

# Marine Protected Area Workshops #1 & #2 Summary Report

June 2012

At the March 2012 Council meeting in Savannah, GA, the Council directed staff to schedule two public workshops before the June Council meeting to solicit input from the public on areas the Council could consider for Marine Protected Area (MPA) designation for speckled hind and warsaw grouper. At the time, Regulatory Amendment 11 (removal of the 240' closure) was still under Secretarial review. However, the amendment was approved and became effective on May 10, 2012. See **Appendix 1** for an overview of the process utilized to conduct the public workshops.

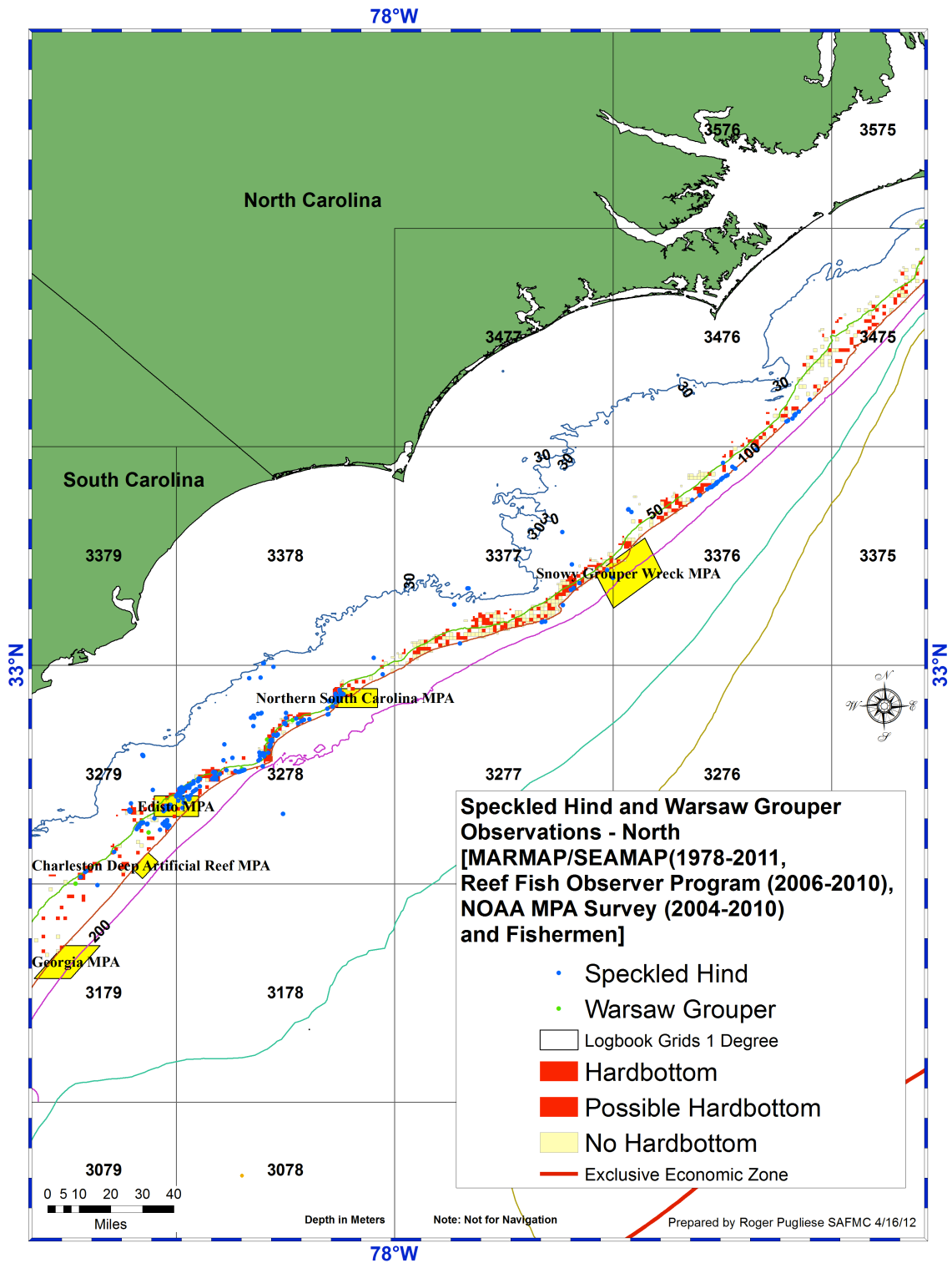
## **Charleston (Workshop # 1)**

The first MPA public workshop was held on the evening of April 18<sup>th</sup>, in conjunction with the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) meeting in Charleston. The workshop began at 6:00 p.m. The majority of AP members attended the workshop in addition to about 10 members of the public. Council staff provided a brief orientation of how the workshop would be conducted and provided some background as to the rationale behind the Council's consideration of MPAs. Staff also provided information on the duration of the comment period and how to submit written comments. Participants then spread among four tables throughout the room and gave their recommendations directly to staff or provided spatial recommendations by drawing on the charts provided. The majority of the AP members were in attendance, although the AP discussed potential designation of MPAs at their meeting and their recommendations are included in the Snapper Grouper AP Report.

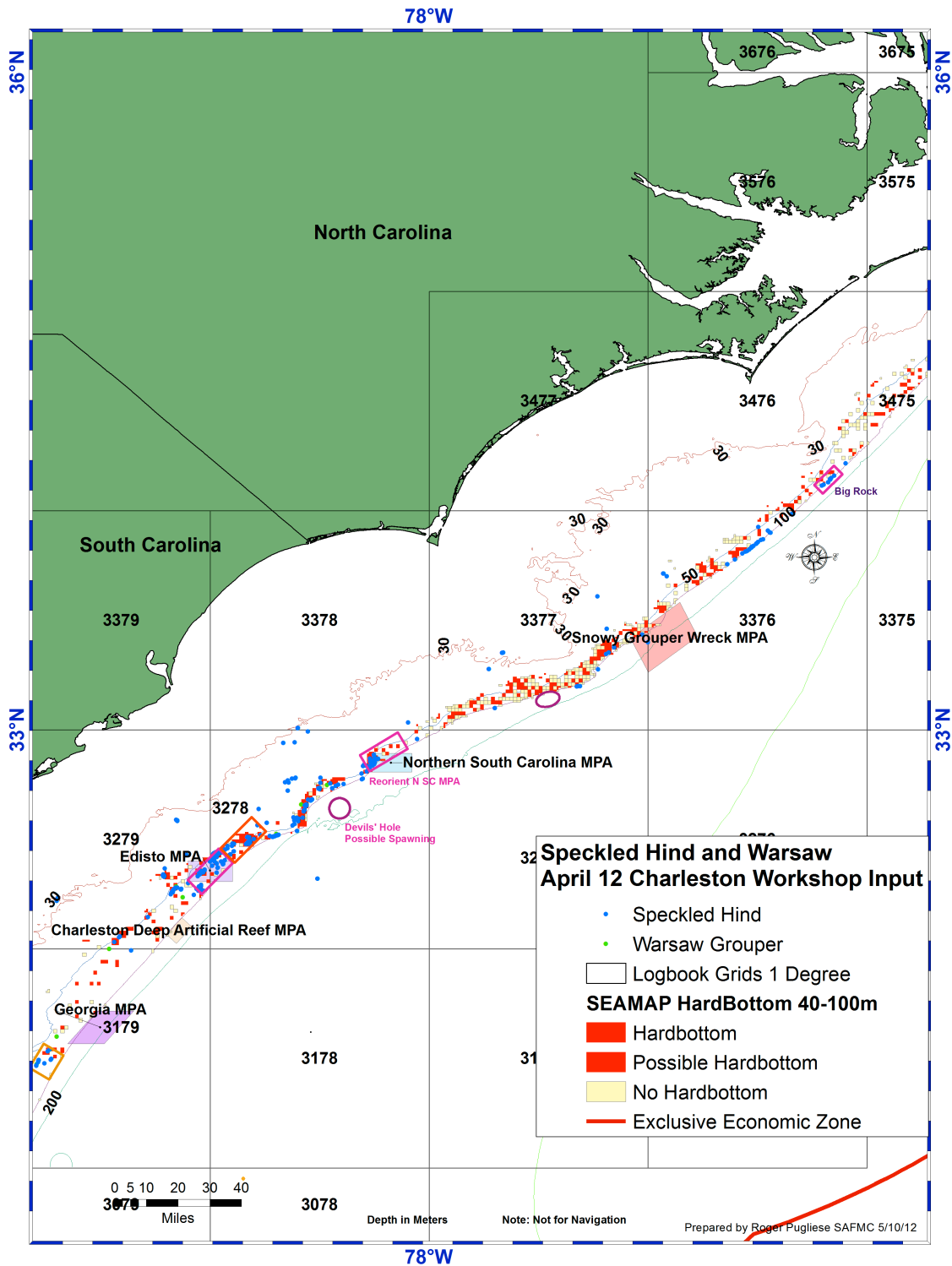
**Figures 1 and 3** show the northern and southern areas of the Council's jurisdiction, respectively, with all the spatial data available on speckled hind and warsaw and sources of those data. Recommendations obtained at Workshop # 1 are included in **Figures 2, 4 and 5** and **Table 1**. **Table 2** shows the percent occurrence of speckled hind within the existing deepwater MPAs.

## **Pooler (Workshop # 2)**

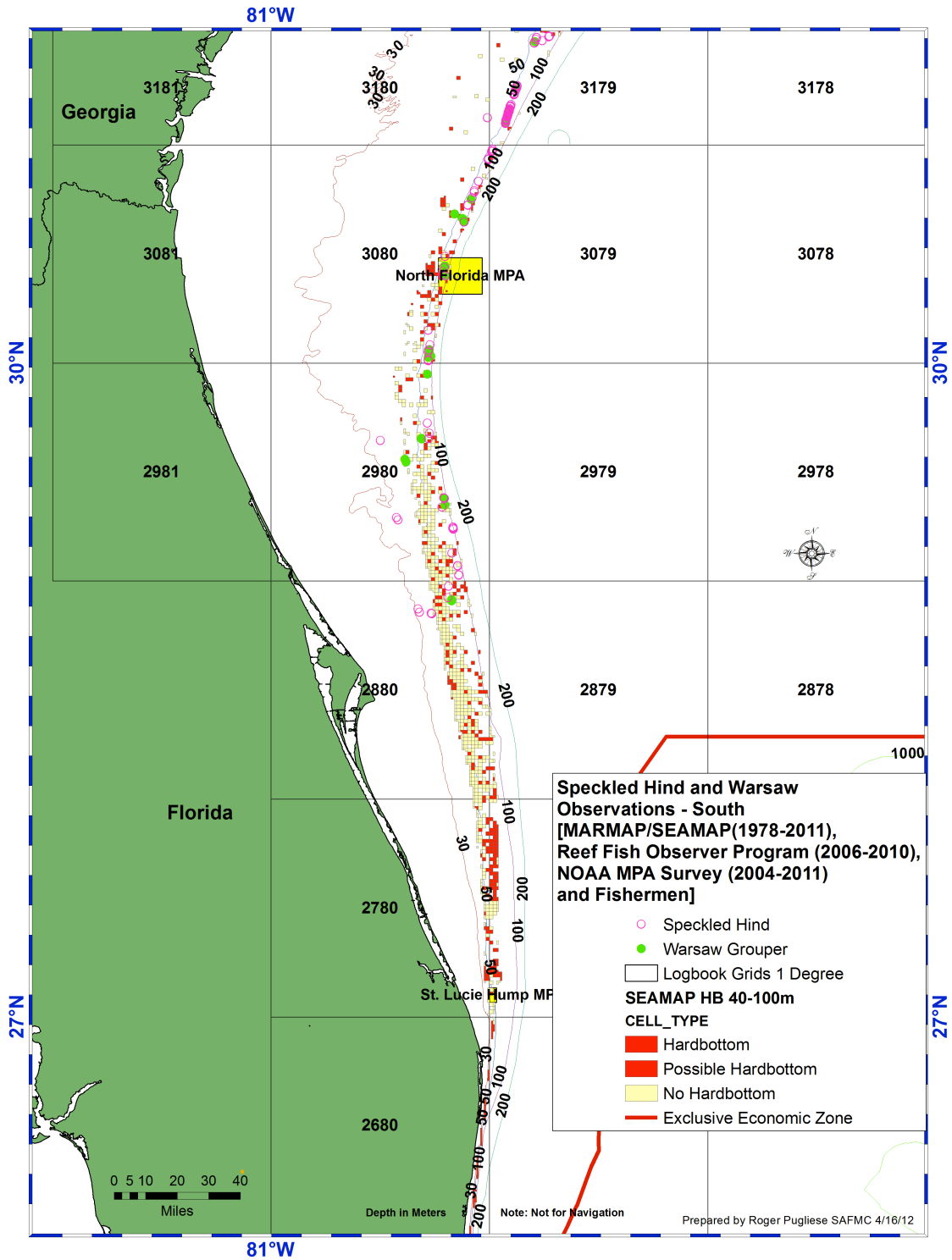
The second public workshop was held in Pooler, GA, the evening of May 16, 2012. The workshop was held in conjunction with the meeting of the MPA Expert Workgroup. The workshop was conducted in a similar manner to the first workshop and additional charts depicting South Florida were provided. May of the Workgroup participants were in attendance, and 9 members of the public participated. No additional recommendations on potential MPA areas were obtained at this workshop.



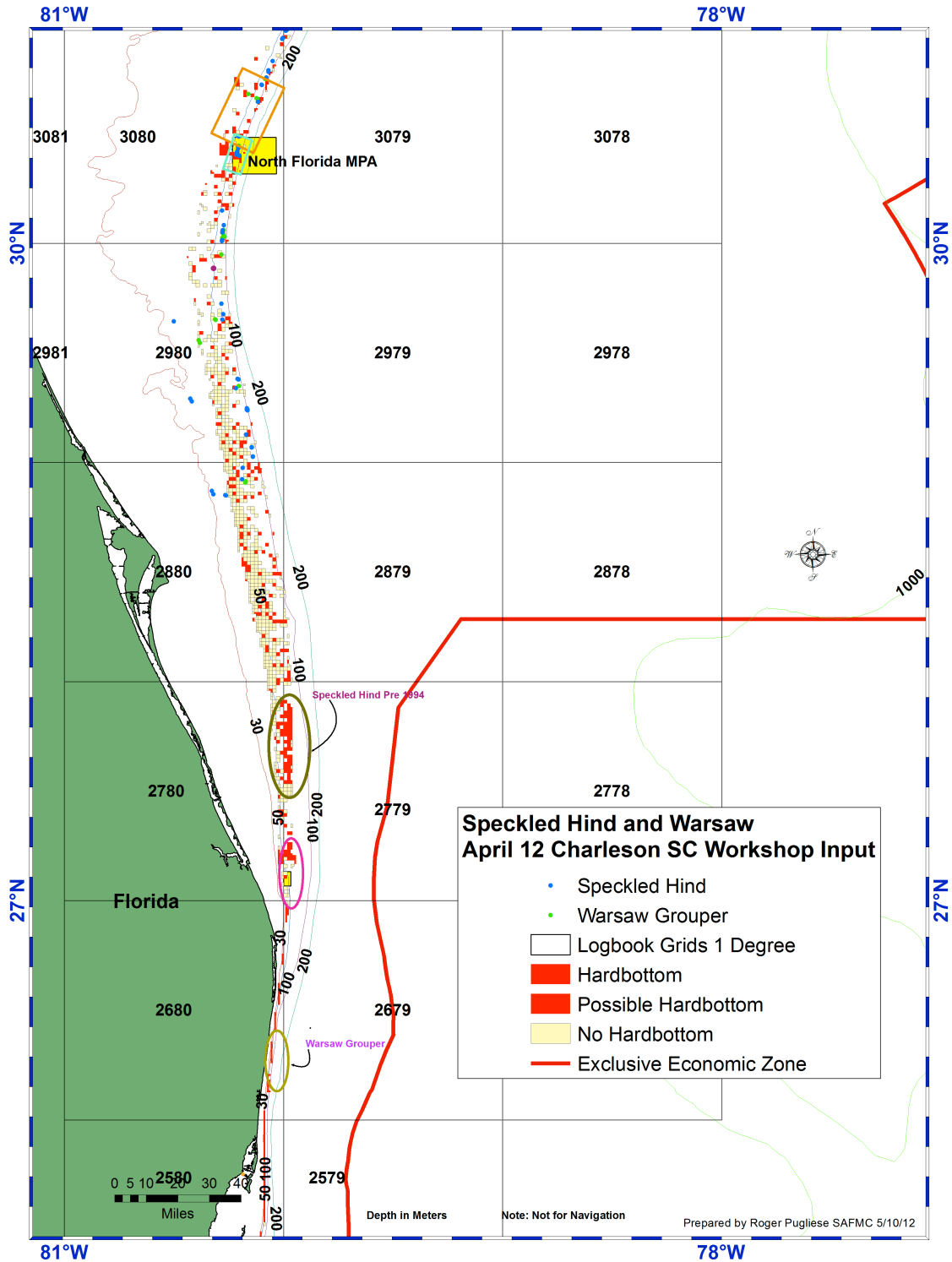
**Figure 1.** Observations of speckled hind and warsaw grouper off the Carolinas for the time period 1978-2010 from various sources (as indicated on map key). Boxes depicted in yellow are the existing deepwater MPAs.



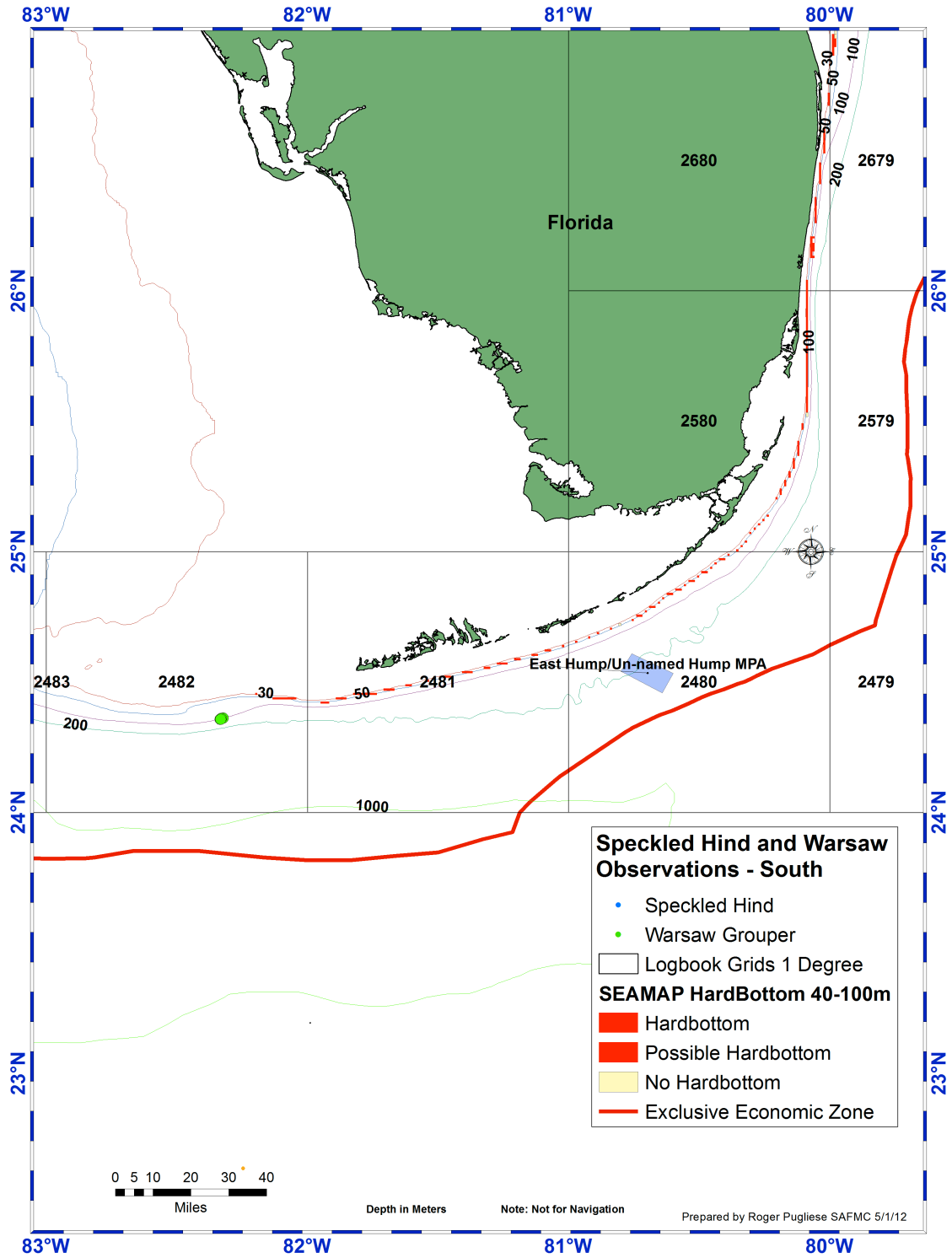
**Figure 2.** Possible areas to establish MPAs to protect speckled hind and warsaw grouper off North Carolina and South Carolina.



**Figure 3.** Observations of speckled hind and warsaw grouper off Georgia and Florida for the time period 1978-2010 from various sources (as indicated on map key). Boxes depicted in yellow are the existing deepwater MPAs.



**Figure 4.** Possible areas to establish MPAs to protect speckled hind and warsaw grouper off east central Florida. Boxes depicted in yellow are the existing deepwater MPAs.



**Figure 5.** South Florida area depicting the location of “Warsaw Hole” (green circle SW of Key West) as a proposed MPA. Blue box is an existing deepwater MPA.

**Table 1.** Percent occurrence of speckled hind within existing MPAs.

<b>Speckled Hind and Warsaw Occurrences*</b>	<b>Speckled Hind in MPA</b>	<b>% Occurrences of Speckled Hind in MPA</b>
Snowy MPA	2	0.3%
Charleston Deep Artificial Reef MPA	0	0.0%
Northern SC MPA	33	5.7%
Edisto MPA	44	7.6%
Georgia MPA	0	0.0%
North Florida MPA	6	1.0%
St Lucie MPA	0	0.0%
East Hump /Un-named Hump MPA	0	0.0%
<b>Total in MPAs</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>14.6%</b>
*(Total Occurrences: 581 Speckled Hind/ 38 Warsaw Grouper)		

Data Sources: MARMAP/SEAMAP (1978-2011); Reef Fish Observer Program (2006-2010); NOAA MPA Survey (2004-2010); and Fishermen

**Table 2.** Percent occurrence of speckled hind within proposed MPAs.

	<b>Speckled Hind Occurences in Alternative</b>	<b>Total Speckled Hind Occurences</b>	<b>% Speckled Hind Occurences in Alternative</b>	<b>Total Occurences of Speckled Hind in modified or new MPAs</b>	<b>Total % in modified or new MPAs</b>
Big Rock Alt	9	581	1.5%	94	16.2%
Reoriented N SC MPA	34	581	5.9%	119	20.5%
Reoriented and Expanded Edisto MPA	59	581	10.2%	144	24.8%
Reoriented Edisto MPA	92	581	15.8%	177	30.5%
South of GA MPA	13	581	2.2%	98	16.9%
Reoriented and Expanded GA MPA	5	581	0.9%	90	15.5%
Expanded GA MPA	7	581	1.2%	92	15.8%



## Appendix 1.

### **South Atlantic Fishery Management Council MPA Public Workshops 2012**

#### **Council Guidance – An Overview**

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) is considering the use of marine protected areas to help provide protection for speckled hind and warsaw grouper. At their March 2012 meeting, the Council directed staff to hold 2 of 5 planned Public MPA Workshops prior to June 2012. The remaining 3 workshops will be scheduled following the Council's June 11-15, 2012 meeting in Orlando, Florida. The MPA Public Workshops will be held in conjunction with the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel meeting in North Charleston, SC and during the MPA Expert Workgroup meeting in Pooler, GA.

1. **MPA Workshop #1** (General Public) – **April 18, 2012 6:00 PM**  
This workshop will be held in conjunction with a meeting of the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel. The AP meeting will end at 5:00 PM and the workshop will begin at 6:00 PM. Location: Hilton Garden Inn, 5262 International Boulevard, North Charleston, SC.
2. **MPA Expert Workgroup** (Expert Group of Scientists & Fishermen) – **May 16-17, 2012**  
The Expert Workgroup meeting will be held from 1:00 PM on Wednesday, May 16, 2012 through 1:00 PM on Thursday, May 17, 2012. Public input on data for the Expert Workgroup will be taken from 5:00 – 5:30 PM on Wednesday, May 16, 2012.  
Location: Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, 175 Bourne Avenue, Pooler, GA.
3. **MPA Workshop #2** (General Public) – **May 16, 2012 6:00 PM**  
The public workshop will begin following the Expert Workgroup meeting and public comment session. Location: Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum, 175 Bourne Avenue, Pooler, GA.

#### **MPA Public Workshops**

##### Background

The MPA Workshops will give the public an opportunity to provide data on locations of speckled hind and/or warsaw grouper and essential habitat for these two species. Council staff will outline the approach being taken by the Council and outline the data available on distribution of speckled hind/warsaw grouper and their habitat. Then individuals and/or small groups will look at charts and provide input on locations of speckled hind/warsaw and/or their important habitat; suggestions for potential MPA sites can also be provided to Council staff. This is not the time to debate whether or not MPAs are the correct approach. There will be ample opportunities for such comments at the Council meetings and during public hearings currently scheduled for August 6-16, 2012. The goal of these workshops is to give the public the opportunity to provide data on locations that are important to be protected to end overfishing of speckled hind/warsaw grouper.

##### Structure of MPA Workshops (General Public)

1. Opening Remarks – Myra Brouwer (SAFMC Staff): 10-15 minutes explaining process, approach chosen by Council, timing, etc. Questions will be answered after the opening remarks.
2. Overview of data & tool to evaluate MPA sites – Roger Pugliese (SAFMC Staff): 20 minutes outlining data currently in the system, how to provide new data, and how to use the tool to evaluate potential MPA sites.
3. SSC & AP Recommendations – Myra Brouwer
4. Break-out into groups at round tables and main table:

- a. Charts with known distribution of speckled hind/warsaw grouper and their important habitat.
  - b. Roger Pugliese will be available to demonstrate the evaluation process and highlight species and habitat distribution and drawing tools available from the Council's web site at [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net).
  - c. Individuals provide data with GIS coordinates:
    - i. Speckled hind or warsaw grouper catch locations
    - ii. Speckled hind or warsaw grouper spawning locations
    - iii. Speckled hind or warsaw grouper essential habitat
  - d. Individuals provide suggestions for modifications to existing or establishing new MPA sites to staff by drawing on charts or providing charts with locations.
5. **Written comments will be accepted until 12:00 Noon on May 21, 2012.** Comments may be mailed to: Myra Brouwer, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston, SC 29405 or emailed to: [MPAWorkshopComment@safmc.net](mailto:MPAWorkshopComment@safmc.net). All comments will be included in the Council's June meeting briefing book materials. These written comments can be an additional opportunity to provide data to the Council and/or an opportunity to voice your views concerning the use of MPAs to help protect speckled hind and warsaw grouper. If you are not in favor of expanding existing or creating new MPAs, please suggest an alternative approach for addressing bycatch mortality given that all harvest and/or possession is prohibited.