



Habitat Program Evaluation and Blueprint

Prepared for the Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel

April 2021



Photos: Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary



Council Guidance



The Habitat and Ecosystem Committee discussed development of a Blueprint to describe and evaluate the Council's activities related to habitat in the region.

The Council directed staff to establish a Habitat Blueprint Development Team/Workgroup to develop the scope of the project and the process to develop a Blueprint document.



Workgroup Purpose

- a. Develop evaluation plan and strategy (Blueprint)
- b. Assist in preparing and reviewing materials for Council discussion and decision-making.
 - Facilitate Council discussion and ensure efficient use of Council discussion time
 - All decisions will be made by the Council through official Council meetings noticed in the *Federal Register*
- c. Assist in reviewing the Blueprint prior to Council approval



Membership - Council



Steve Poland
Habitat & Ecosystem
Committee Chair
Workgroup Lead



Carolyn Belcher
Habitat & Ecosystem
Committee Vice Chair



Mel Bell Council Chair



Kerry Marhefka
Snapper Grouper
Committee Vice Chair

Membership -Staff



John Carmichael
Executive Director



Myra Brouwer
Deputy Director for Management
Lead



Roger Pugliese
Habitat & Ecosystem Scientist





Meetings & Timing

In-between Council meetings during 2021 (April-May, July-August, October-November)

Council/Committee will receive updates in June and September and approve in December 2021





Progress To Date

- Two workgroup meetings (January and April 2021).
- Draft scope of work
- Council wants to bring habitat program more to the forefront and be more focused on deliverables that inform management decisions.
- Blueprint to focus on habitat program apart from ecosystem and climate activities.
- Draft goals and objectives



Photo: Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary



Next Steps

- Review and approve goals and objectives
- Clarify EFH review process and Council/NMFS roles
- *Propose a process for prioritizing review of EFH policies*
- *Obtain information to begin evaluation of tools and services to determine how they meet habitat program's goals and objectives*