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THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Engaging Marine Resource Education Program Graduates and Council Workshop Participants in the Council Process

**Outreach and Communications Advisory Panel
May 2026**



Why are we talking about contact lists?

- In recent years, the Council has had an increased focus on in-person community engagement.
- All in-person events ask attendees to sign-in and provide contact information.
 - This as resulted in a *long list* of individuals interested in at least some component of the Council process.

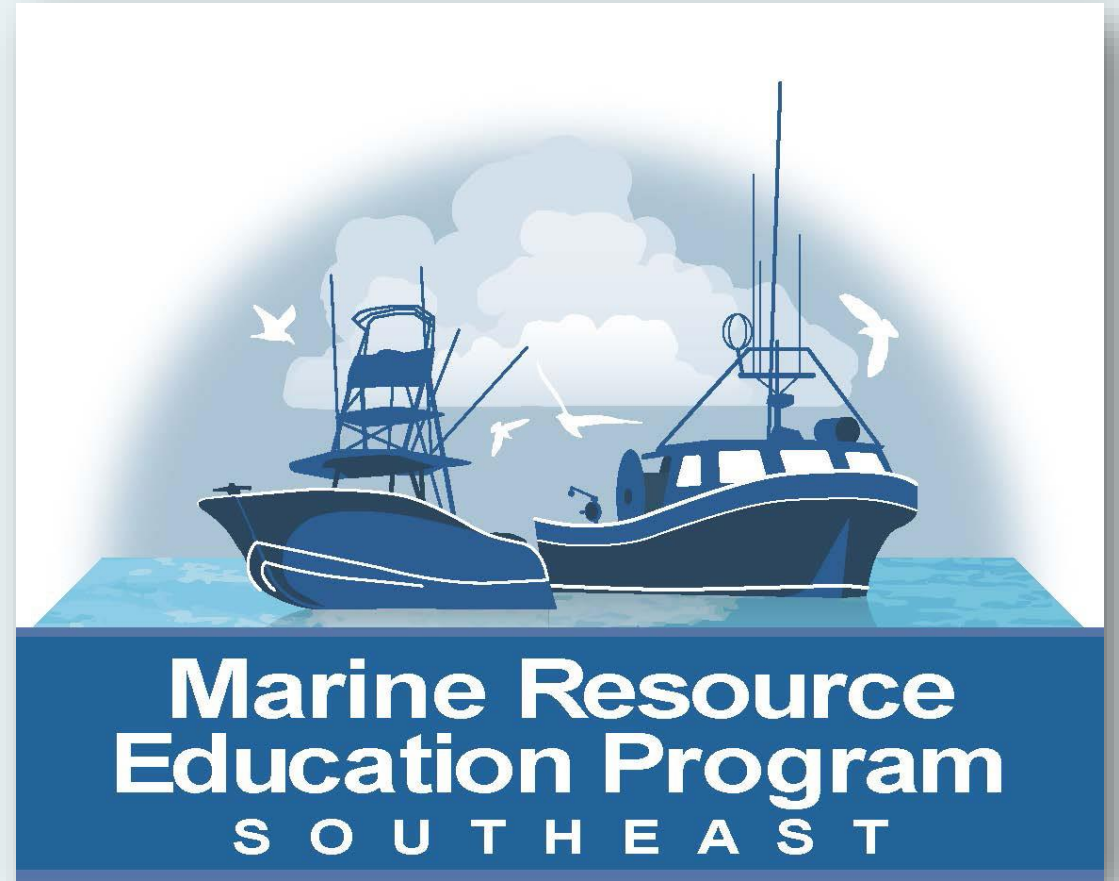


Marine Resources Education Program

MREP is a neutral platform outside of the management process for fishermen to learn the nuts and bolts of fisheries science and management.

- **Audience:** fishery stakeholders in the Gulf and South Atlantic regions.
- **Timing:** Once a year, one week workshop.

Gulf of Maine Resources Institute facilitates development of the program. However, engagement post-MREP graduation is intended to come from the Councils.





Lines of Communication: Conversations with the Council



New Council initiative aimed toward building relationships with fisheries stakeholders and providing an opportunity for mutual sharing of information. Lines allows attendees to actively discuss their perspectives with local Council members.

- **Audience:** Fishery stakeholders in the South Atlantic
- **Timing:** Held every year in two states, alternating.

Focus Group Meetings

- The Council organizes focus group meetings when they would like to get more information on a particular topic outside of the traditional advisory panel and public hearing processes.
- These meetings (or series of meetings) are not reoccurring efforts, and they audience and timing depends on the topics to be discussed.
- Examples include Mackerel Port Meetings (2024) and Snapper Grouper Visioning (2014).



Overall Communication Goal

Provide individuals who have already demonstrated an interest in engaging with the management process with clear, accessible, and actionable information, prioritizing targeted, communication that speaks directly to an individual's interests.

Opportunity Created by These Efforts

- List of fishery stakeholders that have already illustrated an interest in getting involved in the Council management process.
- Individuals have had in-person interactions with staff (putting a face to a name), expressed interest in specific topics, so emails may stand out more.



Possible Challenges

- Need to avoid sharing too much information, especially if contact list members are also on other Council outreach lists (ex. Constant Contact, Citizen Science, etc.)
- Contact lists will need to be maintained over time.
 - Focus group meetings becoming “stale” if a given topic is not regularly addressed.
 - Many individuals will attend multiple meetings.
- Time associated with personalizing individual emails.



Questions for the OCAP

- How to balance providing important information versus providing too much information?
 - Could Council staff create a spreadsheet that would detail contact X list with X information.
 - Example: Contact Lines list when AP Applications are open.
 - Example: Contact Mackerel AP when CMP amendments go to public hearing.
- Suggestions for contact list management service that would maintain a personal touch to correspondence?
- Suggestions for balancing sending out personalized emails within time constraints?
- What information should sign-in sheets gather?
 - Currently gather name, sector, email, and where they heard about event.
- Should meeting attendees be added to general Council email blasts (New Releases, South Atlantic Bite) automatically?
- Other ways to engage individuals outside of email blasts?