



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Ecosystem Management Coordination Summary Report Roger Pugliese, Senior Fishery Biologist

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Fishery Independent Monitoring Programs (SEAMAP/MARMAP)

Sampling, Data and GIS Management:

Acting as Chairman of the SA SEAMAP Committee, staff has encouraged the expansion and refinement of the program to support the long-term monitoring efforts essential to assessing the status of managed resources and habitat and facilitate the broader understanding of the South Atlantic Ecosystem. The 2009 Budget had an additional increase which is proposed to further expand the collaboration with the MARMAP program by enhancing offshore sampling specifically to address the need to expand monitoring of red snapper, enhanced inshore sampling of gag and other species in the snapper grouper complex and their essential habitat. In addition, SA SEAMAP Committee also supports as an ongoing SEAMAP project, the *Southeast Taxonomic Center (SERTC)* building on the previously established collection, curation and cataloguing protocols in collection, preservation, and identification of invertebrates and fishes into the collection database.

Habitat and Ecosystem Internet Map Server (IMS)

Staff continues to coordinate with Tina Udouj, Kathleen OKeife and Henry Norris with FWRI to guide the development, expansion and refinement of the IMS. Spatial information developed for the system support ongoing place-based management actions developed or under consideration by the Council for all managed fisheries and habitats. Recent additions to the systems include the following:

SECOORA Ocean Observing Asset Inventory

EcoResearch Module and 174 footprints created for entire South Atlantic populated with initial research references from State COMPASS program including those for offshore coral and bottom habitat.

Researcher Section linked to the IMS is under design with initial focus on fishery independent data/GIS, deepwater habitat, Essential Fish Habitat, ocean observing and monitoring

EcoSpecies Module is still under design but development is dependent on future funding.

Access to the Habitat and Ecosystem Internet Map Server follows:

<http://www.safmc.net/EcosystemManagement/EcosystemBoundaries/MappingandGISData/tabid/62/Default.aspx>

National Habitat Plan and Regional Partnership Coordination

National Assessments

National Assessments will provide a broad view of the status of the Nation's fish habitats. The work will support the partnerships and their refined view at regional level and in the Southeast, hopefully to the watershed level.

Southeast Aquatic Resource Partnership (SARP)

Implementation of the Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan

The plan developed by the SARP Habitat Committee is incorporated in the Fishery Ecosystem Plan to facilitate achieving habitat goals and provide a mechanism to address ecosystem health at the watershed level.

Additional Information is available at the following address: <http://www.sarpaquatic.org/>

Science and Data Committee

Staff co-chairs the newly formed Committee providing a bridge between marine and freshwater systems. Information from the Fishery Ecosystem Plan will be available in developing more detailed habitat and possibly species information at the watershed level. Collaboration and data sharing with the developing Atlantic Coast Partnership will further facilitate the regional or watershed assessments. Chairs have initiated coordination through the National Biological Information Infrastructure or NBII which is an Intranet Portal that provides access to biological content and services through a single web accessible interface. NBII partners, scientists, and staff can use the NBII Portal to collaborate on a wide range of questions related to the management, use, or conservation of this nation's biological resources.

South Atlantic Research Project (SARRP)

Staff serves on the SARRP Strategy Team coordinating the development of a *South Atlantic Regional Research Plan*. This plan is being structured to address four major Regional Priority Issues identified by the developing South Atlantic Alliance. The areas are: Healthy Ecosystems, Working Waterfronts, Clean Coastal and Ocean Waters and Disaster-Resilient Communities. The 2008 SAFMC priority research plan was provided to highlight regional fish and fishery research needs for integration under primarily the Healthy Ecosystems section of the broader research plan.

Additional information is available at the following address: <http://www.gcrc.uga.edu/sarrp.htm>

South Atlantic Governor's Alliance

Staff serves on the Executive Planning Committee and has cooperated in the development of supporting material for the South Atlantic Alliance. As of May 2009, the Governors of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida signed the voluntary partnership.

Integrated Ocean Observing Systems (IOOS)

IOOS Legislation and Directives to Partnerships

INTEGRATED COASTAL AND OCEAN OBSERVATION SYSTEM ACT OF 2009

On March 30, 2009, the legislation establishing IOOS became law. Section 12304(c)(4) includes requirements for establishment as a regional information coordinating entity. In order to insure that SECOORA can readily demonstrate compliance with these requirements, internal development as well as external guidance are proposed. This two step

process will enable SECOORA to determine its own path, while taking advantage of expertise from outside the region. The internal development will utilize the existing committee structure to meet the primary requirements of the legislation. These primary requirements include:

- Operating under a strategic operational plan (SOP)
- Meeting regional user needs
- Operating an observing system to meet those needs
- Identifying gaps in the observing system
- Providing information products for multiple users

Southeast Coastal and Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA)

In May, the Board of Directors and Membership Committee approved the Bylaws and 2009 Budget. Additional information is available at the following address: <http://secoora.org/>

NOAA Strategic Plan Workshop

Staff attended the first NOAA Strategic Plan facilitated workshop in Jacksonville Florida soliciting input on NOAA next generation strategic plan.

Coordination on Fisheries and Climate Change Proposal

Staff is coordinating with South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium in the development of a fisheries modeling and education proposal highlighting the possible implications of climate change habitat and fisheries.

Coordination on Establishment of New NOAA Research Consortium in South Atlantic

On September 30, 2008, the SAFMC provided a letter of support of a proposed NOAA Research Consortium to be housed at the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University in Fort Pierce, Florida in cooperation with the University of North Carolina Wilmington. On May 7, 2009, NOAA announced the award of a new cooperative institute to focus on ocean exploration, research, and technology development for the U.S. East Coast. The institute is a consortium to be led by and headquartered at the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University in Fort Pierce, Fla. The University of North Carolina Wilmington will be the co-managing partner and limited partners are SRI International, St. Petersburg, Fla., and the University of Miami. The institute will collaborate with NOAA scientists on long-term research topics, provide significant coordination of resources among all nongovernment partners, and promote the involvement of students and postdoctoral scientists in NOAA-funded research. Institutes also benefit from funding stability, allowing them to support and expand their research and educational missions. The new Consortium is hoped to support mapping and characterization of high priority near-shore, shelf and deep water habitats of the South Atlantic Region which are needed for future management actions as the Council moves towards ecosystem-based management of fishery resources and associated habitats. This information is critical to the Council to address both fishing and non-fishing impacts through place-based management actions including establishing Marine Protected Areas, creating Special Management Zones for snapper grouper, designating Essential Fish Habitat and Essential Fish Habitat Areas of Particular Concern, establishing restricted gear areas and allowable fishing areas. Additional information is available at the following address:

http://www.noanews.noaa.gov/stories2009/20090506_institute.html

Coordination on Offshore Alternative Energy Development

On April 29, 2009, the U.S. Department of the Interior issued the final regulatory framework on Renewable Energy and Alternate Uses of Existing Facilities on the Outer Continental Shelf. The Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service (MMS) will be holding a series of regional stakeholder workshops in June to allow stakeholders to learn about the newly published regulatory framework for renewable energy activities on the Outer Continental Shelf (OCS). Attendees will learn about the regulatory framework and the MMS leasing process. Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) staff will participate at some of the locations to discuss FERC's role in the issuance of licenses for wave or ocean current projects on the OCS. Time will be provided for discussion and questions and answers. Leases issued under the new regulatory framework will authorize activities related to renewable energy development, such as commercial development of offshore wind, wave, or ocean current or non-commercial activities related to assessing renewable energy potential in an area.

Meetings in the South Atlantic will be held in the following locations:

June 10: Ft. Lauderdale, FL, Location: TBD, Time: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

June 11: Savannah, GA, Location: TBD, Time: 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Additional information about the new regulatory framework for offshore renewable energy is available at www.mms.gov/offshore/renewableenergy. You will find a link to the final regulatory framework on this site.

National Offshore Wind Technology Workshop is schedule for June 29-30 in Arlington, Virginia