Tagging Program Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

FAX: _____

Email: _____

Program Web Address: _____

Date Application Submitted: _____

I. Program objectives and purpose

A) Why was/will this tagging program begun/begin?

B) How is information obtained from program being used or how will it be used?

II. Tagging Program Design

Please attach program design documentation (if available) in addition to answering the questions below.

A. Was your tagging program developed with input from scientists? YES / NO

If yes, please list scientists and affiliated scientific institutions:

B. Has the design of your tagging program been reviewed by scientists? YES / NO
If yes, please list reviewer(s) and give a brief summary of the review:

C. In which geographic area(s) are fish/will fish be tagged and released? [i.e. state(s) & body(ies) of water]

D. Time-line for conducting tagging:

For existing/new programs:

1. When did/will your tagging program begin?

2. How long will fish be tagged under this program?

3. How long will return information be gathered under this program?

E. Tagging and Sampling :

1) What species are/will be tagged?

2) What size range of fish are/will be tagged?

3) Do/Will you set a goal for number of fish (list by species) to be tagged by year?

YES / NO

▪ If yes, on what is that number based?

4) Have you completed or are you aware of any studies done to investigate how well tags stay in fish once a fish is tagged? YES / NO

▪ If yes, please explain.

F. Tag Specifications:

1) Tag type?

2) Tag manufacturer and model number?

3) Tag color?

4) Where is tag inserted on/into fish?

5) What information is printed on tags? (list EVERYTHING)

G. Release and Recapture Data Information:

1) For item in each row, check each column for which information is either collected/recorded or sent:

	Data Collected at Initial Tagging of Fish	Data Collected at Recapture of Tagged Fish	Recapture Information sent to both anglers (release and recapture)
a) Species			
b) Specific Geographic Area			
c) Gear used to catch species			
d) Date of release/recapture			
e) Tag number			
f) Length of fish w/units			
g) Fate of fish (i.e. released w/ or w/o tag, landed..)			
h) Angler contact information			

2) List any other data/information not listed above table which is collected when fish is tagged initially or recaptured :

H. Recapture of Tagged Fish

a) How is recapture information obtained from angler?	
b) Does the program provide recognition /reward (i.e., letter, hat, etc...) for recapture information received? YES / NO If yes, 1) Explain recognition. 2) How soon is the recognition sent to the angler?	
c) Is the person who tagged the fish informed of a recapture of one of their tagged fish? YES / NO If yes, explain when & how.	

III. Data

A. Data Management

<p>1) Does your program coordinate with any management agency or scientific institution? YES / NO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If yes, explain. 	
<p>2) How does your program handle the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) multiple tagging instances? b) re-tagging of previously tagged fish, and c) re-releasing of previously tagged fish? 	
<p>3) Does your program have a computerized database of release and recapture information? YES / NO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If yes, what software is used? 	
<p>4) Is data from your tagging program used in any type of analysis? YES / NO</p> <p>If yes,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Who performs the analysis on your data? b) How often is data analyzed? c) What type(s) of analyses are done? 	

B. Data Quality Assurance:

<p>1) Are data checks performed for accuracy of release and recapture data? YES / NO</p> <p>If yes,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) How are data checked? b) Who checks your data? c) How often are data checked? d) Are data checked against data sheets? 	
<p>2) Are any provisions in place to check for obvious errors (i.e. fish species captured out of expected range)?</p>	
<p>3) If database is computerized, does your data entry system have any automatic data checks incorporated into the data entry program ? YES / NO</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If yes, explain. 	

IV. Commitment Level

A. How many full time/ part time/ volunteer staff run your program? _____/_____/_____

B. If recognition/rewards are provided, does the program have funding to provide them over the life of the program? YES / NO

Explain: _____

C. How long will the program accept recapture information after the tagging efforts have been terminated? _____

D. When your program is completed, can you arrange to have someone else respond to tag returns? YES / NO

Explain: _____

E. What is your programs long term plan for data storage and availability?

YES / NO

Explain: _____

V. Training

A. Describe, in detail, your training program for taggers.

B. Who trains the taggers, and what is their experience or qualification?

VI. Program communication with anglers and management agencies.

A. Will summary tagging data be made available to participants in your program and interested parties? YES / NO

Explain: _____

B. Is your program and reward information advertised to the public? YES / NO

If yes, explain: _____

C. Does your program communicate to taggers? YES / NO

If yes, how often? _____

D. Is feedback including release information provided to recapturers? YES / NO

If yes, explain: _____

F. Are data provided to fishery management agencies? YES / NO

If yes,

1) In what format? _____

2) To which person or program do you submit your data?

G. Does your program use outreach or publicity to inform the general public of your tagged fish and how to report recaptures? ? YES / NO

If yes, explain: _____

APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

I. Project/Program Objectives (14 points)

- *Does the program have appropriate scientific or management objective(s) that justify a tagging project/program solution?*
- *Are the data being used?*

II. Program and Scientific Design (51 Points)

- *Is the design (scientist involvement, sample methods, location, and expected number of tag releases) appropriate to obtain project objectives?*
- *Are tag specifications and application technique appropriate for the target species?*
- *Are release methods and recapture procedures (handling) appropriate for the program objectives?*
- *Are the timeline, timing, and geographic location of releases appropriate relative to chosen objectives and hypotheses to be tested?*
- *Are sufficient data elements present to allow conclusions to be reached to support the program objectives?*

III. Data Acquisition and Data Management (QA/QC) (20 points)

- *Are Quality Assurance/Quality control methods sufficient to ensure accuracy and integrity of all data?*
- *Do chosen analysis methods allow conclusions to be reached relative to study objectives?*
- *Is the chosen hardware / software suitable for the tasks expected*
- *Are archival modes sufficient to allow future access and analysis of data by other researchers?*

IV. Commitment to program (15 points)

- *Is there sufficient assurance that the program has the necessary support (staff, funding, infrastructure) to address the project objectives and respond to tag returns and data requests in the future?*

V. Training / Education (10 Points)

- *Is there adequate evidence that program participants will be properly trained in tag/release/recapture methods, and that those methods will be properly followed?*

VI. Communications and Outreach (10 Points)

- *Do sufficient opportunities exist for communication with the public to assure that project objectives are met?*
- *Do sufficient opportunities exist for communication of study results to program participants and other relevant bodies (Reports, web pages, etc)?*

Notes for Scoring Applications:

- **Minimum score for certification = 80 percent, or 96 points**
- **Certification is for entire program, not by section of application or species tagged.**
- **Response to programs should include suggestions for improvement to obtain certification (by criteria).**