Protected Resources Committee
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
March 2015, St Simons GA

Proposed Critical Habitat for North Atlantic Right Whale

The Federal Register Notice with the proposed rule and request for comment is attached in this document.

The **Draft Biological Source Document** is available here: http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/2015/February/narwsourcedocumentfinal072114.pdf
This is: the Source Document for the Critical Habitat Designation: A review of information pertaining to the definition of "critical habitat."

The **Draft ESA Section 4(b)(2) Report** is available here: http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/2015/February/draft4b2report020415.pdf.
This report documents NMFS's compliance with section 4(b)(2) of the ESA, which requires that when NMFS designates or revises critical habitat NMFS considers the economic impact, impact on national security, and any other relevant impact of specifying any particular area as critical habitat. Section 4(b)(2) also allows, but does not require, NMFS to exclude any particular areas from critical habitat if the benefits of suchsexclusion outweigh the benefits of inclusion, unless the failure to specify an area as part ofscritical habitat will result in the extinction of the species. This report documents NMFS's determination whether to consider excluding any particular area from the proposed North Atlantic right whale critical habitat based on our consideration of identified impacts.