

# **SAFMC Citizen Science Action Team Presentation**

## Volunteers

SAFMC Citizen Science Program  
All-Hands Action Team Meeting  
January 31, 2018

# Goals and Objectives

- Understand Universe of Potential Volunteers and How to Recruit
  - Review How Other Citizen Science Programs Do It
  - Document Individual Interests and Goals
  - Determine Existing Skill Sets and Experience
- Training Needs for Projects
  - Basic Orientation and Training of all Volunteers
  - Advanced or Project Specific Orientation and Training – initial and continuing
  - Communication
  - Incentives and Retention
- System and Mechanism to Match and Assign Volunteers to Projects, Researchers and Scientists, Project Leaders
- Evaluate and Certify Volunteers Upon Project Completion

# Determining Volunteer Interest

## Information gathered by Team:

- Reviewed Technical Publications on Use Of Citizen Science
  - ❖ Oceanography, Coastal Management, Use of Fishermen, Costs
- Reviewed Literature for Best Practices Utilizing Volunteers
  - ❖ Target Groups - Recruitment Techniques
  - ❖ Data Quality Through Training
  - ❖ Data Collection - Needs in the Field

## Conclusion:

Decision to Design a Two Step/Two Forms Process

- Step 1 – Basic Volunteer Interest Form/Skill Assessment
- Step 2 – Project Specific Volunteer form

# Determining Volunteer Interest

## **Product Developed:**

Step 1 - Developed a General Application Form –  
Volunteer Interest Form

- ❖ Volunteer Contact Information
- ❖ Interests, Motivation, Resources They Could Provide
- ❖ Geographic Location and Time Availability
- ❖ Skills, Knowledge, Experience

# Expanded Skills-Based Volunteer Interest Form

## Work with Projects/Topics A-Team:

Evaluated a Need for Skill and Interest Based Groupings

- ❖ Scientists and Researchers
  - ❖ Commercial Fishermen
  - ❖ Recreational Fishermen
  - ❖ Interested Citizen
- 
- Developed a Recreational Fishermen Skills/Interest Form
  - Obtained Pilot Project Plan – Scamp Grouper Discards

# Next Steps for A-Team

## Template for Training Plan

- Use the Pilot Project (Scamp Grouper Discards) to create a sample training plan

# Recommendations – Initial Volunteer Interest Form

- Approve a Final General Application Form for Use
- Develop Instructions for the Application Form
- Develop Orientation Material for Citizen Science Volunteer Applicants About the Program (Maybe work with Communication A-Team?)
- Determine Method to Recruit Volunteers (Maybe work with Communication A-Team?)
- Determine Method to Retain Volunteers
- Database Needed to Enter Initial Volunteer Applicants
- Determine Method for Reviewing Initial Applications

# Questions, Suggestions, and Input

- Communication With Volunteers on Ongoing Basis
- Method and Ethics to Evaluate Volunteer Performance
- Method to Certify Volunteers After Project Completion
- Training to Enhance Skills and Ability for Established Volunteers
- Rewards and Recognition for Volunteers
- Feedback From Volunteers on Their Experience as a Volunteer
  - ❖ Reverse Appraisal - 360 degree Feedback
- Work with Communication A-Team on:
  - ❖ Orientation Materials for Citizen Science Volunteer Applicants About the Program
  - ❖ Methods to Recruit Volunteers