

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Snapper Grouper Amendment 16 Public Hearing

**Port Canaveral, Florida
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Summary Minutes

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My name is Adrian Martinez. I own a business in the port called Handler Custom Fishing Rods, tackle and offshore tackle and rods and reels. A couple of things that I wanted to touch on since he was just talking about it; completely eliminating the ability for our fishing fleet to do anything, which is really all they do at that time of year is bottom fish, so to completely eliminate the availability of them to be able to use our natural resources in any way, shape, or form, it's not gonna have a reduction; it's going to completely shut down their business. They're not going to be able to do anything and if they're shut down, I'm shut down. I own a store and I'm not here to complain and say, "Oh, it's gonna hurt my wallet." The real issue here is the data and they are screaming up and down about the data, the data, the data.

The data most people would agree is skewed, but a couple of things that I think a lot of people failed to touch on are in the last – I don't know how long it's been, 10 years has it been? You've had to buy two reef permits to get one, okay. The reef permit value has gone from I remember it was \$5,000.00 to I think they are \$12,000.00 a piece now. So you have to spend \$25,000.00 to be able to commercially fish. So if you gotta buy two permits to get one, that means that for every Russ out there and every Stan out there that's commercial fishing, there was a Bob, a Bill, a Fred, and a Mack that are not fishing anymore. So there, right there, you've got a reduction in pressure. That's inarguable. Reduction in pressure there.

Now, my boat – I have a 24 foot center console very average boat for most people that fish out of Port Canaveral. I burn anywhere from 50 to 75 gallons of fuel every time I go fishing. I went from spending \$225.00 to go fishing to spending \$450.00 to go fishing. I fish a lot less now because I can't afford it. The economy has not caught up with the swell in the fuel prices and all you have to do is go out here on a weekend, like the guy said, the trailers are not in the parking lot and if you go out on a weekday, which is when I fish. I'm a business owner, but I still like to go out on a weekday because I don't like to be around other boats, I will go and fish a 20 square mile area and not see a boat the entire day, the whole day. So that one thing – pressure is down. Now, these fish have already been managed somewhat. It wasn't in 1950 we decided you were only allowed two gag grouper per man. I don't know what the date of that implementation was, but that is not something that is within the last 10 or 12 years, okay? That reduction needed to be there because it was a complete onslaught. People were just going to town on the things.

Now, how long do you think that it takes for a fishery to recover? When are we gonna see the effects from it? One of the big things that I think has to do with – let me state that I believe that gag fishing is better in the last two or three years than it's been in the previous 10. Part of the reason why I believe that happened is because it's taken time for the effects of a 24 inch minimum size limit and a two fish per man limit to take effect, but also we've seen a reduction in commercial pressure because of the reduction in reef permits and we don't have any shrimpers! When I was 16 years old and I drove my boat through the port to go fishing, there was four shrimp and scallop boats deep down the entire seawall. Now, there's four boats in the whole port and those guys were catching the 12 inch red snapper. They were catching the 12 inch gag grouper. They were out on

hard live bottom living their juvenile life. They're gone. They were catching thousands of pounds of grunts a day, which are what grouper and snapper love to eat. So you've got all of these things that have been taken out of the equation, okay? And we've already seen an increase in fishing, like I think its inarguable that the fishing has been better in the last couple of years than it was before that and for them to say that we've got a threat, I just – I think it's completely asinine.

I've been bottom fishing in Florida for the last 15 years aggressively. I fish a lot. I've seen what the stocks have done over in the Gulf. I've seen the gag grouper fishing be just as good as it was 10 years ago over there. I don't understand why they consider it threatened over there, yet the longliners are still able to continue to work. They guys that – they are chewing up the resource to pay for things that like on a day trip, Stan will go out and if he catches a thousand pounds of grays, he uses so much fuel, so much ice to catch those fish and that money ends up in the pocket of the people that are utilizing the resource. That long liner goes out for 10 days at a time, the first thousand pounds he catches is for groceries, you know? You are using up the resource for nothing.

The longliners are making a lot of the decisions over there and I think that's a big problem over here, but over here I don't even understand where the data is coming from. All you have to do is look at all of those things that obviously they are gonna have a huge reduction in catch just by definition, let alone changing the rules and by eliminating commercial guys like Russ and Stan to operate and provide fish for the local community. All you're doing is adding to – I mean this is a bigger picture thing – but you're adding to the deficit. Now, we're gonna buy fish from Mexico. We're gonna buy fish from Central America, okay? Now we're gonna stress those economic zones, okay, which don't have the kind of regulation that we have here. So all you're basically doing is encouraging a push of the sword further into the economic problem that we have right now that is bad enough as it is.

So now he can't make any money on charters. I can't make any money on tackle. The restaurant now is buying fish from another economic zone, which is out of the U.S., which further puts us in a position where we're just importing everything, okay? You are doing it all based on data that's pretty much incorrect and if you talk to any of the divers and you talk to people that are fishing all of the time and truth be told, the average fisherman out of Port Canaveral is not going out and catching 10 grays every time he goes fishing. You take the average guy that bottom fishes out of the port and you poll them and ask them how many gag grouper they catch in the year. You're not talking about a lot of fish and it's not because they're not there. It's because they're hard fish to catch. It's not like a coby. It's not like they swim up to your boat and they say, "Hey, please catch me." You know a grouper; you have to have knowledge to catch them.

So to say that they're threatened, I just – I think its complete incorrect and I think that the trickle down effects of it are gonna be pretty exponential and something needs to – the data needs to be reevaluated certainly before any decision is made.

Mark Robson: - called you back this afternoon right away.

Andy Griffiths: I got the message, but it must have been a bad reception either you in the hotel or me where I was.

Mark Robson: Okay, well I was on the road actually, so that probably was me with the bad reception. I apologize.

Andy Griffiths: Cell phone to cell phone is twice the chance of a bad hookup.

Mark Robson: Yeah. Anyway, I apologize for the miscommunication.

Andy Griffiths: Oh, that's no problem. I appreciate you making the attempt to call me back. I'm real helter skelter here with my notes, but I have already sent you both as well as all the other members some e-mails. The e-mails are kind of constructed in the way that we always should have a 24 hour cooling off period before we hit send, but we didn't exercise the 24 hour rule. So I wanted to come up here and show you that I'm not some kind of radical. I'm a 16 year elected official in Monroe County. I'm usually the reasonable voice on our boards down there, but we do have a lot of interesting people down there, but as a comparison I look quite the norm.

I grew up in a fishing family. I'm a native Floridian. I did have a fleet of eight charter boats. We specialize in overnight, three-day, two-night trips to Dry Tortugas and even back in 1992 when The Keys were voting to say "no" to NOAA and prevent the sanctuary, I was working with Roy Crabtree to recognize a two-day possession limit on board our boats for snapper or grouper because we came into the Marcaises which was state waters. After being in the federal waters, we had too many fish on the boat and we were able to resolve that, but even then they were not willing, they the council at the time, was not willing to take Monroe County out as separate because of all the potential problems that would create having us have our own region. But Florida is very unique in a lot of ways, but with respect to fishing in the south, you don't see hardly any gags, less than 1% of the harvest.

You come up north and it's quite significant, so Florida is very, very different. When I first looked at this, I thought well I don't care about closing gag grouper, that's really not a problem for us, but then when I saw the language, it said all the groupers would be closed. It was pretty shocking because I've been going to meetings for years. I was a member of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Council for the first two years and then I was on the Tortugas 2000 Council for a year and a half and we created those

no-tag zones and we specifically targeted the concentrations of the spawning aggregate for black grouper and snapper and we think that's had a very positive impact throughout the upper Keys especially because of those no-tag zones down there.

So I've tried to work within the system for years and years. I'm a 30-year licensed captain and this is the first time I've ever given testimony to say that truly a closure would put me out of business. I mean I've made some good investments and financially I'll be okay, but the people that work for me will be devastated and the people that I know that have gone into my business will be devastated and I know the economic and social consequences stated in some of these reports is pretty cold. Whatever I could do to put a human face or tell you a story of an individual that I know personally that is gonna be hurt by this – its stressful enough as it is and the economy and the price of fuel.

My business this year up until August is down every month significantly with the exception of April, May, and June. Those three months are holding their own because those guys are still gonna go at least one time and they choose to go in those three months because the weather is more stable. But all the other months require out of town travel, those people didn't go. So on top of that with the fuel prices – so the business is down dramatically and at the same time, profit is down. So it's a double whammy. If you throw on a four month closure, which is 33% of the year, there's just no way to recover that. I recently invested \$1.4 million dollars in some waterfront property that is very colorful and it has some unique challenges of its own, but developers bought my property where I tie up my boats where the rent was reasonable and I had no choice if I wanted to continue in this business.

So I made that investment so I have a place to move the boats once the developer kicks me out of my home now, but I would have never made that investment if I thought that it was really possible to with one fell swoop put an industry out of business. I've never used those words lightly because I know you would dismiss me like a lot of other people get dismissed when they say the sky is falling. So I don't want to be Chicken Little, but this is the first time that I am dead serious. This is gonna put us out of business and I've never used those words in 30 years. So I started doing this very young.

I'm looking for any kind of idea, any kind of way to reach the 36%, 37%. I'm trying to try to take the science and with all of its

problems that I've heard about throughout the testimony and people acknowledge that there's problems with the science. When you have 700 interceptions representing 1.8 million recreational boaters, there's some – that's pretty insignificant sampling for that number. I think any pollster would tell you that's very insignificant to base a policy on and I create policies in government and I would never – see, I understand by being mandated to carry out an action because I serve on a school board and we're very micromanaged by the state of Florida, but no matter what, I have a vote on that school board. No matter what the state stays I've gotta do, me as an individual board member can vote my conscience and go home at night and sleep. That's all I want you to do.

I know you have a mandate. I know the language in the Magnuson Act was changed to be draconian if you don't carry it out. I'm just asking you to vote your conscience. You have the right to do that as a panel member. You have a right to your vote and I'm asking you to do that because maybe we'll get some attention, but I would be willing to risk what's coming if we don't reach the 37%. I'm willing to risk – I don't know about everybody else – I'm willing to risk that because of the economy and the profit and the effort being down dramatically that we can buy another year and see what happens. I know the data is two years old, so its early to make the judgment, but I know – I just know in my gut and I see that the effort is down dramatically to probably over half the normal effort due to the consequences of what's going on, so I would just like to give it another year and see what happens.

Just no matter how I manipulated these – I did all the math to figure out the individual months by percentage. I could not extract March by itself and April by itself because those two months are included in every alternative, so I couldn't figure the percentages, but combined they are 19%, so you figure that's about 9.5% each because the months are fairly equivalent, which I was surprised because the bad weather is in the winter and as the weather improved, you'd think that the percentage would go up, but it doesn't. It's pretty much from December right on through to April, the impact is the same, which makes me think fewer trips, they must have higher catches in the winter. When the weather finally is good to go out, you do much better per trip than when the weather improves. I guess that could explain that.

I'll be sending you more comment after this meeting tonight. I was kind of hoping ya'll would hang around until later. I drove

nine hours to see you if you want to have a drink later. I could probably come up with something else, but thanks.

Mark Robson:

Thank you very much for your comments. That's a long drive, I know.

Barrett Colby:

Okay, my name is Barrett Colby. I've got a commercial fishing boat in Port Canaveral, the Downeaster II. Listen, what I would like to say about all this is that it is critical that you take the captains, for all this to work, to take the captains and mate off these fish because they sell a lot of their fish. There are boats that – I know this is a fact, its not a rumor – they take their fish and they'll tell – when you step on that charter boat, they'll tell you right out front what I catch is mine. I fill my own bag limit. That's a fact, okay, and its known all over the place.

There are very few charter boats that don't have their commercial permit. They have a restricted species in the state of Florida, they're allowed to sell their grouper, snapper underneath that restricted species. The state of Florida has never addressed that. I have an unlimited grouper, snapper permit, but I can sell my recreational catch under my restricted species under my charter boat catch, which all these guys have, okay. It's up and down the whole coast of Florida. I think if you're gonna manage the fish, that's a real important way of managing fishing. I know a few charter boats that are saying that they are not gonna – that's what they are gonna do with their kingfish. They are no longer gonna sell their catch. The grouper, snapper guys that are selling them, I've never heard them say they are not gonna sell what they catch. It's not against them. As far as I know, the boats – when you get on a man's boat and it's his charter, he has the right to tell you that those fish are his fish and he will divvy them out however he feels and I know there's probably been some things happening in the past over all that. So that's the state of Florida.

So I believe it's real important that you take those, that goes through and they get taken off of there and the dockside, the thing over the phone situation is I believe that they need to be dockside addressed with somebody and they need to fill out their log books. There needs to be two things just like there are with us, the state of Florida, darfish. We do a trip ticket, then we do our log book so there's backup information to tell you what is what. You can go to the state of Florida and pull my trip ticket and I still have my logbook to back up what is the true statement. So in recreational if you have some kind of dockside checking and then you have your log book. You can't really – on the charter boats they are starting to do the log book. I don't know about – they got the phone calls he's saying. They call recreational people and ask them what did you catch today?

So I think there needs to be what the state of Florida surveys by dockside and then what they collect in phone call data that needs to

be worked out. I'm sure there's a percentage of fallout that they can say, "Well, this isn't right or something. The guys on the phone are exaggerating."

George Geiger: Actually, three methodologies. There's a dockside intercept where they intercept recreational anglers and there's a whole sheet of questions that they ask; what was your primary target? What was your secondary target? They look and measure the fish that were caught. They count the number of fish that were caught by species. They also ask where they came from, how many miles they traveled, did they stay in a local accommodation? So there's a whole list of questions that they ask on the dockside intercept. Then there's the telephone intercept survey where they are required to intercept every wave period, I think its 110,000 recreational fishing people. So now it's random dial. So they keep dialing. They'll often go through 1,000 people until they hit one that says they were fishing and when they find the one who says they were fishing, then they ask the questions, what did you catch? When did you go? Where did you fish from? What did you catch? That type of thing.

Then there's the third survey, which he was talking about which is the charter boat survey, which I participate in. They call me and ask me if I fished on – what days I fished during a specific period of time during the week and then they ask me how many people fished with me, where I left from, where I conducted my fishing operations, and that's basically it.

Barrett Colby: And what I think they're trying to say to you is where the flaw is is that the surveyor is not doing to the trailer boats, but he's – the trailer boats is the majority of the recreational fishing in this area probably. So they're not going to –

George Geiger: Well, there's a couple of real bad biases in the marine recreational fishing statistic survey. Number one, they don't intercept night time people who fish at night. Secondly, they don't access people who fish behind private homes or on private property. Those are two very large biases that are in the system. Plus they don't make really enough public intercepts to verify the data, which is why NOAA Fisheries is now spending \$10 million in an effort to develop and improve that MRFSS program and turn it into a whole new system.

Barrett Colby: Okay, so you're saying there's – I don't know of what you're talking about as far as what I see is what they see I think. They are getting interviewed at the dock by the state of Florida and maybe

the federal government on what they caught on the charter catch. On the ramp, I don't know how much interviewing is going on and that's what they're saying. If that's what you're addressed, you will get better data of course.

George Geiger: The same interviewers who check the charter boats check the ramp people and –

Barrett Colby: And what they're saying is they're interviewing those people there and they are not interviewing anybody else. That's what they're saying. I don't know if that's true or not. I've never been through an interview.

George Geiger: Everybody acknowledges there's not enough intercepts and we know that.

Barrett Colby: Alright.

George Geiger: And the people who do the intercepts are biological people from the FWC, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and that's contracted from the federal government to conduct those surveys, correct?

Barrett Colby: Alright, the main thing is that I believe that to help the fishery the captains need to be taken off. If they've got a grouper, snapper permit and they go out commercial fishing, that's fine. They bring back commercial catch. They're out charter boat fishing, they need to be – those fish need to be pulled aside, not being allowed to catch and –

George Geiger: That's in 15B and that's with the Secretary of Commerce.

Barrett Colby: And that's gonna be done in the grouper snapper? Okay.

Male: Recreational bag limit sales is also in that

Barrett Colby: Is the state of Florida addressing that? Are they doing it?

George Geiger: No, that's in Amendment 15B –

Barrett Colby: I know it's Amendment 15B, but is the state of Florida going along and saying that now they're not gonna hand out that restricted species permit?

Mark Robson: No they're not taking it up.

- Barrett Colby:* They're not taking it up, so they're gonna get to sell it under the state of Florida's restricted species process. In other words, if I have an RS, I'm gonna get to sell my grouper snapper? Are you not taking into account the fact that – I don't understand that really. Go ahead, you were gonna say something.
- Mark Robson:* Well, it's – I can talk to you offline. It's not part of this council process, but I'll talk to you about it.
- Barrett Colby:* I understand, yeah. Okay. Thank you.
- George Geiger:* Thank you.
- Mark Robson:* And I believe that concludes this public workshop.
- George Geiger:* Well done.
- Mark Robson:* Thank you.

Barrett Colby:

My name is Barrett Colby. I've been out of Port Canaveral for about 25 years now fishing. I've got a small commercial fishing boat. I'd like to say that I am very happy that we've gone to trip limits. I've seen it work with the kingfish and I think it will work great with the gag grouper and the grouper plan. I really don't know what to say about the guys that are – the closures. I'm hoping that you'll do a three month closure and not a four month closure. The recreational – I don't know what to say about that. Right now the fishing is down, but you gotta look at the fact that this economy is not gonna stay slow forever. Fishing is cyclical. It's good one year, it gets slower, then it gets slower, then it gets real good again. They say it's on a seven year cycle. It could be a five year cycle, but right now looks like we're on the right cycle.

You've got to address what you're addressing and there's been a good show of fish, but it's not gonna last forever and it's not gonna happen every year and the recreational fishing business is gonna come back strong again. Our economy is gonna turn around and fishing is gonna come back strong again and we've gotta have a plan in that addresses that. That's the way I feel that those boat ramps will be full again and if we don't have regulations and stuff that addresses the fish, it's gonna collapse. I think you're on the right path. I hate to say it, but you're working in the right direction. So I wish I knew more of what I could say about all this, but you took the porgies away from us and you gave those back to us. So it's a give and take.

I think when you – I think you pilled the LAPs off the table and if you pulled that off the table and given the commercial guys, which is me, a thousand pound trip limit, I think it'll work. I don't know – I've talked to several different people and we're thinking maybe May is the opening date that hopefully you'll do. I don't know what the Carolina guys want. Do they want January? When do they want this to be opened for the overall quota to be opened is what I'm saying. So I don't know what the panel said. I mean what's the theory behind that as far as the opening, the opening date for the overall quota? Two different options. I'm not sure what they are.

George Geiger:

Well, if there was a four month closure put in place, the opening would be the first of May.

Barrett Colby:

Okay.

George Geiger:

January, February, March, April. It would be a one May opening for everybody.

Barrett Colby: Okay, alright. Well, you know –

George Geiger: If we went to three month closure, which month would you want closed? Which of the four months would you want taken off the four month closure list?

Barrett Colby: Starting that February.

George Geiger: So closure January, February, March?

Barrett Colby: Yeah.

George Geiger: Or February, March, April? Which?

Barrett Colby: Yeah, February, March, April. I think that would be the better. I think you should leave that January open. I think that – I don't know how – these guys make a good point. I don't know how the charter boat industry is sorta gotta give them a fish. I don't know if you can give them six fish or what you're gonna do, but it seems like they are screaming that they are gonna be out of business with the head boats and all this other stuff. I don't know what you can do about that, but the true recreational fisherman, I don't – some of these guys that are up here speaking, I hate to say it, they've got good jobs and they're not – in my opinion, they're not recreational fisherman. They are putting their fish out there. So they just want to be able to go fishing so they can have that extra income. I hate to say that, but that's a fact. So you got a question?

Mark Robson: No, no.

Barrett Colby: Okay.

Mark Robson: Thank you very much.

Barrett Colby: Oh, I know what I'd like to say is –

Mark Robson: Go ahead.

Barrett Colby: What's really important is like in the king fishing quota we're able not to overrun our commercial quota. It's really important that in this grouper quota that we're not allowed to overrun this quota. It's gonna be reduced tremendously and I would not like to see it overrun. So maybe that thousand pound trip limit when the quota has gotten to 80% or something, you might have to reduce it again, so you don't overrun the quota because I think that with the way

the kingfish have come back, the way we've worked these kingfish – you know we started out with a thousand pound trip limit, 700 pound trip limit. We went to these 50 head. We're able to survive with this fishing with that particular fishery because of the way its been managed and I believe that if this grouper fishery is managed in these trip limits that we will survive and the fish will get better and maybe the quotas will get larger. I do believe that you will see that we're gonna have a closure, but the season is not gonna go all the way around. We're gonna have a closure because we're gonna meet that overall quota on that thousand pound trip limit.

You probably already agree with that. I think there's gonna be enough production because of right now there is large – there is good fish stocks. That doesn't mean next year those same fish stocks are gonna be here, especially if they get that recreational comes back and our economy comes back. Alright, I appreciate that you've gone this way with the trip limit. I think it's the best way to go for managing fisheries and that's all I have to say.

Mark Robson: Thank you Mr. Colby, I appreciate it.

George Geiger: Thank you for your comments, I appreciate it.

Barrett Colby: Okay.

Yeah, I'm Dave J. Huber from The Recreational Fishing Alliance, Florida chapter. I am not going to read this whole thing. There is no point. I'll just go through the basic overview of it. For those of you who don't know RFA – well, you guys probably do know. RFA is a non-profit grassroots political organization representing recreational fishing community and sport fishing industry since 1996. I'm here representing today our 50,000 national members, over 2,000 of which reside in the state of Florida.

Some important points regarding these regulations are that collectively in the area of the SFMC, recreational fishing produces over \$3.4 billion dollars annually of economic output and supports nearly 50,000 full time jobs. Noting that importance, I mean our take on the gag grouper is that I just went in and listened to Gregg Waugh. Apparently, some new data has been assessed as we had mentioned at the June meetings and there has been a change in the assessment if I understood it correctly from an overfished state to a non-overfished, although the overfishing situation is still deemed to be occurring. That being the case, the assessment has changed significantly over a short period of time and there is still an amount of uncertainty, a large amount of uncertainty in the assessment and based on that, for as far as the maximum sustainable yield and optimal yield alternatives for the gag we support Alternative 1.

Regarding the allocations for gag, the variation from year to year between the commercial and the recreational sectors has been pretty substantial, but the average has been near 50/50 so we are actually I guess in agreement with what you guys are saying Alternative 2, the 49-51% being close to that is the historic allocation is what we would agree to.

In terms of management allocations, again considering the variability of the data and the admitted – the best available science being somewhat lacking. I'm using kind words in some cases. The current regulations are what we support. We don't – until we get a revised determination or a more accurate determination of the fishery, we feel it is inappropriate to move forward with Alternatives 2A, 2B, 6, 7A, or 7B at this time. Those are all the bag limit reductions and seasonal closures. Particularly in the area I'm from in southeast Florida, this closed season is exactly the only time of the year when we can access this fishery, so it's 100% closure for some of us down there.

Regarding the vermillion snapper, basically repeating what we said in the June meetings. Again, I won't go into vivid detail here, but again gaps in the data regarding the vermillion snapper of supporting Alternative 1, which is again no action and we're concerned regarding the impact of Alternatives 4A through 4D in terms of increased bycatch mortality with a size limit change.

Regarding the use of venting tools and dehooking devices, we believe it should be a voluntary thing. The SFMC should increase its outreach and education in this and encourage anglers to do it, but we don't feel it's appropriate to use it as a mandatory regulation at this time. Thank you for your time.

David Ingram:

Good evening. My name is David Ingram. I'm 35 years old and I'm a Florida native. My dad is – his family moved down to Florida in the 50's. So I've been in Florida a long time. I plan on living here the rest of my life. We have a heritage of fishing in my family. My dad was a fisherman. His dad was a fisherman. I love to fish and my wife and I have a 12 week old baby girl and I hope someday I will be able to pass this heritage along to her as well. I just want to say that I do appreciate your efforts in trying to regulate and I think that's an important part of any livestock or any species, so I appreciate your efforts in that regard.

I went to the University of Central Florida and I got my Bachelor's Degree and Master's Degree in environmental engineering. I worked in sponsored research, so I am very familiar with data and the importance of data and I do have concerns about the data that was collected. I wish I had the time in my life to pour over the data and how it was collected and I have to say a shallow understanding of that right now. I wish I had a deeper understanding of how all the data was collected, but I do have a good understanding of it. I also want to mention that I'm a forensic engineer right now. That's what I do for a living, so I work on deriving opinions from collecting evidence and the one thing that we rely on ultimately is common sense.

What I keep hearing over and over again from particularly people that have been fishing in Florida all their life is the state of the stocks right now. What I keep hearing – and I understand there is a lot of emotion involved in this. A lot of people are very emotional about it and understandably because their livelihoods are on the line. I mean they are gonna lose their jobs and it's gonna cause – you know it's gonna probably cause divorces and it's going to be an economic as well as an emotional and social hardship on many people in the state.

I'm not trying to beat you guys up about that; I know you understand all that, but I'm just reiterating it. Ultimately, what the common sense is telling me again without having poured over all this data is that the catches are better in the last years and what I'm saying is it's going against – you've collected this data, but everything that I've seen and many other people have seen goes against this and I'm hearing also that you have to do something. It's the law. You have to do something. Well, you know if I had cancer, I would want the doctor to do something, I agree, but I wouldn't want him to just start cutting off parts of my body until he knew what he needed to do. So what I support is right now,

well actually I'm not even gonna say ban the shrimpers or ban these guys because I don't want to take a side right now.

I think the data needs to be evaluated. I think we need good data to make good decisions, so right now I propose that no action is taken and that other types of data are looked at and are incorporated that you start to include like this gentleman mentioned, the recreational sector. How come we weren't asked? Things like that. So at this point, I support no action at this time. Thank you.

Mark Robson: Thank you very much Mr. Ingram. You have a question?

George Geiger: Have you been to the website and reviewed the SEDAR process, the stock assessment process that we used?

David Ingram: I have not.

George Geiger: Which means you haven't even looked –

David Ingram: As I mentioned, I wish I had time in my life. I mean I'm currently building a new home for my family. I wish I had time to do these types of things, but again, that's why I'm saying we need to employ the common sense factor. I mean everything that I'm seeing is that the stocks are healthier, they are going better, and then yet all of the sudden we're – and listen, I know how regulations work in Florida. I've lived here my whole life. Once we lose something it seems like we never get it back. I mean it's gone. I mean four months – its just disturbing that the decisions are being made and it just seems like the data has issue with it and I just wish everyone would just take a step back instead of just saying, "We have to do something!" You understand?

Mark Robson: I understand, thank you.

David Ingram: Alright, thank you.

Mark Robson: Thank you.

Gale Nelson. I live on Merritt Island. I'm a recreational fisherman. My frustration is in the room I was just in, being led by George, was his information first of all, is from 2005 and it needs to be in a format that's easily understandable. He knows his stuff. That's obvious he knows his stuff and the way he spews it out, I don't know who could catch on. I find that a little bit offensive. It should be easier to understand. It's not in a format, I think, that is user friendly unless you are totally immersed in this 24/7. You're out here collecting this stuff from the public. It should be public easy and it's not. That's all I have to say.

Gregory DeBrango, how you guys doing? I really wasn't planning on speaking, but I did see some things in there when I was sitting in there with Greg. Some of the tables, the information in the tables for Amendment 16, I noticed that they included longline data into that and that kind of bothered me. Longlining snapper and grouper is illegal and I don't know why they would even consider putting that into that data assessment. We're all gonna sit here and everybody the same thing is data collection, of course, is our biggest problem. Well, for years I mean we sat down; we reviewed the SEDAR assessments in 2003 on the vermillion snapper, the snowies, the tilefish. We come up – as an AP member, we're handed these things and it almost seems like this is what the frustration was at the meeting. We're trying to come up with a decision that's not gonna hurt each person as an individual.

We felt that we're forced into trying to make some kind of a decision that's going to be put into a plan, which really doesn't seem like it ever does and the thousand pound trip limit, putting that in there, to me, was kind of blowing smoke because if you look at all the trips, there's really not a whole bunch of them that reach that thousand pounds and it's really not gonna add any kind of percentage to the 37% that we're supposed to take.

As far as all these goes, I mean I can see in the recreational sector if we drop the bag limit down to one gag per person, well as a recreational fisherman, one gag for that person going home if it's a 30 pound gag, you're looking at 50% yield. You're looking at about 15 pounds, 20 pounds, whatever of filets. That's a lot if you're not going and selling them. So I mean I could see where if everybody on the boat was allowed one that should be okay. Commercially, these guys – I mean four months of closures, like I said, they come in here – I mean I'm all for closing everything when they are breeding. I think that the two month closure on the commercial I think we're seeing as a direct result from that being done so many years, the fishing pressure being off them commercially has actually helped our stocks along with maybe the Oculina, the breeding in the Oculina.

If you go down to the Keys and you visit all these sanctuaries, that is – and I will reiterate, I've said this many times – that is the only success story that I've seen. Fishing pressure right now is down. I will reiterate what these guys said as far as the boat ramps. In New Smyrna Beach I've been to two different boat ramps for mini season, boat ramps that were – if you got there late at 8:00 you were not putting your boat in because there was no place to park. I got there the first morning at 6:00 for mini season for my charter, which my charters are down immensely this year because of fuel costs, \$700.00 for two days in fuel costs, which eats up a bunch. There was two boats at the New Smyrna Beach boat ramp and New Smyrna Beach now is wanting to come in and charge people to put boats in too, so that's another little shot, you know?

So I mean two days I get back to the dock, I get back to the boat ramp late in the day, maybe seven trucks and trailers. I still don't believe it. I'm looking at it and I don't believe it because I know these boat ramps, it's full through two lots. It just doesn't make any sense.

Like I said, now these plans, the only thing I seen that works is MPA's. That's the sanctuaries if we grow our own fish. We come in here and this gag plan is very Florida unfriendly. It's gonna – if you looked at the numbers on there like Greg was saying is 922,000. I mean the big numbers are gonna hit Florida and all us charter fisherman, it's gonna kill us, you know? If we want to take somebody out to catch something, what are we gonna fish for? If you put a big hook down there, well, if you're trying to catch a snapper if its still open and you bycatch a gag while they are closed, well that MFMT and we're gonna take that away from the gags and who knows, after a couple of years we'll be in the same boat as the shark fisherman and not see any kind of fishing.

Let's revisit the MPA's. Let's go in there. Let's stop I mean because the plans they just for some reason don't ever seem to work. Let's go in there. Let's grow our own fish. Let's take it. Let's produce these reefs. Let's monitor them. We can study them. We can learn what's going on. We can collect good data from these reefs and we can have multiple ones all the way from the keys all the way up to North Carolina and grow our own fish, no fishing zones, zero fishing pressure, 100% zero fishing pressure with breeding in these grounds for vermilion, for everything that we want to fish for, just like as in the deep water and let's build our future stocks that way. Thank you.

Jeff Coutant:

My name is Jeff Coutant. I'm a resident of Longwood, Florida, recreational angler. I just wanted to speak today a little bit. After being at the June meeting and this meeting, I noticed some differences in ideas of how to manage the resource. We went from overfished to overfishing, which somebody was just talking about. For me and for my two young boys that are growing up, I support the first Amendment, which is really no action. Anything beyond that is a difficult situation. You have young kids and you want to take them out fishing. There is really only three months in the year that we actually can – I don't take them out to the deep water. They can't fish that deep and that obviously will change as they get older, but the science that we're talking about doesn't really – I don't feel lends itself to an absolute closure and I hate to see that take place for my kids sake. I can take them fishing during those months and to have a complete closure would just devastate them because the next three months after that thermoclines move in. There is no grouper fishing at all.

The other thing; we talk a lot about the gag and so forth and at the same time we're gonna close all grouper so you can't even get deep water grouper, which eliminates bottom fishing altogether and I just feel like that's really gonna put a lot of pressure on the recreational anglers as a whole. In talking and listening to the meeting, economic impact of the closure does not even enter into any of the equations from what I understand other than from charter boats and stuff like that. I think that a closed season is gonna have a much greater economic impact than what we're really taking into consideration as far as bait shops and everything along that nature.

In Florida and this coast, it's just – it would be absolutely devastating and I would hate to see that happen. I mean we're already suffering. At the same time, for selfish reasons, I'd much rather have the fishing opportunities out there and not have to worry about closures. We've all become accustomed to sizing, bag limits, and so forth. We're not out there to rape and pillage; we're just out there to catch fish and in essence, by closing all the grouper, it basically eliminates bottom fishing for us for six months out of the year. Then the hurricane seasons come. I mean there may only be four or five opportunities as recreational angler, which I only get to fish on the weekends and statistically speaking you might get 14, 15 trips in an entire year, I would hate to see that come to that we're actually going to close the season based on the data. Like I said, I don't see the credibility. I just can't believe that the recreational sector is taking as much of the resources, what's indicated.

At the same time, we talk about percentages and I ask the questions, “How is the percentage we need to reduce the total tonnage by and get the whole scientific rationale behind it and I guess 36% reduction is okay. We need 37%, but 36% is okay. By changing the – by having the closure, it takes us to 31% and then we’re gonna go ahead and tack on an extra 5% by changing the bag limits. I mean at what point is it just acceptable given the life of the way the economic trend has been lately, that if we’re gonna take measures and I don’t feel on the recreational side closure in this area is gonna have as much of an impact as economic impact.

Again, I only fish – and I’m pretty sure I’m about an average guy – maybe 13 or 14 times a year, but the numbers seem to equate to way, way more catching going on that what I’ve ever seen being on the water and around the water all the time; being a member of a fishing club. I don’t see where the recreational limits are anywhere near the tonnages that we’re talking about up there on the board. I don’t know how that science came up with that. I mean there’s always an explanation, but at the same time it just doesn’t make logical sense to me and I think it’s too drastic. So I’m gonna say that at this point until we really figure out what the true catching is and what really the situation is offshore that we just leave it alone. Maybe I would support possibly a reduction in the bag limit, but don’t close the season. I mean that just basically eliminates the fishing possibilities altogether.

Kind of what Terry was saying, at some point – in a business world you can’t make bad decisions when you’ve got something that you’re looking at and you know that you can’t do this because it’s not the right information and we’re talking about the economic impact of an entire state, coastal communities. I mean there’s not another state that has the perimeters that we’ve got and I think that the overall economic effect of implementing any of the other ones other than option one at this point is gonna be drastic and its gonna be a situation where yeah everybody can say, “Well, we acted on the information that was there, even though we knew the numbers weren’t quite right, but that you guys told us we had to do it.” I think we’re obviously doing our part on the front end, but I don’t think there’s gonna be time for us to do anything to get the situation remedied in a timely fashion that you guys have to act on.

So I think that taking no action for the time being or maybe possibly reducing the bag limit by some fish on the grouper, it would be better and let the economic times that we’re in for the next 12 months for sure – let it reduce the pressure. It’s obvious

that it is and I think that once somebody takes the time to look at the data – we talk and we talk in all these meetings. I spoke in the June meeting a little more in detail, but when you get the actual numbers of what's going on, there's a huge decrease in the pressure out there. I would say that 40-50% minimum on the recreational side. Commercial side I can't speak for. I think banning longlines is gonna be a huge step with a 40% mortality is what I understand over there. That's huge.

Mark Robson: Can I ask you a question?

Jeff Coutant: Sure.

Mark Robson: Your estimate of what you think the pressure effort is down; is that based on what you observe with – do you have members of a club that you participate with? Where do you – how did you come by that number?

Jeff Coutant: I'm a member of South Florida Offshore Anglers okay that's to start with. Over the last several months, I've made three or four trips over here and I can tell you that this time of the year, a Saturday morning, you're gonna go fishing. If you're not here by – if you're not in the water by 6:00, you can't find a parking spot. I can honestly tell you that I have never seen the parking lot as empty as it has been for the last several months. I mean it's had a huge impact. I know I don't take the family trips that I would normally because of the cost. Now I'm typically fishing with four other guys so that we can afford to go. I mean for me to take it on as the entire – take the whole family and go fishing, it's \$450.00 to go fishing for a day that I pay rather than \$125.00 divided amongst the guys. It's gotten to be expensive and I think 50% is probably pretty close number.

Again, a few phone calls to local bait shops. I mean it's information that is so readily available that we tell you guys and I keep – they say, "Well you just need to tell us. You need to tell us. You need to tell us." We're not the one making the decision here. We're basing it on the information that was given to you. How come somebody else other than the public isn't saying, "Hey guys, fishing pressure is way down," and this is really drastic approaches. I mean, let's just close the season because we think gag grouper population is down, but while we're doing it, we'll just close all grouper fishing for several months and I just – its gonna have a – its gonna hurt my family's ability to go fishing because we don't like to troll so much and those are the months

that actually the bottom fishing is good. That's what my boys quite enjoy.

Mark Robson: Thank you very much.

Jeff Coutant: Thank you.

I'm Jeff Page. I'm a resident of Orlando. I've fished somewhere, I don't know, for the last six years. I've fished between 50 and 100 days a year probably averaging about 75. Simply put, I can't afford to do that anymore. If I get 40 days on the water this year, that's gonna be a lot and that includes some inshore trips. So anyway, the economy has obviously slowed down my ability to fish, but more than that, it's about I don't remember the last time I went out and limited out on grouper. I don't think very many people that go out recreationally do. I mean occasionally you have that awesome day, but if I catch two or three fish on a day and another guy on the boat catches one; if we come home with four or five grouper, that's a pretty good day with four guys on the boat.

So the limits, to me, I'd rather see limit reduction rather than total closure because I'm not willing to spend \$400.00 or \$600.00 depending on the size of the boat to go out and catch no fish. It's not gonna happen and when you look at your data and I just sat through and asked a lot of questions next door and you only – your economic impact numbers only consider the fishing industry. They don't consider any other support industries. They don't consider the money that we spend at the gas station, the money that we spend on ice. They don't consider the cost increase of having to import fish instead of buy fish locally for restaurants. They don't consider economic impact beyond the dock, which is totally flawed, especially in the state of Florida where we are surrounded by water and we're taking away the fish from the local just like the gentleman before me will be importing them and saying that money is going – not only not coming into our economy; it's going probably out of country at that point.

It will put not only the commercial fisherman out of business; it will stop the recreational fishery. It will hurt the local economy in ways that you haven't even considered based on the data that I've heard and the questions that I asked a few minutes ago. Pressure is down. I was out two weeks ago on a Friday morning with two foot wave forecasts. There were six trailers in Port Canaveral at 6:00 in the morning. A year ago at 6:00 in the morning, that lot would have been full and full when I say full, that's 50 to 80 trailers. I don't know if you've been over and looked at this lot at Port Canaveral, but there were six trailers; six boats in the water at 6:00 in the morning on a Friday morning with two foot seas. The pressure is down. You guys need to do the research. It's like you're driving a bus 90 miles an hour down a highway and you're looking in the rearview mirror. The data is not relevant in today's world. It's changed too much with prices from what it was two years ago, three years ago with the data you're looking at, not only is your data flawed, it's no longer relevant. The world's changed. It's changed drastically in the last couple of years and you guys have to consider that.

I would rather see short-term bag limit reductions and reassess the data or get data that's current in today's economy because your data – the economy is way different and nobody here can argue that it's not today than it was when your data was collected. The pressures are different both commercially and recreationally and then on top of that we've got – the gentleman before me said there's no shrimp boats compared to what there used to. They're still fishing illegally and all it takes is a 12 pack of beer and a radio call and you can go find out what their bycatch is. Their bycatch is exactly what we're talking about, snapper and grouper and bottom fish. We need to control that. I was

out last Sunday and there was a boat, as shrimp boat, fishing inside of the 8A reef, which is in 65 feet of water.

We have to have more control over what the shrimpers and commercial industry is doing here in our port because the shrimpers especially are killing – their bycatches is atrocious and they're fishing illegally on top of it. We need to look at moving not only monitoring and regulating them closer, but we also need to look at moving them out further where they're doing less damage to the juvenile fishery.

There was some suggestions, but I mean have we thought about doing an every other day closure or a two day out of the week closure rather than a total closure to at least allow people to get out and fish on a given day? It may be a way to achieve some numbers that we're looking for, but instead of shutting down the charter business altogether, it may give them the option to fish three or four days a week instead of none. I would support charging at the ramp so that you can have a way to monitor how many people are actually using them and at least have a way to track what's going on at the ramps because right now you have no way to do that. You have no data from the past. You have no present data. If you were charging at the ramps at least you could take that money and reinvest it in actual research that's current and you could have a way to track what's going on at the ramps and know how many boats are going in the water and you could see the trends. I guess that's really all I have to say and thank you guys for listening.

Jess Dick: Good afternoon. My name is Jess Dick and I am vice president of ARCD Hooker, otherwise known as ARC. I want to thank the council for allowing us the opportunity to make public comments on Amendment 16.

Under reduced bycatch of snapper, grouper species, dehooking devices and venting tools: ARC supports the Snapper Grouper Committee's Motion 9 approved Alternative 3 require the use of dehooking and venting tools. We support the Snapper Grouper Committee Motion 10 approved to make Alternative 3 the preferred alternative applied to the commercial and recreational fishers. ARC recommends proposed Alternative 3 preferred reduced recreational and commercial bycatch mortality by requiring the following for a personal and _____ vessel to fish for snapper grouper species in the South Atlantic EEZ.

The use of venting and dehooking tools by both commercial and recreational snapper grouper fisheries ARC is convinced that the safe hook removal and gear removal and venting techniques will significantly decrease post release hooking mortality of snapper grouper species by up to as much as 95% subspecies. As fishery participants become more proficient in the safe use of the technologies through education and outreach workshops as well as at sea practice on multiple species, live releases.

George Geiger: Mr. Dick, I'm sorry to interrupt, but if you have written testimony and you want to submit that. You don't need to read the entire testimony. The council members will get it both in written form and they'll get it on videotape if that's acceptable. Thank you for your patients. You're basically supporting the alternative that would require the use of circle hooks, venting tool, and dehooking device. And also importantly I took from your comment that you guys also supported the interim rule on red snapper.

Jess Dick: Right.

Jim Gillespie: Hi, my name is Jim Gillespie. No relation to Steve Gillespie, although he is a friend of mine. My background is technical in nature. I have degrees in physics, aerospace engineering, but the bulk of my career is working in the engineering community. Although it is not in fisheries management, I have done an awful lot of analysis and as Steve stated earlier, the data integrity is everything when it comes to making decisions. Prefacing decisions based on the work scientific.

Mark Robson: Excuse me, Mr. Gillespie. Could you guys – I can't – we can't hear the public speaker. If you want to talk outside that will be fine, but I want to – don't want to interrupt his time.

Jim Gillespie: Prefacing a study with the word scientific does not necessarily mean that it's accurate or that it has integrity. I think data integrity really is an issue here. I have heard the term "best available data" thrown around throughout many fisheries management studies and I do not believe that in this particular case that we are looking at the best available data to come to this decision. Specifically, some of the topic that's been discussed a lot today is the level of effort. Effort is down significantly. I could share similar stories that have been told today about experiences going out during mini-season, which traditionally has been very difficult to get out and very difficult to find a spot to dive. That was not the case this year.

I have spent – this past week I spoke to three of the larger dive shops in the area, which typically spend – keep their doors open the entire night between Wednesday and Thursday to fill tanks. Two of those three dive shops ended up closing their doors at 8:00 in the evening because they were not seeing the divers coming in to get the food. The demand is just not there. The effort is just not there.

I currently work in a healthcare industry. Tony had mentioned that it is impacting the blue collar workers. I know quite a few physicians and surgeons in this community that have large boats that like to sport fish and dive. They are not going out. They are complaining about the price of fuel. They cannot find people that are willing to come on their boats and help them fill up their gas tanks on their boats to go out. So it is not impacting just a small sector, but it is impacting a large sector. I'm concerned about this. I want to challenge this whole concept of best available data. At some point, you have to make a decision and I believe that one of the decisions should be that we just don't know enough to move forward and close the fishery. We are making a decision – any of the proposed alternatives are not founded in solid legitimate

science. Looking at the deviations on the data, the non-linearity of the data, the invalid assumptions about how things are done, the open-ended ambiguous conclusions, even in the train charts and the gag catches between commercial showing that the recreational catch, the trend line is that it's going up, that the commercial gag catch is going down, but there's nobody that is asking why.

The responses that they get when that particular data set is looked at, does not stand up to any legitimate scientific analysis. There is nothing behind it. There is not enough effort and energy put into that, the simple chart is thrown up. The trends are shown. It's open-ended. The decisions are being made. I'm frustrated. I've been very active in this community, in the dive community. I started a spearfishing club about 10 years ago. At our peak, we had 40 members in our club. No one in our club has ever been approached for MRFSS data in its history.

I know a lot of recreational fisherman. This is a very hot topic. No one in this area has been approached for MRFSS data. So diving off the shore here in east central Florida, seeing what the fishery is like, not seeing any depletion whatsoever from our personal experience, its incredibly frustrating to have data that is fragmented, highly non-linear without valid, legitimate analysis behind it that statistically will sound up to conclusions that can justify the alternatives that are being presented today.

I do believe that the council has a responsibility to have some semblance of integrity in the data that they are going to make their decisions on. Best available data to me does not mean that we have data and we are just gonna use whatever we get. The council has got scientific members on its panel. They understand the flaws with the data, specifically the MRFSS data that so much of the recreational decisions are being based upon, but it appears that they are looking the other way, that it's a foregone conclusion, that we have to implement something regardless of what the data says, so we're gonna chose one of these alternatives.

I plead with the council to consider Alternative #5, which is acknowledge the fact that the best available data today is effort is down. You do not have to have an extensive study of that. If we do, it's very easy to get the effort level data, use that data in coming to a conclusion about extrapolating towards a future and how it will impact the fishery. Thank you for your time. I do not envy your positions that you have to sit in and listen to us today, but I recognize that.

Mark Robson: Appreciate your comments.

John Adair:

Welcome to the hot seat, right? Well I promise you I won't badger you or bully you. I've just got a few points to make. My name is Captain John Adair. I have recently returned to the industry full time as a charter boat. I have my own six pack of charter boats going off as well as I run headboats four days and three nights a week. I just want to make a few points just to give you a little background. I'm a Florida resident for 56 years. I've been fishing at least 50 of those 56 years. I've been commercial fishing at least 40 of those 56 years either commercially catching fish and selling them. Until 1992, I had a restricted species endorsement and I am on my third issue of my 100 ton master's license. I'm a member of a National Association of Charter Boat Operators. I'm also currently on a committee called Project Fish Smart. I'm not sure if you've heard of it, but we're currently working on Atlantic group king mackerel where all the stakeholders come together in hopes that we can come with reasonable ideas for fisheries management and that's what we've been tasked to do under the Moore Foundation and I feel blessed to be a part of that because maybe a little bit of what I do can make a difference.

Right now, nobody needs to say and I don't think we need to rehash this bit about the economy and everything. It's hurting everybody and it's not just fisherman. It's not charter boats. It's not headboats; it's everybody, recreational fisherman because I fit into all three of those categories. I no longer sell fish for a living because I don't find it economically viable to try and buy my way back into the industry. What does concern me is the concept like what was done over on the Gulf Coast like the seasonal closure on snapper grouper fishery. That could be probably close to the final nail in the coffin for the charter boat headboat industry here in Port Canaveral.

I run the Miss Cape. I also run the new half day boat, The Explorer out of Port Canaveral. Because of fishing pressure and fuel costs, we don't get the opportunity to range very far and very wide in our fishing activities, so we hit the same rock piles day in and day out. I can assure you that there aren't many gag grouper left in those few rock piles and I think the economy itself is regulating at least the charter boat industry and the headboat industry because of the expense involved.

What I would propose though – I've got a few proposals and I threw these out on the table at Project Fish Smart as well. From a headboat or charter boat, we can't close business for six months a year. We can't close down from January to the end of May. The bills keep coming. The boats can't sit idle and in this area, there's

not much left to fish for unless you decide to push us off to come other species, which in turn will be in trouble. What I propose is in lieu of a seasonal closure is close the fishery one or two days a week; you can achieve the same percentages, okay. We've overcome all the objections to those percentages and what I'm proposing is close one or two days a week to get a percentage reduction in unit effort.

Also, reduce the bag limits or increase the size limits or even go to a slot limit. I have no problem with that, but give me something to catch, okay? Don't narrow my opportunities to please my customers, okay? We recently increased the size limit on sea bass, okay? Catching a 12 inch sea bass is pretty tough nowadays, at least where we are able to fish, but at least we can take those people out there and catch them and release them safely. I have no problem with dehookers. No problem with venting tools. We vent our fish every time we get an opportunity; we vent the fish we release on the headboats. I teach that to my mates, okay? The problem is that on the Gulf Coast where you've got a seasonal closure, you can't just close up shop. When you close up shop, you're out of business, okay?

In Project Fish Smart we've identified this. Right now we're working on Atlantic Group king mackerel. The SKA is a stakeholder. The bait and tackle shops, they're all on our panel. The recreational fishermen are all on our panel. The people that sell ice, sell gas, sell bait. Wal-Mart has even got a stake in this because if you don't sell sinkers, if you don't sell lead for bottom fishing, you know? The ripple effect. What I would propose also is a reduction in the commercial quota, okay? We continually, the SAFMC, continually protects the commercial quota even in view or in light of the fact that a great deal of the fish we consume in the United States is imported fish anyway, okay? Then we pay people to get out of the business and then they turn right around and buy back into the business and we pay them to get out of the business again. I mean the only snapper – the only viable snapper, grouper fishery we've got anymore on the commercial sector are the longliners, the ones that are high production, high bycatch. I mean we need to get smarter as a management process on how we manage these resources and realize how much more the recreational fishery means to the actual economy, the health of the economy of the United States.

Let me just check my notes, and like I said, I'm not gonna badger you. I think you guys – I wouldn't want to be in your position. I've thought about applying for one of the posts on the council, the

jury is still out on that. The last and only thing I will really complain about is – and it's been enacted on the Gulf Coast. It's proposed in Amendment 16 is why in the heck don't you want me to be able to eat fish anymore? Why are you taking away my bag limit as a captain or a mate and putting me in a position of having to tell my wife no, we gotta eat kingfish today because they won't let me keep a snapper or a grouper. I mean that makes no sense whatsoever. I mean if you have to take it away from the captains and the mates, do it by reducing the bag limit and at least give us the option of allowing our clients to keep that bag limit, but I too like fish. Thanks for your time.

Mark Robson: I have a question for you. You do – you have smaller charters as well as headboat fishing?

John Adair: Yes sir. I have a six pack boat as well as I run the headboats out of Port Canaveral.

Mark Robson: So your concerns about the closed season, do they apply just to the proposed four month closure for the shallow water grouper fishery or how do you – do you have a vermillion component to your business in terms of the catch?

John Adair: In the areas in which we are able to fish on the headboats now, vermillion really don't constitute a large percentage of our fishery at least out of Port Canaveral, okay? I mean at one time I ran head boats out of Fort Peirce. Vermilions were a key component of that fishery back in the 70's and 80's. Because of the pressure on the reefs, they are not that key a component anymore. I mean I would consider more of a bycatch rather than a staple, yeah. Okay sure.

John Barber: How you doing, George?

George Geiger: Great. How you doing?

John Barber: Doing all right.

George Geiger: You're already on.

John Barber: Yeah, okay, all righty. My name is John Barber. I'm a licensed six-pack captain, a recreational angler and the administrator of the Deep Blue Sea fishing community, which represents about 450 fishing families that fish primarily between Ponce Inlet and Sebastian Inlet. And although my comments don't represent everybody, generally, it's - my comments are the consensus of most of the people. Many of the people actually will make the trip over there today.

I'd like to first run through my take on the amendments to the alternatives and then I'd just like to make some general comments and, you know, do I get about six minutes?

George Geiger: Just go.

John Barber: Okay, cool. All righty. The first thing is, on Alternative 1, no action, I support Alternative 1, but I would also like to see the modification of it, banning all long-lining, eliminating by-catch wherever possible, and any - ending any habitat destructive practices. The idea here is, is we can leave a lot more fish in the ocean without taking them out of head boats, recreational boats or charter boat boxes.

There's a lot of room to work in here and you guys, I'll point at my end comments, you actually have the science and you actually have the numbers on some of the shrimp boat trolls and some of the, in particular what I'm looking at are rock shrimp trolls. We can leave these fish, especially the juvenile fish, in the ocean. We can get to where we need to get to to build this fishery without changing any of the existing rules and that's the basis for my opinion on Alternative 1.

On Alternative 2, I oppose Alternative 2. There is no reliable data or system to that the South Atlantic Marine Fishery has currently in use. I've crawled through MRFSS for six months now. I have talked to your scientists; I've talked to people on the Blue Ribbon Panel Review. That system has got to go. I know it's being replaced but to do these types of drastic changes on a system that

has gone through three Blue Ribbon Panel reviews and has been shown to be, you know, not useful for fisheries management purposes on all three reviews, it's failed three times, and the fact that we keep going back to it, with the best available science, we got to get out of that.

I do believe we need to do some things in these fisheries, but this is a failed system, a failed structure and failed data. We got to get away from it. It would be economically disastrous, both socially and scientifically irresponsible to implement alternative number two.

I will touch on some anecdotal data I have. Fishing pressure in the area I'm very familiar with, from Daytona Beach to Sebastian Inlet, has dropped between 30 and 50 percent in the four higher, in the recreational sectors, in the last two years. There is only one piece of information that says that it has increased and that's MRFSS, and when I finish up my comments I'll give you the sources for those.

In addition, Alternative 2, it's being pushed as a commercial regulation while also imposing a closure on the recreational sector. It appears to be the Council's intent to enact a second reduction by enacting a reduced bag limit.

On Alternative 3, I support that amendment. I won't read the amendments, you know what they are. On Alternative 4, I support that amendment. Alternative 5, once again, I support that amendment, but I think, you know, at some point in the future we're gonna have to regionalize the management.

You know, it's pretty obvious that we can't manage grouper fisheries through the entire South Atlantic the way we are, but we don't have the science, the money or the juice to do it. You know, it's a problem, but I think anything that gets us close to more regional fine-tuning management versus saying, well, we're just gonna close grouper for three or four months. They don't spawn for three months out of here, out of Port Canaveral, you know, they spawn for one month. To close it for three, to close off their aggregation, it doesn't make any sense.

Alternative number - let's see, yeah, Alternative 5, I support. Alternative 6, I support. I don't really have any position on the, you know, Miami-Dade County Alternative other than, you know, this goes along with regionalization of the fishery. I think anything moving that was is a good thing.

Alternative 7, obviously, I oppose. The only other thing I'll say on Alternative 7 before I close my comments is, since I've been in this game for about six months, I've hit all these meetings, been to everything. There seems to be a trend where we have some extreme measures, some moderate measures and some null measures.

And it seems to be we always point at the extreme and then wait for all the people to holler and everybody to whatever, and then we come back to here, okay. That's a political type way that the system is running, that's not science-based, okay. And it always seems like - and the problem is is if you guys actually had the science and the juice and the data to say we got to do this, you're not gonna have the support of the recreational fishermen, you know, because they now have been conditioned to know you're always gonna go here, hope you can get there, but maybe come back to here. And this South Atlantic has to quit doing it this way, because you're losing the confidence of the recreational anglers.

I said this in the Orlando meeting, once you've lost the confidence of the recreational anglers, that you have the fisheries best interest not their interests but the fisheries best interest, you're gonna have an enforcement nightmare, because you don't have enough boats, agents and people out there to make sure that people stay legal. You can wring the guys up hard you do get, but you're only gonna get a very small percentage. The best enforcement mechanism that you have is to convince us scientifically and convince us organizationally that you have the fisheries interest in their best interest and at that point, all the recreational fishermen will continue and most of them still do follow the regulations.

But once you've lost the high ground on this you're not gonna get it back and you're not gonna get it back through enforcement. You don't have enough enforcement out there now. And once you start getting wide-scale, you know, people breaking the rules you're never - you know, once that one gets out you're not gonna get it back. I said this in Orlando; I said it once before, you guys got to take this stuff seriously.

MRFSS, I'd like about two minutes on MRFSS and we'll call it a day. Average number of physical intercepts of surveys of the recreational fishermen is less than 9,000 per year for the entire South Atlantic, okay. And although, you know, this intercept data is thin, if you look closely, the raw data going in, you are seeing that less and less people are fishing 10 miles and out further. Your

own raw data even shows that the fishing pressure is pulling back in.

I can give you a bunch of anecdotal data that you're gonna have a cobia and a king fish problem pretty soon, because all the charter operators out of here, out of Port Canaveral, are now hitting the kings and the cobias because they cannot afford the gas to get to the grouper/snapper fishery. They are pulling in.

Okay, so your own data says that fishing pressure from 10 miles out is pulling in. Okay, you put the data in the MRFSS; you press the MRFSS button, what comes out of MRFSS? It tells us that fishing pressure has had a moderate increase over the last two years, that's what coming out of MRFSS is saying. So the raw data going in is saying, no, no, it's cutting back, but the stuff that's coming out of MRFSS is saying there's more fishing pressure.

No one that I've talked to on staff can explain this disparity. I have sent many, many emails and I have gotten great response from your folks, they have been extremely cooperative and forthcoming, but I have not had anybody yet be able to explain to me why the raw data says one thing and what you're getting out of MRFSS says another.

George Geiger:

John, if I might stop you there. Your emails are coming to the South Atlantic Council concerning the MRFSS -?

John Barber:

They are coming to the South Atlantic, you know, to Carmichael and those people, but I'm also - have sat down and talked with Dr. Roy Crabtree, the biologist people. I've talked to everybody that I can get a hold of, and nobody has been able to explain why raw data coming in is saying one thing and processed data coming out is saying another thing. I would love to have somebody give me a call and explain it to me. I'll pay the bill. I would - you know, it's just scientifically and economically irresponsible. You're gonna kill us.

Every source of outside data, everything outside of MRFSS, and I have done my homework, gas docs, marinas, fishing clubs, charter associations, network and cable news organizations, newspaper articles, boat manufacturers, boat sales, boat repair facilities, bait and tackle stores, dive shops, the Coast Guard, even our own FWC says that fishing pressure has dropped. There's some argument about the numbers. Some are saying 10, some are saying 20, some are saying 40. I've gotten numbers up to 50 percent.

Every piece of anecdotal evidence that I've gotten has told me that it's going the other way. Yet, you're operating with the assumption that fishing pressure is increasing and making regulations. If I honestly believed that what you said about fishing pressure was true I would have a different approach on this, but I think the underlying basis for why you're making these decisions is flawed. Fishing pressure is not increasing, it is decreasing.

Mark Robson: Can I ask you a question?

John Barber: Sure.

Mark Robson: The MRFSS, you're talking about raw data in and processed data out, what specific timeframe or report are you looking at or information from the MRFSS system are you looking at?

John Barber: Okay. I have freedom of the information to every piece of data that ever went in the MRFSS. Primarily what I am looking at is the last two years. I understand the management policy that, you know, you guys are doing a lot of rearview mirror management, three years, five years back, and I understand that it's another issue. I - you know, I've heard good things from you guys trying to speed that up to maybe an 18-month issue or whatever, but the reality of it is the snapshot of the last two years.

Now, the thing that's got me baffled is, is I looked at the last, you know, the last wave or last thing they did and you're still saying the fishing pressure is up. Mini-season - talk to any of these guys that come in here and ask them what'd you see at mini-season? It was down.

Mark Robson: Okay, thank you.

John Barber: Okay. There is low-hanging fruit out there. There are things that we can do. By-catch, habitat destruction, those are the areas, those are low-hanging fruit that are not gonna affect us economically, that you can do, and I would strongly encourage you guys to come back with some science and come back with some options that would do that. I would strongly support those.

Indiscriminate fishing practices, you know like long-lining, anything that is killing a fish, that's not bringing it back, whether we're looking at circle hooks, whether we're looking at venting tools, all these things are positive steps that also tell the fishermen we understand what's going on, we want to make some rules that help, you know, us not kill fish that we don't put in the box.

The - you know there's a lot of things we can do without removing fish. You know, in particular on these juvenile fish, if you're trying to boost em, these are the issues that need to be addressed first. I've found a wealth of information in your own science and documentation that is out there, that for some reason doesn't get acted on.

Rock shrimp comprise 19 percent of the catch by weight, 28 percent by number, okay. The rock shrimpers out here on our 21 fathom, that is where all our little snapper - if you go out there, I will take you out at my expense. We can sit there and catch 16 and 18-inch snapper and small grouper, one after another after another. Those guys dragging those nets, the way I found my good numbers was following those guys years ago. They know where the rocky and croppy bottom is. So there is a lot of dead finfish in there.

The white and brown shrimp, 4 percent of the catch by weight, these are your own numbers that came out of the Fishery Service Observer Study in 2001, September 12, Appendix C. All that information is in there. There is a lot of dead fish coming out of these nets according to your own observers. That's, you know, that's a good starting point. You know, I'll just close with a couple of quick comments.

Mark Robson: Mr. Barber?

John Barber: Yes.

George Geiger: No, go ahead.

John Barber: Couple quick comments on MRFSS. Okay. These are from your own documentation. Conclusion and recommendations. The designs, sampling strategies and collection methods of recreational fishing surveys do not provide adequate data for management and policy decisions. So the question is do we take something that we know is tragically flawed and substitute the words best available science or do we take that as one factor in the science and do a little legwork on our own, charter captain associations, you know, all this other anecdotal data that's out there.

If you've got 20 different sources of anecdotal data that is telling you that fishing pressure is down and you have one piece that tells you that it's up and you operate on the one piece, that's why you get a lot of people questioning, you know, what's going on. I will

submit the rest of everything and all of my sources, as I always do, in electronic copy for you. I really appreciate your time in this.

Mark Robson: Thank you very much.

George Geiger: And John, I appreciate you taking the time and certainly the homework that you've done. The one element of the homework that's missing is - I'd like to talk to you, and I'd like to spend some time with you and I wish I had the time here tonight - maybe I do have the time if we get through. And I'd like to go point by point, because there are some things, you know, statements that you're making that we're managing and we're making these reductions based on effort that we know is reduced today. And I would like to just talk to you point by point and give you another item for your homework.

John Barber: Mm hmm.

George Geiger: You may discount it, you may not, but I certainly would like to have an opportunity to talk about some of those issues that you raised in your comments. Do you have my telephone number?

John Barber: I sure do. You know, I met with Dr. Roy Crabtree a couple of weeks ago; it was a very positive meeting. You know, I'm always interested in hearing and learning. I learned a lot from him. You know, I've learned a lot at these meetings. I've been following them real close for the last six months. I do want a strong fishery out there. We have that in common. How we get there and what we consider a strong fishery and what the metrics are, we can negotiate on.

But you know, I - you know, we caught a break with gas, you know, let's just face it, everybody caught a break. It's helping the fisheries. In four or five years we're gonna have some amazing fishing out there. We -. Yeah, we caught a break. But I would like to see us take this breathing room of this break that we caught and really come back and look at taking some anecdotal data, taking some other things and coming up with not the best available science but the best possible management system that we have. There are several things in the Blue Ribbon Panel committee about bringing in the fishing clubs and bringing in some other information and some other resources _____ and making policy. For whatever reason, they've done three of those panels and I've got a whole bullet list here of items that have been left on the floor that haven't been picked up and a lot of these are low-cost items.

They're not items that are gonna kill anybody. And there's a lot of people interested in helping out.

I really appreciate you guys giving me the time today. My information is on my contact sheet, George. I'm in a little bit of time crunch today but I will touch base with you, you know, and we will - we'll talk.

George Geiger: Please - do you have my cell phone number?

John Barber: No, I don't.

George Geiger: Let me give it to you, 772-559-2212, and anytime next week, preferably in the afternoon, I'm gonna be at a Gulf Council meeting down in the Keys.

John Barber: Mm hmm.

George Geiger: And if you leave - you're gonna leave a copy of that so I can have a reference to it when we talk?

John Barber: I'll email it to you.

George Geiger: Okay, thank you.

John Barber: I was a little bit scattered getting out of the office today.

George Geiger: Okay.

John Barber: I got a few rough edges on it but -.

George Geiger: Please, please call me.

John Barber: Okay.

Mark Robson: Your - the last digit on your phone number, is that an 8?

John Barber: Yeah, it's an 8.

Mark Robson: Okay.

John Barber: Yeah. Once again, thank you so much for your time. It was good seeing you.

George Geiger: Okay, thank you.

John Barber: It was good seeing you, George. Thank you, Mark.

Mark Robson: Thank you.

- Pat MacGrady:* Are we all set? All right. My name is Pat MacGrady. I am a recreational fisherman. I fish out of Ponce Inlet and Port Canaveral. I just have a few comments regarding the Amendment Number 16, with regard to the grouper and snapper and changes. I've learned quite a bit since attending my first of these public comment meetings, and one of the things that dawned on me was one of the problems that we have is the death of the discarded fish as - well, maybe it's not discarded, released fish. So it's not how many grouper that we actually personally catch on a boat, but it's how many grouper might die as a result of having to throw little guys back.
- Mark Robson:* Factoring in fishing mortality.
- Pat MacGrady:* Right, and instead of changing limits, for instance, you know, from five to three, we might be actually better served by removing the size limit on grouper and making it illegal to cull beyond the limit of let's say three. The following of rules with - whether they're culling or whether they're maximum number or whether they're size is largely an honor system as opposed to an enforced law system.
- I mean in 10 years of fishing out of Port Canaveral and Ponce, my boat has been stopped two times. So what we do on the ocean really is up to us as fishermen to be, you know, conservers of the environment and most of us have behaved, you know, that way. And I think if we reduced - if we changed the size limits to no size limit that individuals who would go out fishing would catch their two or three or whatever the maximum number of fish, regardless of the size, so you're - now the 16-inch snapper or little grouper would be taken home and enjoyed and we wouldn't be tossing grouper and snapper back that are - you know, have a good chance of dying. From what I understand, it's figured in the neighborhood of 70 percent, although I don't know that I can agree with that.
- Mark Robson:* What do you mean?
- Pat MacGrady:* As far as the release mortality.
- Mark Robson:* It's not that high.
- Pat MacGrady:* Okay. As far as the amendments and alternatives as they stand, I would opt for that lower three grouper limit in lieu of a recreational closure. As far as the alternative amendments, which I found very interesting, they're all commercial limitations. I don't have a handle on, or you know what they may or may not do

commercially. And unlike the recreational population, the commercial population is fairly well regulated. I mean they have to sell their fish at certain places and they count fish. So you folks have a better handle on that. And those are my comments.

Mark Robson: Can I ask you a question?

Pat MacGrady: Sure.

Mark Robson: Yeah, there you go.

Pat MacGrady: Is mine still on?

Mark Robson: Yeah, yours -.

Pat MacGrady: There we go.

Mark Robson: Yeah, you can turn yours off for now and then we'll -.

Pat MacGrady: Okay.

Mark Robson: I wanted to - hang on - little feedback. You said that you were okay with the lower bag limit, the aggregate bag limit, but you didn't like the closed season for recreational angling.

Pat MacGrady: Right.

Mark Robson: Is there - if it was not possible to get the amount of fishing, you know harvest reduction needed to get to the standard that the Council is looking at for reducing over-fishing, would you be supportive of a closed season that was a shorter timeframe or -? In other words, would you be willing to look at something other than a four-month closed season?

Pat MacGrady: I don't know that I have - I mean I only have wishes. I obviously don't have any sway. I would much prefer the ability to fish throughout the fishing year. The wintertime is an important time for the - for recreational fishing here, not - and it's - part of it's because, you know, the fishing is better than it is in the summer. And it's because of the environment here, like we - I haven't been fishing in two months because of the cold water upwelling that we have. In the wintertime we don't have those water conditions. So if the weather allows us to get out, I get out two or three times during that four-month closed period that I wouldn't be able to get out. So I would much prefer the - you know, the limit on catch versus closing what's going on.

If you asked me to choose between two months and four months, of course I would say two months.

Mark Robson: Do you fish year-round or do you -? I mean you said that you do focus a little bit more fishing activity in the winter -. What would you say is your peak fishing time?

Pat MacGrady: Peak fishing time is I'll say fall, November through January. And then we have a winter period that runs - I guess I go backwards and say fall through into the springtime. We kinda - I stop, pretty much, fishing, at least offshore in the, you know, in May, because it's - we get the run of dolphin in April and early May, and then, you know, there's nothing going on. I don't fish for king fish so. I think you'd see a lot more of us fish for king fish if you closed the grouper.

Mark Robson: For the four months?

Pat MacGrady: Yeah, for that four-month period. Which then might cause another problem.

Mark Robson: Do you have any thoughts or comments about the vermilion snapper regulation proposal?

Pat MacGrady: You know, I don't - when we catch vermilion snapper we throw em back. I've never taken vermilion snapper home. We consider them a nuisance.

George Geiger: Really?

Pat MacGrady: Yeah.

Mark Robson: You do encounter them?

Pat MacGrady: Yeah. We do catch vermilion snapper. They tend to be in shallower water than, you know, I intend to fish in, but if we're fishing, you know, in the shallow stuff like 90-foot water, we'll run into vermilion and if there's a zillion of them we'll move, because they just sit there and chew bait up.

Mark Robson: Okay, thank you.

Pat MacGrady: All right.

Mark Robson: Appreciate it.

Pat MacGrady: Thank you very much.

Rich Kluglein: My name's Rich Kluglein and I'm -. Go now? My name is Rich Kluglein. I'm a charter captain in Fort Pierce, Florida. I have - I don't have my homework like that gentleman does. Some of the things were impressive. I don't know if they're right or wrong, but this is what I've seen in the amount of time that I've been doing this. I tried to rally some troops to come up here, other charter captains and this and that. And the bottom line is that they were just totally pessimistic and they did not want to come up at all because they basically said you guys, in any decision in the past have made the decision before comments.

Now, a few things -.

George Geiger: Let me interrupt you. And this is an opportunity that we get in this particular - just I have to address this because -.

Rich Kluglein: I know it sounds bad but this is what I was - even today -.

George Geiger: No, no -.

Rich Kluglein: I'm trying to get the phone calls and -.

George Geiger: And I know that -. We hear that all the time. And I hear that. I know that and we hear it all the time, and believe me, I've - I used to sit in the audience, okay, and shoot at the people where I'm sitting now, and the reason I'm here is to - was to try and make some type of a difference.

Rich Kluglein: Right.

George Geiger: But I can tell you that that type of sentiment is not accurately founded because this Council - and I don't have it in front of me, but the same statement was made in Jacksonville last night, but since I've been on the Council, a number of times I can't - I'm not gonna give you a number, but I know from fact that we've had preferred alternatives, if you see them presented in the other room.

Rich Kluglein: Right.

George Geiger: And based on public testimony and public comment at the meetings those preferred alternatives have been changed.

Rich Kluglein: That is true.

George Geiger: And that's listening to the public.

Rich Kluglein: That is true.

George Geiger: Now, what people have to do, they do have to understand, however -.

Rich Kluglein: But the basics, which I don't want to get to right at this point of that, was this is what - this is what we've experienced off of Fort Pierce, okay. This is what the charter boat industry has experienced from the Council. And I do understand that - I read the stuff I get from the Council, I read my blue letters. I've emailed people on the Council. I do understand some of them are commercial grouper fishermen. You know, and - I spoke to em. And I do understand that they, you know, I mean it's not an easy job that they have, but let me just explain what's going on with the charter fleet in Fort Pierce.

You closed the Oculina Bank numerous years ago, okay. It was an experimental closure. That was a very large portion of our fishery. People would come to Fort Pierce because of the proximity to the bank, and you know, it was excellent, excellent fishing. Now, I can understand the closure and the experimental closure, all right. But I do look at the long-range things about all of those deep water habitat closures. Fort Pierce, I believe, was picked first because of the minimal resistance that you had as opposed to the Marathon Hump where there was huge, huge resistance and it didn't work out.

But anyway, that being said, I went to the meeting when they were talking about increasing the closure, you know, for the length of time, and there was one biologist there that I remember. Somebody had this silly thing about somebody finding a plainer down there and stuff, and we do know that rock shrimp, the rock shrimp boats and the shrimp boats, you know, that's nothing new, they are fishing around those area, and up until recently, have only been stopped for the patrol boat that's out there. However, that biologist at that time said that the grouper fishery on the Oculina Bank is not in trouble from recreational bottom fishing as long as they don't anchor but the closure went on, all right.

So we did lose a lot of people over that and a lot of people - and in fact, that gentleman, I can't recall his name but he was from Harbor Branch.

Rich Kluglein: Okay. So anyway, then what happened to Fort Pierce is we had our hurricanes. It destroyed us. It destroyed the hotels and it destroyed our economy. And that ruling that we have now - and of

course, the fuel prices are just crushing it now, I mean it's pretty much - you know, most of the guys are, you know, are going out. But the actual thing is is that there's no alternative for that closure in January. You know, so the amendments there, none of them do me any good because that January through April closure is the only time that I can actually pay my bills with my boat through the rest of the year. That's my season. And grouper fishing in Fort Pierce, Florida is basically our business, other than sailfish.

So I don't see where any of that is - has - I do - I have one point and that would be they opened up the Oculina, since we have north/south migration and east and west in depths in the summer, okay, but they're not. They're gonna leave that closed. So even our summer fishery is still not going to be good. Our winter fishery is the time we need it.

Mark Robson: Can I ask you a question? You said - so your primary fishing season out of Fort Pierce is exactly that four month period or is it - ?

Rich Kluglein: Well, it's not exactly. It starts in December, okay - it starts in December with people coming down, and it increases. And February and March is spring break. You know, March being the one, and - to the beginning of April. And if we can get the days - we don't have to go that far because of the amount of grouper that come in, 80 feet of water we can do quite well. In the summertime the fish migrate to some of the deeper waters, okay, and the Oculina is closed for us. So either way off of Fort Pierce, you know, we're just not gonna be catching many grouper.

Mark Robson: Are you catching - is it mostly - what's the percentages of gag in your catch versus other species or even snapper?

Rich Kluglein: A large percentage.

Mark Robson: Do you - what other species do you target when you -?

Rich Kluglein: Well, you know, as far as the vermillion and other stuff, it just depends on the baits we put down. But it - we are limited by the days that we can get out there. But if the conditions are right it's usually not an issue of catching your limit and that's why people come. That's all I have to say.

Mark Robson: Thank you very much and thanks for your comments.

Richard Shields: Hi, thank you for your time. I'm pretty frustrated with this whole situation here.

George Geiger: Would you identify yourself please?

Richard Shields: My name's Richard Shields. I'm a recreational fisherman from Fort Pierce, Florida.

George Geiger: Thank you. For those who didn't hear earlier, this is all being recorded on a videocassette recorder and a DVD gets sent out to every councilmember. So not just Mark and I get it, but every councilmember will get a copy of all the public comments.

Richard Shields: What about the public comments I made at the last meeting and the meeting before that and the meeting before that? Because I'm here to make the same statements that I made at the last two meetings with zero, you know, zero anything. I mean if you all are gonna close it there's nothing I can do, I know that.

But I mean, unlike some people here, I would support a six-month closure and not a limit reduction. It's very expensive to do what I do, and the only way I can justify it is feeding my family with the catch. Now, my family doesn't pay for seafood like some people but that's how I justify the amount of money I spend on a boat, on gear, on maintenance, upkeep, everything. This is very frustrating to even sit here because I know that what I'm saying is just everybody hears it and it's over. You know, I mean this is very frustrating, we can't vote, we can't sway - we can't sway anyone's opinion. What are we supposed to do, you know?

I mean you guys have no idea about my catch. Nobody's ever called me or asked me. I've left, you know, I suggested that you all email me. I suggested that you call me. Nobody has. I mean not that I expected that to happen, really, but I mean your recreational catch - every recreational fisherman in here hasn't even given you any data on it, so how do you know your data's right? I mean there's some people that are good and some that are bad, and most of the time the people that are bad say they did better than they did. How can you go on an honor system when there's no honor?

I am - you know, there's nothing I can do and I'm extremely frustrated with that. I've - you know, I mean I went out last Thursday and Friday and I got my limit of groupers both days. I got em before 10:00 a.m. I could've got five more groupers if I wanted. And I had no by-catch. But nobody asked me, nobody cares, you know. I mean what are we supposed to do? I mean I

didn't take anymore because the limits two, but I could've got more.

I've - I don't know, I mean please tell me what I can do, because I'm gonna go home today and December 1st it's gonna close and I'll have participated in these meetings which must be for show because I mean I'm sure that there's five or six other people in here that have been to the last five of em and said the same thing and gotten the same nothing from it. I mean we're not - where I live there is a grouper population, some places there aren't. But it's there year-round and I - I could take video, but is that gonna help? Is there anything I can do, please tell me, because I need to know. I mean my - I won't dive anymore starting next year. Sorry.

George Geiger: There is something you can do and we discussed it earlier, and I've been trying to encourage people to get together as groups, recreational fishing groups, people in the business. I mean everybody's complaining about the data. You know, and I appreciate and I remember sitting in the audience - I remember sitting in the audience with Ron Rincones at meetings years ago, and here I am, you know, I took this in an effort to try to make a difference.

Richard Shields: Mm hmm.

George Geiger: And it's tough. You know, you - you're asking us what you can do, I'm telling you what you can do and that's ban together and you're gonna have to go to Congress and get Congress to fund these unfunded mandates that come down in Magnuson and Stevens. I mean if you want improved data there's only one way to do that and that's to fund it.

Richard Shields: Real data.

George Geiger: That's to fund it.

Richard Shields: Mm hmm.

George Geiger: The data that we're using is, in fact, by law real data, and regardless of whether you agree with that or not, everybody in this room has to understand that this Council is mandated by federal law to use the best available data. It's been - the State of North Carolina, the State of North Carolina sued the Secretary of Commerce on Amendment 13C using the same data that we used for this amendment and they lost. The judge said that the Secretary of Commerce, and I'm gonna paraphrase, had no

justification not to act based on the quality or unquality of the data; that they had data, it was considered the best available and he was mandated by federal law to act. If this Council doesn't act and we say we're not gonna do anything, the Secretary of Commerce will.

Now, when people come before the Council, you guys have to understand this goes through an extensive process, a scoping process, where we come to the public and we ask for input as to how we can go about framing alternatives to achieve the reductions necessary by a stock assessment.

Richard Shields: Mm hmm.

George Geiger: We don't have an alternative as to whether we accept the stock assessment or not.

Richard Shields: You're saying it's on us to get accurate good data if we want - I mean is that -?

George Geiger: No, it's on all of - it rests squarely on all of our shoulders, but from the Council -.

Richard Shields: But I mean how are we supposed to fund it? I mean we -.

George Geiger: You don't fund it. I'm saying that you need to get - we had the Central Florida Offshore Anglers in here earlier. We had Recreational Fishing Alliance came in here and spoke earlier. We had CCA. We have a company, ARC, who manufactures release tools. We have another group called ACE, I think - I'm sorry, I can't remember the -.

George Geiger: Angler Education. It's time for all these groups to get together and anglers to get together and - the Council cannot lobby, we're prohibited by federal law from lobbying.

Richard Shields: Right.

George Geiger: The public has to go, and if you want better data you've got to get Congress to fund the Southeast Science Center to allow them to do the research necessary. And that's - I don't know what else to tell you.

Richard Shields: Right.

George Geiger: It is hard. It's hard on everybody. And I'm gonna tell you something else, you know - I'm sorry, Mark, but this is just a

ripple. This is a ripple on the - gag and vermillion snapper is a ripple on the water. Right on the heels of this we've got red snapper coming, and if you think that's tough, we've got annual catch limits. The latest Magnuson Stevens Act requires this Council to put in place over-fishing levels, annual catch limits and from that will be annual catch targets for both the recreational and the commercial industry. And the amount of the catch target that comes off the annual catch limits is gonna be predicated upon the accuracy of the data that's used and how reliable that data is.

So by complaining about the unreliability of this MRFSS data and complaining about the unreliability of the data when it comes time to put annual catch targets in place, guess what.

Richard Shields: So all we can do is join an organization and hope that they can lobby it.

George Geiger: Not hope, do it.

Richard Shields: Oh yeah.

George Geiger: Do it.

Richard Shields: Right. Okay.

George Geiger: I mean, you know -.

Richard Shields: Yeah. Nor will this be a very big issue to any congressman that's elected.

George Geiger: Well, you know - I don't know whether I'd get in trouble saying this or not, but the power of email is unbelievable. You could tie - you get 50,000 people from RFA, CCA has 100,000 members. Individual fishing clubs. I mean you're talking about over two million anglers in the state of Florida.

Richard Shields: Mm hmm.

Unidentified: This goes way beyond that. Politics are done by deep-pocket money.

Richard Shields: Yeah, and we don't have it.

Unidentified: It goes way back to even oil companies and stuff. I mean when you got George Bush in office and now you got the other guy coming in here that just got a \$4 million - you know -.

George Geiger: I don't know - there's been enough -.

Unidentified: I mean I -.

George Geiger: But there's been enough done -. I understand.

Richard Shields: I -.

George Geiger: I'm sorry. Go - I'm sorry but I had to answer your question.

Richard Shields: Right, well -.

George Geiger: Directly - and -.

Richard Shields: Once again, I'd like to say that this is killing me and you know I'm very against it. I wish that there was something else that could be done. But as was explained to me at the roundtable meeting, there is nothing that can be done. And I'm - I just - I will join my organization, that's for sure. Thank you very much.

George Geiger: Don't just join, get em to band hands and join hands with other organizations.

Richard Shields: We have been - people have been. It has been -.

George Geiger: Okay.

Richard Shields: But it's very difficult. Thank you.

Ron Rincones:

Hello, George. Ron Rincones, Valkaria, Florida, retired. I have a statement that I'd like to read. Please, there cannot be a total shutdown of the grouper species without dire consequences to the charter and head boat operators, marinists, tackle shops. While I acknowledge your scientists have deemed refishing is over-fished, I contend they are not.

For the most part, grouper and snapper species are as healthy as they've been in 20 years and have steadily improved as you have implemented restrictions on the reef species. Through the many restrictions in place, there has been steady improvement in size and quantity. The additional restrictions in my proposed Alternative 5 below, would both end alleged over-fishing quickly and fulfill the onerous mandates and modifications to the Magnuson-Stevenson Act. Hopefully this may preserve an industry already in serious trouble due to fuel cost and the general downturn in the economy.

There is presently a dramatic reduction in fishing pressures just due to fuel costs. Coupled the slowdown in the economy, job losses and the inflationary factors in anything requiring transport, and I make the educated observation that fishing pressure has already declined well below the level of over-fishing.

It seems to be the critical factor in all this is it's deemed over-fished, and that triggers something in your process that forces you to take actions. Proposed Alternative 5, a commercial trip limit of a thousand pounds for gag with a fishing year starting May 1st. In addition, during February, March and April, fishing for and possession of the following species would be limited to one per angler for each of the following: gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, red herring, rock herring, yellow-mouth, tiger grouper, yellow-fin, grassy and coney.

In addition to the above limits, there will be a vessel limit of no more than two of each of the above species. Head party boats possessing the proper permits would be allowed four gags or black, in aggregate, four of each of the remaining grouper species listed unless otherwise restricted. No sale of grouper species would be allowed during the month of February, March and April.

Another thing that must be considered is a commercial trip limit of 200 pounds during July. While there will be the hue and cry that this will put the commercial divers out of business it will not. Many of the commercial divers with snapper/grouper permits are charter boat captains, have multiple licenses or have other full-time employment.

Each year during July large deep-water post-spawn grouper are pushed into divable depths along the Atlantic coastline by the icy-cold upwelling known as Eckman's Transport. Grouper become lethargic and are sitting ducks for divers. Hook and line anglers catch zero during this event, which may last four weeks or more. Furthermore, in comparison with hook and line anglers, there are a very few commercial divers, but their take of large deep-water gags is considerable.

A trip limit of 200 pounds will not end their ability to harvest grouper, but it will retard the slaughter. This will have a most positive effect on grouper stocks if a positive effect is needed. Also keep in mind this will only affect a very few individuals.

In conclusion, the sad part of this entire issue is, even if a fishery is relatively healthy and rebounding, and you've had em on rebounding schedules now for a good number of years, but deemed over-fished, you are forced because of onerous modifications to the Magnuson & Stevenson Act of 2006, to take drastic action regardless of the consequences. This is not right and this is not fair, and I ask you to consider my Alternative Number 5.

Mark Robson: Thank you Mr. Rincones.

Ron Rincones: You're welcome.

Mark Robson: Did you want to leave your written statement with us or you gonna -?

Ron Rincones: I sent it in.

Mark Robson: Okay, very good, thank you.

George Geiger: Who did you send it - did you send it to Kim, Ron?

Kim Iverson: He - you copied me and sent it to -.

Ron Rincones: I copied her and I sent it to that address that was provided in the bulletin that went out from Jim, 10 something or other.

Russ Lowers:

My name is Russ Lowers. I own a six-pack charter boat, commercial fish, I recreational fish, take people out on charters. I find this amendment - it would be a good thing if we actually did have a problem out there with grouper/snapper fishery. The Magnus & Stevenson Act is one of the best things going, but I really think that you always say you have this scientific information, well, I'm actually a biologist also.

I find that I don't think you know the population size so therefore you cannot find sustainability. If you knew these numbers then we'd have a chance with this. I think that all these people in this room are very outgoing people that would not cut their own foot off just to go out to try to catch a fish. These people want to sustain this fishery. They want it to thrive. They know the value of this fishery and how it will support us in the future.

I think that the information that you have is not scientifically just. I think that if you really wanted to help out the grouper fishery, since the groupers are a protogynous hermaphrodite, one of the biggest ways you could sustain this population in this fishery is to put a slot limit in with these fish. A slot limit, therefore, would hold these fish - the larger males that actually have harems of females in with the population and therefore you'd have higher fecundity levels and therefore you'd have more fish within the fishery. Instead of worrying about, you know, total numbers taken, if you could sustain the numbers that you have and create larger numbers in the future, I think would be the just way to go.

In the last three to five years, we've had - like everybody says, problems with their income, fuel prices going up. We had two or three years of total hurricanes that blew out six months - four months of the fishery, two to three years in a row. Last year was the first year I've ever heard of that was blown out for 29 out of 30 days. May is one of the biggest months for charter boats. Brock Anderson, who's one of the main charter guys next to me, had 28 charters that were blown out in the month of May last year. I could go on and on and on about, like everybody else has.

I think, number one, if you increase money taken in for licensing, you could take some of that money and use it for some scientific information. Put some sonic receivers offshore, some **Vencos**, use some sonic tags, find out what the real - what really is going on out there. Scientific information is very, very expensive but it will back the information you need to make some of these decisions.

To sit here and say oh well, we've caught this many pounds of fish, you know, we've got to be killing off the population, well, you don't know how many are out there, nobody knows. Nobody in this entire world can tell me what the population is of grouper offshore. I know for a fact there's maybe one paper written on groupers off Port Canaveral, maybe, you'd be lucky to find one. And to have all this stuff coming through and using the Magnus & Stevenson Act to back yourself up to make this decision, I don't think it's justifiable. I think that you're just making a decision to protect your boundaries. Well, you should have the information that you need in order to make that decision, and I don't think it's here.

I propose, number one, if you'd have to change it, I'd go with Amendment 3, but you know, you're saying you guys are responsible for the Secretary of Congress. You said, "Boy if we don't make a decision the Secretary of Congress will come down on us." Well, why don't you just make a no decision, let the Secretaries come down on you and say, "Hey, you get the information to find out how many groupers are out there." Put the pressure on them to get the money to put scientists out there to get that information that you need to prove you wrong, because somebody's not doing it. Nobody's doing it.

You know, they've got some good information off the west coast but there is none off the east coast, not up in the Canaveral area. And right now I'm - I dive more than anybody that you could imagine, and the snappers are rebounding like you've never seen. I've seen more snappers in the last year than I've seen in 15 years. Grouper - the grouper fishery, it's rebounding also. You know, I can't tell you numbers, nobody else can tell you numbers, you just see more. Because we don't have any scientific information, and that's what this should be about. It shouldn't be about, you know, catch numbers. Well, if you knew how many fish were out there and how much you're taking out of that pool, you could say, we're only taking this much out, it's no big deal.

But to have that beginning number, I think, is number one, it should be number one in this whole Council, and how you get that is everybody's responsibility. I think that if we - licensing fees would be probably number one, I'd get in that - and if anybody can't do it, you know, we're all sitting here - we'll all just bitch about the whole situation and nothing will ever get done until somebody has some money to throw some money out there. Get the scientists involved, to get real data, to get real information. And the sickening thing is is that the ways of the mean are

available to us. We have sonic technology. We have ways to find out how many fish are out there, where are they going, how are they getting there? I mean a lot of the fish that we have come from the Carolinas. Is that scientifically proven? No. Anyway, that's all I have to say.

Mark Robson: Thank you very much.

George Geiger: Russ, I have a question. Have you gone on the website and reviewed the stock assessments?

Russ Lowers: Some of it. I've been so darn busy I haven't had time. But I can honestly say that I have done a lot of research on the grouper status out of the Canaveral area and there is no information. Not a scientist involved, not Grant Gilmore, nobody. Grant's done some deep water research with some of his rovers but that's it. I mean I know the scientific community. I'm involved. But to know what's going on with this, it's pretty sickening.

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Russell Sinclair: My name's Russell Sinclair. I'm from Big Game Charter Fishing out of Port Canaveral. I run a charter boat. I'm gonna touch around on a lot of different bases. The first base I'm gonna touch on is underneath the gag grouper closures 7B, totally against that. I guess I'll have to settle for 7A.

For obtaining information on for-hire vessels such as charter boats and head boats, we hold multiple permits between tuna permits, grouper/snapper permits, coastal migratory species permits, state fishing licenses. There's no reason why we shouldn't have a log book to make our accurate more - to make our data more accurate in the future.

I still strongly want to suggest circle hooks be mandatory for bottom fishing, be mandatory on charter boats, party boats of any kind and recreational boats.

Another thing I want to comment on would be the - for surveying recreational anglers, that's got to be the one area that our data collecting has been the most inaccurate that all our new laws are being based on, and they said they randomly call homes that are on coastal waters. We all buy fishing licenses and we all have our boats registered to be on the water. If you did your surveys pulled off of registered boats or fishing licenses, it could be extremely more accurate.

And I would also go for the commercial quota of for gag grouper, 3A, which is the March and April closure. Letting the fishermen fish in January and February if the quota's not met and with a trip limit of a thousand pounds. I totally see that as a better alternative than a four-month closure. It'll put some people back into business for two months. And that's all I got to say.

Mark Robson: Thank you very much.

Scott Bussen:

My name is Scott Bussen. I'm a local charter captain and commercial fisherman. I do about half and half. You may recognize me. I visited you guys in Jekyll Island and the other couple meetings that we had locally here. You're gonna have to excuse me, I don't have a written comment because I was fishing the last three days and I didn't have time to put it together. But I'd just like to reinstate my comments that I made the last time I was here and also back up some of the comments some of the other guys have made that have been here.

I can tell you right now, my charter business this year due to the local economy and economy all over, is probably down in the neighborhood of 60 to 70 percent, and I have a predominantly local clientele that likes to fish for grouper and snapper. I do a lot of bottom fishing. I've fished out of here for 20 some years.

And you know, once again, as far as I've seen with the stock assessments, you know, I'm not gonna go into the data stuff that you guys are talking about again, but from what I've seen over the last, say 10 years as you guys have implemented various control measures, things have increased, you know. I mean I've had - in my commercial end, I've had increased catches, and that's not due to learning anything new and it's not due to more effort. You know, the fish are there. Now, I can tell you right now they weren't here this year, but we had cold water since the first week of March, which is very odd, very odd situation.

Now, if you had done a stock assessment at this time and you're looking just say Daytona to Fort Pierce, there was cold water from here to there, and it wasn't freezing cold but it was cold enough the fish were gone. Now the water's warmed up. They're here. I just dove three days, I saw plenty of gags, you know. I'm chasing lobsters around and there's grouper around, you know, and it's August. Generally in August we don't even hardly see groupers in August. You get a couple of red grouper, a couple gags, you know.

So anyway, my thing is, you know, I also - I'd like to reiterate the fact that if you look at the effort that the recreational side is putting in right now, the lack of effort is enough to more than compensate for the 50 percent decline. I can tell you right now, if you go down to Sunrise Marina and it's Friday night - you go down there tomorrow, which is - what is it, the fourth day of lobster season. See how many boats are in that parking lot next to the boat ramp, and that's a public boat ramp.

Normally on any given Saturday in June, July or August, that place is walled. People are parked all the way out to the other road. You go there now, this whole summer long, that place - I'd get to work at 6:00 in the morning and there'd be 10 trailers there. Normally they'd be lined up 10 deep just to get in the place and there's six ramps to get in there, you know.

So I mean my thing is the effort is so far down because of the cost of fuel, I mean that alone to me is enough to make up for what you're looking at on the recreational side, you know. And the last time I was here I proposed again that go ahead and reduce the bag limits, reduce the bag limits to one gag and one or two other mixed groupers and let us fish through those four months recreationally, you know. We're - like I said, our businesses are all down between 60 and 75 percent already, and if you cut us four months, those four months all we do is bottom fish, every one of us. If you cut out grouper and snapper those four months it's over, it's over. I might as well pack it up.

All I can do is king fish because you're gonna - I know you're gonna close it for the three or four months for commercial, and we're already closed two, which I supported yeas ago when you put in the two I said, you know, it's gonna kill me, the best two months of the year, because whether you know it or not, gags are migratory. They migrate to Florida in the wintertime. They show up around somewhere in December and then they leave May 1st when it opens up. You know, there's still stragglers around, I call them residents, they live here year-round. You know, and those fish from May 1st through the end of the summer just get wiser and wiser, they're the smartest groupers on the planet, you know.

But those wintertime fish, they're cookie-cutters. I know that they're breeder type fish, but they're migratory. They're not here, they leave in May, maybe middle of May, maybe June some years if the water's a little different, you know. But I - it's all part of the data thing that I don't think you guys - I don't think some of the actual people with hands-on get their hands in it, you know, and it kills me, because you're gonna close - you're gonna cut everything I do for four months out of here, and like a couple of the other guys said, Tony and a couple of the other guys, you're gonna put us all out of business, and it's not - there's more fish now than there's been in 10 years. I can tell you that, I've seen it. I see it everyday when I'm out there.

One other thing I'd like to comment on, you know, I went to your meeting in Jekyll Island and I mainly went up for the lap program

meeting on the commercial side of it. And I seen now where you guys want to go do a commercial trip limit of a thousand pounds for gag grouper. I'm very upset about this because in talking to Kim Iverson and listening to you guys at the meeting, I know you rejected the lap program, but you also wanted to keep it on the back burner, which I understand. But you also want to educate us to do it, which kinda goads me into the fact that possibly you're trying to backhand it to us.

So when you're gonna go ahead and cut me to a thousand pounds of gag grouper in a trip, now I can't make a three or four day trip in the summertime or whenever I might be able to fish now. I mean it's kinda like you're just limiting what we can and can't do. The whole idea of the LAP program that you wanted to do was the big high efficiency thing, that was your big thing. It was, it's gonna make it efficient. The big boats, they're gonna go, and they're gonna do it and they're gonna catch em and it's gonna be done and everything's gonna be efficient.

Now, if you want to cut us to a thousand pounds, granted, I might not have more than a thousand pounds a couple times a year, but you know what, it might be in June, it might be in May when I can make a four-day trip and not get the, you know, stuffing kicked out of me by cold fronts, you know. It's just - I don't know. I'm very upset about the fact that you want to do that because I see it as a backhanded effort to push us into the lap program on the commercial side, you know. I mean the big thing with the laps was the efficiency and now you're saying, well, now you can't be efficient, you're gonna have to stop at a thousand pounds even though you're 70 miles from home, you're gonna have to come home, you know so.

As far as the other stuff goes down south of here, I mean I fish out of here full-time, so I don't have anything to say about that but -. I'd like to ask you guys a question as to where you came up with this thousand pound trip limit deal, what - where did that come from? What was the idea from that?

George Geiger: That was a recommendation that came from the snapper/grouper advisory panel.

Scott Bussen: Was this before or after half the guys quit?

George Geiger: Half the guys didn't quit, we had five people resign, two commercial people from North Carolina.

Scott Bussen: Right.

George Geiger: One who was the director, the executive director on the Monroe County Commercial Fishermen's Association, who was replaced because they wanted to replace him with a fisherman instead of their executive director.

Scott Bussen: Right.

George Geiger: And the other two were recreational people, one was Dan Kipnis from Miami, the other was Jim Gray from Orlando, who wanted to do other things.

Scott Bussen: Right. Other than getting themselves frustrated.

George Geiger: Well -.

Scott Bussen: I understand - you know, I understand you guys have to do something. I understand -.

George Geiger: And neither one of those, if you're - the reason we're here is to take comment on that.

Scott Bussen: Right.

George Geiger: You know, we get hammered all the time that we don't listen to the fishermen. In this particular case this was an alternative that was brought to us by our snapper/grouper advisory panel.

Scott Bussen: Right, I understand.

George Geiger: And what we did was we asked for analysis. We did not accept it as a preferred alternative.

Scott Bussen: Right.

George Geiger: What we did was we put it out there for analysis and we even - because it's now been - one of the prime reasons we are here and in Jacksonville -.

Scott Bussen: Right.

George Geiger: And in North Carolina - where else are we doing this Kim?

Kim Iverson: Charleston.

George Geiger: In Charleston.

Scott Bussen: Right.

George Geiger: The reason we're doing these extra hearings was because of the addition of those last minute alternatives.

Scott Bussen: Right, I understand, you put em out there and you have to do public hearing - I understand that.

George Geiger: But - and that's what we want to hear from you, that you're opposed to them.

Mark Robson: The point is that they were suggested options that came from, you know, the Council's advisory panel, which is made up of fishermen, and they're not the Council's preferred alternatives, and they're under - you know, they're open for comment and discussion and your comment is to the point on that, so we appreciate getting that. So thank you.

Scott Bussen: Right, and my thing is - you know, I understand when this Amendment 16 started, you guys kinda came up with a preferred alternative, and as of, say the two or three meetings I've been to, I haven't heard one person that actually was like hey that's a great alternative, you know what I mean. But from what I understand through the grapevine, is you guys are still leaning on that preferred alternative for closing everything for four months, you know, and I just - I think - I mean I think you're making a big mistake and I think -. And I understand you're going by what you have to go by but I think your mistake in the economy that we're in right now is gonna cost a lot of us our jobs.

Mark Robson: I understand. We heard you and we hear that so we got your comment and thank you.

Scott Bussen: Okay. I'll go, I got the hint, thank you.

Mark Robson: And if you would identify yourself and your affiliation with any -.

Shawn Dick: Good afternoon. My name is Shawn Dick. I'm the executive director of Angler Conservation Education or ACE. I want to thank the Council for allowing us to make public comments today. ACE is a cooperative fisheries education and outreach organization whose goals are to increase stakeholder awareness in order to decrease by-catch post release mortality and to keep our U.S. fisheries open to participation.

We are a cooperative fisheries partners with Guy Harvey Ocean Institute, CCA, IGFA, RFA and other conservation-minded industry leaders that prefer industry developed and practice ethical catch and release angling over more economically damaging time area closures.

According to the best available estimates, about 14 million saltwater anglers made almost 82 million fishing trips in 2004. These fishing opportunities provided significant economic benefit to the nation as a whole. Many stakeholders believe that the data used to regulate the recreational fisheries is critically flawed. Recreational catch in the U.S. Marine waters is monitored primarily through the Marine Recreational Fishery Statistical Survey, MRFSS, which was set up in 1979 by the ____ Marine Fishery Service of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association.

The MRFSS conducted both offsite telephone surveys and onsite interviews at marinas and other points where they fish. Although the MRFSS was and is intended to be national, not all coastal states take part. Several state programs operate in lieu of or as a compliment to MRFSS. Since the MRFSS was established, management goals and objectives for the recreational fishing sector has changed and become increasingly complex. The MRFSS program has not had the resources to keep up with these changes, nor has it been able to take advantage of the recent advances in statistical sampling theory.

In response to concerns about coverage and quality of the MRFSS data, _____ asked the national academies to review current marine recreational fishing surveys and to make recommendations for improvements and possible alternative approaches. The report finds that current survey methods are inadequate to provide the quality and timeliness of data necessary to manage recreational fisheries. The report concludes that the establishment of a comprehensive universal sampling frame with national coverage,

most likely in the form of a national register of saltwater anglers would be the most efficient way to improve the quality and quantity of data used to assess recreational fishing.

As of the May 2006 report, release of this report, Congress was considering legislation that would take several steps towards establishing a national sampling frame for recreational fisheries. We agree with the national academies, MRFSS review and determination and support Congress' efforts to establish a national sampling frame.

We are aware of the Magnus and Stevenson Act mandates to use the best available data in science. We're aware of the time constraints by the Council to end over-fishing within one year and appreciate their efforts to meet those deadlines. Under reduced by-catch of snapper/grouper species ARC recommends and supports proposed Alternative 3. If circle hooks are not required in this preferred alternatives, we recommend minimal design specification of dehooking devices that can remove deeper swallowed J hooks.

We still recommend that circle hooks be used voluntarily within the fisheries, because we believe that it does reduce by-catch mortality. ACE supports the snapper/grouper committee motion 12; approve staff to develop a letter to the regional administrator requesting the regional office to develop an interim rule of 180 days, which could be extended once more for 186 days.

We agree that an interim rule will avoid delays and implementation of measures to end over-fishing and reduce by-catch mortality in the snapper/grouper fishery. We recommend that Alternative 3 preferred be included within this proposed interim rule to implement reductions in fishing mortality as specified in the preferred alternatives in Amendment 16 for gag, vermillion, snapper, black grouper and red grouper.

ARC recommends that until MRFSS' data can be better quantified and qualified and/or improved, that the Council consider less stringent and more proactive ethical catch and release fishing and practices to reduce by-catch mortality rather than harsher time area of closures. I'll answer any questions if you have any. Thank you.

George Geiger:

Thank you. Hopefully, Shawn - Terry, you got three people here, you got ARC, you got this -.

Mark Robson: Have you just state your name and -.

Stan Mickk, Jr.: Yeah, my name's Stan Mickk. I run a charter/commercial boat right out of Sunrise Marina here in the Cape. It's just, you know, if you need to reduce the bag limit or something, that would be fine, just to take em for four months, you know, it's gonna really have an effect on us. You know, we have a lot of people charter the boats specifically for the bottom fish, the grouper, snapper, amberjack. During the wintertime like that, you know, they don't need 10 grays in a trip, you know, reduce it to 1 per person or, you know, 6 per boat or whatever it needs to be, but to take em for the four months, you know, would really have a giant affect on us.

You know, and as far as the commercial, you know, the 3A alternative where you just close em, what March and April it said, you know, that would be better than the four-month closure, you know, it would give us a little bit of chance to catch em while they're here. But that's about all. Like I say, just the four-month closure would really hurt our charter business. They got to be able to keep something.

Mark Robson: Thank you very much.

Stan Mickk, Jr.: Thanks.

Steve Gillespie:

My name is Steven Gillespie and it's a privilege to be able to speak in front of you guys today. I know you have had - been on the receiving end of a lot of frustration, and I too, along with everybody else feel a lot of this frustration. The last gentleman in the past 30 minutes I've been here listening to some of the testimonies and personal experiences, I - it's - I don't want to go through this, but I - a lot of the things that have been said already, I reflect - I also agree with.

First of all, I just want to get into a little bit, I'm involved with an Internet forum called Spear Fishing Planet, which is comprised of approximately 2,500 people whose purpose is really to protect the sport of spear fishing as well as, you know, promote awareness and resources for even hook and liners, spear fishermen to practice our sport and mine conservation.

I'm a Florida native, I'm a second generation Florida native. I've grown up - my parents grew up in south Florida. I've been exposed to the fisheries in south Florida. I grew up in the Destin area, so I'm familiar with the Gulf side, and I'm a very involved diver, spear fisherman, as well as hook and liner out of Sebastian, that's my home port, and I know that one very well. I can say that my experience range runs from Ponce Inlet down to Fort Pierce, but primarily Sebastian is it.

And I don't want to take up too much time, I just want to reiterate some of the points that Dennis O'Herns made with the FRA. I'm sure you know him. And I also have - there's a couple other people in this room who I respect highly that are charter captains and local divers from my area who have some very good things to say as well.

The first thing is, and I don't want to get far involved with it, is the data. You know, by trade I'm an engineer, I'm an aerospace engineer, mechanical engineer and I'm also licensed in civil engineering. And data to me is, you know, it's a very important thing, you know. I mean sometimes in making assessments and whatnot, I know you have to extrapolate and you have to take what you have with what you guys coined the best available data.

But my line of work, we don't make decisions until we fully understand everything, you know. If we extrapolated and used the best available data then man wouldn't have gotten to the moon and people wouldn't be driving cars. I wouldn't be, you know, working where I work and helping wireless communications. It's - data is crucial in establishing a process and a science that works.

So like the last gentleman said, and like you said earlier, Mr. Geiger, I fully agree with you that it's everybody's responsibility to get together and figure out what needs to be changed so that we get the right funding to help collect the right amount of data, to be able to put together a validated set and a right process and right science, to validate whatever regulations need to happen to protect our resources. I think I speak for everyone in this room that we all are - you know, we all have a concern for conservation management, but we want it to be done based on valid data.

Another thing, too, is I understand your - the Council is required by law to fully assess the socio-economic impacts of whatever proposed relations are coming down the pike here, and I also understand too, based on Magnuson and Stevens Act and whatnot, that the term over-fish mandates a one year, you know, line of action from the time it's declared until the time any regulations go in effect.

To me, and I'll be honest with you, I haven't been too involved up until a couple months ago, of what goes on with SAFMC, but to me what that sounds like to me, it's basically a knee-jerk reaction. You know, something happens, there's a place in the system that allows you guys to do - make a decision really quickly, and to me it kinda reminds me of, you know, three people holding a large boulder and all of a sudden something happens, someone says, okay, knee-jerk reaction, drop the rock. One person drop it, the rock comes down and breaks a leg, you know.

And like I said before, everything comes back to data. I think that it's more important to assess what we really have out there. I know it takes money, I know it's gonna take time, but before we put these new regulations in place, and you've heard from Mr. Martinez, which is a friend of mine who has his own tackle shop, that's his dream. He's living in America -. He's a young man with a - he builds the best custom rods around here, he's got a nice tackle shop. Everything he does in his life is based around fishing. Just like everything I do in my life is based around fishing, but he's actually making it his livelihood.

And you know, with the gas prices going up, with people - less people going out right now, it's a hard economic time for all of us and he's feeling that pressure, and these regulations are gonna absolutely kill him. It's gonna make him shut down his dream, and he's just one example. I'm sure this room's got three or four more people that probably have the same story, and I'm sure you've

heard em, a lot of em by now. The impacts can be pretty severe. I mean I don't think that this Council has done an appropriate job yet of assessing what that impact is. I mean not just in a dollars term, but how many people lose the livelihood of what they have, their quality of life. You know, you've got a commercial fisherman over here that's probably, you know, inherited from his father or grandfather, and he has to go find something else to do with, you know, all he has known before is to fish. And like I said, you know, many of us are recreational fisherman, but we hold it so close to ourselves. I teach my son fishing, you know, I learned from my grandfather.

It's hard - I know it's hard to asses, what - you know, what's the economic state right now at this point, what it was three or four years ago and what it's gonna be, especially with elections coming up and the economy they way it is, but there are indicators out in the market right now. There's a flooded boat market, that's one indicator. You've got the rising oil prices that are, you know, they come back down a little bit, they're gonna stay where they're at and they're probably gonna, you know, rise again. You've got, you know, the change of leadership with the country coming up, you know, we- that's a big gray area. You know the stock market.

There's all these different things that may not be directly related, but they're somewhat related and they're measurable to some extent. And I know that you guys probably have scientists there or, you know, people that can assess this, but it really needs to be done. I think that the assessment that was made that the fishing pressure has increased over the past couple of years, I do not agree with that. My experience is that the fishing pressure has gone down. One gentlemen in here a little while ago said that he saw six boat trailers at the Canaveral ramp at 6:00 in the morning. Let me tell you, that would've been on any other given weekend or - weekend especially, it would've been probably in the 50 or 60, 10 times that.

I went out two or three weeks ago out of Sebastian Inlet and I'm not even sure if you're familiar with how that parking lot's laid out, but it gets pretty cramped there very quickly on the weekend and there were two trailers and that's it. When we got back there were maybe five or six all day long. We didn't see but maybe two boats offshore all day long.

My experience as a diver, I dive all the time, I hook and line all the time. I switch it up. I do both when I'm out there, and I cannot tell you the increase of red snapper, the increase - it's astounding. I

can take - I would be honored to take a scientist from your committee and your Council down just some of the regular top spot numbers that we have, that are just general public numbers, and till when you're kicking down the ledge to turn around and actually see the 20 or 30 snapper that are following you.

The gag grouper population, I want to say that in my opinion it hasn't risen nor declined, it's maintained, it's maintained well I think. I have no problems going out and finding where the grouper are.

I really, honestly think that there's a lot of data - you know, and being exposed to the different areas in Florida, I know that there's different marine ecosystems and whatnot. But for a large section of it here in central Florida, I don't see any peril in the horizon on our fishery, I don't see it. I - and I'm talking to you as someone when the weather's good it goes to two to three times a week, having five or maybe seven dives if I'm really pushing it, a day.

And I really think that all this needs to be reconsidered. We need to really stop, take the time to look at ways of getting better data, look at what really needs to be done on the horizon and really assess the socio-economic impacts that these proposed regulations will have on the state of Florida. I love this state, I'm never gonna leave this state, and it would be an utter shame that this state is the center of southeast fishing in the whole United States, that this happens.

And then, you know, before too long, you know, one thing - I know that the total - I've heard about, you know the red snapper being the total shutdown of that coming down, you know, that you guys are considering that. It's just - it's absolutely ridiculous from my point of view, and I hope you all understand that. And I would like to invite some scientists to come down here in our area and actually look and try to collect some data.

And me, as a person, as a citizen, would like to see more things in place to be able to get good data, not just interviews and surveys at the ramp where you get tainted data from people. I know that you could do fish counts, but you could call on the phone and you know, I mean you really don't know what the fishermen are gonna tell you, but there are better ways of really surveying of what's caught, and better ways - as an engineer I'm very aware of the acoustic technology we have out there, I'm very aware of submersible technology, and I know that with the right funding we

could get more tools for you guys and your advantage to be able to collect the right amount of fish data.

Anyway, my opinions fall under the FRA's opinions of the whole proposed regulations. I personally, from a personal level, I think that I'm just so tuned to my life to not making a decision till I have all the data. I don't really have a preference as far as no change, that's my preference.

George Geiger: And if I - and I don't take issue with anything you've said.

Steve Gillespie: Yes, sir.

George Geiger: Except one thing, and the Council is not taking an opportunity here to act, and the law doesn't allow us to act, the law mandates we act. There's a huge difference there. You know, if you think I'm sitting here and he's sitting here thinking about doing this stuff on a voluntary basis because it's something we think needs to be done, you know, you're sadly mistaken.

Steve Gillespie: Yes, sir, I understand that.

George Geiger: I mean you can't imagine the - you can't imagine - you know, you hear what's going on here tonight. I was in Jacksonville last night -

Steve Gillespie: Oh, I heard all about it.

George Geiger: And you should be on my computer in between times. And - it's - you know.

Steve Gillespie: You know, and the thing is -.

George Geiger: So understand that this is not something that we're just voluntarily reacting to as oh, we got this data, let's do something, we are mandated to do it.

Steve Gillespie: Understood. But the problem I guess I have is what gets you guys to the point to where you're mandated to do something. There's someone that declares something over-fished based on no data, and it's a scientist. There's a scientist that declares a state of over-fished species based on no good data.

George Geiger: And what I would invite you to do, you know, if you go to our website my telephone number is on that website.

- Steve Gillespie:* Okay.
- George Geiger:* And I would like to talk to you personally, one on one, and talk to you about the stock assessment process -.
- Steve Gillespie:* Okay.
- George Geiger:* And - not in an effort to - just to educate you on the process and how -.
- Steve Gillespie:* I would like that.
- George Geiger:* How it goes - you know, the red snapper stock assessment, for example, had I believe 66 sets of eyes, 66 brains and 66 pair of hands looking at this data over time. So it's not something that scientists are not involved in. When a stock assessment is completed we invite three independent experts within the statistical committee, who are usually from a foreign country because their expertise lies at a very high level in those areas.
- Steve Gillespie:* Right.
- George Geiger:* They're from the Center for Independent Excellence, and they provide this service not just to fisheries, but to industry and businesses who rely on statistical analysis to conduct their business. And these guys will come from their business and they form a team of three to overlook the stock assessment process to determine whether or not the process that was used was proper, the data was in fact usable, and whether the assessment that's produced is usable for management.
- Steve Gillespie:* Right.
- George Geiger:* And they make a recommendation then to our science and statistical committee as to the usability of that. And then it's looked at again by that group of 18 independent scientists. So it's not like this is done in a vacuum and it's not done by one person. So I wish - I would like to speak to you and talk to you about all these issues and tell you how the whole process works, because it is very complex and it is not done in a vacuum.
- Steve Gillespie:* And I understand that, and I understand that, you know, I'm an engineer and these are biologists and scientists of a different animal, I guess, you know, so to say. I'm used to seeing things more black and white and they're used to, you know, trying to make projections. But out of those 66 people that looked at that,

how many have been diving in my ecosystem, is - even for one week. You know, I mean I - there's a way to collect data and then - you know, you got to scrutinize how it was collected, what does it pertain to. I mean there's - you know, if I go to the Keys, I'm gonna see a different scenario -.

George Geiger: And that's what I'd like to talk to you and describe those independent indices that are used to collect data and how they go about gathering data. It's not perfect.

Steve Gillespie: Right.

George Geiger: And those independent experts point that out in virtually every stock assessment. I was just up at the king mackerel stock assessment in Jacksonville, and they had some very critical comments about the quantity of the data and potential - some quality data issues. So they make those comments and recommendations that improvements in research could be made here and data collection could be made there.

The problem is that it takes funding to the science center in Miami to actually - to get that type of science and data collection accomplished. And that's why I'm imploring the groups to get together, to get with - to get Congress to fund these unfunded mandates to conduct management based on this data.

Steve Gillespie: I understand.

Mark Robson: And I would make the comment also that the federal - in the southeastern United States, anyway, the process that's been set up recently to do stock assessments on federally managed species, has become better and better and more and more rigorous and part of that rigor is including a lot more eyes on the information. But beyond that, for example, I represent the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, and we have staff biologists that work on those assessments, and sometimes we're the lead agency on doing it.

And the modeling and the information, you know, the types of computer modeling that are done to look at the status of a particular fishery, those models are constantly being improved and updated and upgraded. And they, of course, also are requiring more and more data to be effective models. And so there's a real effort to try to continuously improve those kind of assessments based on that modeling, and it does require us to get better data and we're gonna have to keep working on that.

Steve Gillespie: Yes, sir.

Mark Robson: So it's a kind of interesting dilemma there. You know, we get better models but it means we got to go out and get better field data. But the other part I wanted to say about this - the federal stock assessment process, and we call it SEDAR, it's an inclusive process, and it supposedly, it should be, if it's working right, designed to - it's particularly at the data workshop stage and even at the assessment workshop, but particularly at the data workshop stage, to encourage information coming from whatever sources they can be gotten from.

And I think that's where fishermen and - you know, commercial or recreational fishermen should be participating in those workshops as well. So - particularly if it's a species that you have, you know, direct knowledge of, you should take advantage of those opportunities to participate in those kind of -. Because you may have very valuable information that the stock assessment biologists or the modelers can go, well, maybe we need to look at that.

Steve Gillespie: Right.

Mark Robson: You know, because - and I've seen that happen at those workshops. It has happened.

George Geiger: And it's also recognized that people have lives and jobs and that you can't take off a week and attend a king mackerel data review workshop in Jacksonville.

Steve Gillespie: I understand.

George Geiger: But Denny O'Hern was there.

Steve Gillespie: Right.

George Geiger: He's the FRA guy for those in the room who don't - who didn't - he was there all week. Bob Zales, from the National Association of Charter Boats, was there all week. We had representatives from commercial industry who were there to represent commercial industry and over - and just provide oversight to see what's going on and understand what was happening within the process.

So there are groups who send people. And we even send individuals. And when the Council does that, we generally select people off of our AP and we will pay their expenses during the week. Ben Hartig was there for the week from Florida. Ben is a

commercial hook and line king fisherman from out of Hope Sound. He sacrificed a week to go up there. So there are fishermen who are involved in this process. And you know, to paint with a broad brush that it's just all bad data, you know, as much as I hate the data, it just - you can't use that with the brush to do that.

Steve Gillespie: I guess the real question here is, you know, I mean we all have concerns about the validity of the data, but it's such a big decision. Do you make such a big decision based on best available data? I mean I know for a fact that a scientist or an engineer didn't coin that term best available data. That's a political term. And I'm not saying that your data is totally bad, I'm saying it's outdated and it's miniscule in size to appropriately assess the population of the fisheries.

George Geiger: And that's a very astute observation. The Magnuson and Stevens Act is a federal law that was produced by politicians, and best available data comes directly out of the act.

Steve Gillespie: Right.

George Geiger: So it's a very astute observation.

Steve Gillespie: Well, I really appreciate your time, and thank you. I know there's a lot of other people here that have things to say and -.

Mark Robson: Thanks for your comments, Mr. Gillespie.

George Geiger: And I apologize to the audience for these butt-in periods, but you know -.

Mark Robson: Yeah, we don't mean to be soap-boxing ourselves, that's not why we're here.

George Geiger: But it's important to not just say things and walk away after having made statements that do have a flip-side to them and get some understanding.

Mark Robson: And the other thing I guess we should point out, we're trying to develop these workshops in a format that does, hopefully, allow a little bit more give and take, and I think that's - so again, we don't mean to cut into your time.

My name's Terry Winn. I'm actually from a little town in Osteen, which is in Volusia County. I'm currently the vice president of the Central Florida Offshore Anglers, which is a group of 165 fishing families from the Orlando central Florida area. Born and raised in Florida and fished these waters since the early '70s through today and am a licensed captain and held a salt water's product license and restricted species permit for snapper and grouper for quite a while.

And it became apparent to me in the mid-'70s and early '80s of what was happening to the fishery out there and I voluntarily gave it up on my own and took more of a conservative viewpoint about what was happening to our fisheries out there. And at that time with - eventually we got decreased bag limits and increased fish sizes. I've seen some drastic changes in the fishery that I thought was, you know, almost to the point of being nonexistent and in severe decline.

In those years, diving these reefs off of Sebastian, off of Port, off of New Smyrna in the 80 to the 120 the - the ledges that were available as a diver, we didn't see any snapper, we didn't see any grouper. Fishing for them commercially, we would have to get into the deep water and off to the Oculina Bank and then the Cones area, the 250, the 220, to be able to catch enough to turn around and sell em.

Once the original measures were put in place to try to control and do something with this fishery, and until this point, we've seen drastic changes as a diver, as a noncommercial supporter now after being one, I now go out on these reefs and I see, off of Daytona and off of Port Canaveral, in the 80 to 100 foot range, just swarms of snapper.

I challenge the data that's being used. I see all the - hear all the discussion, I've read the stuff; I've sat in the presentations. I think it's obviously that everybody knows there's flawed data. I do understand Magnus and Stevens and the fact that you, by law, legally need to do something to end over-fishing. But with that said, I think it's also time that people, in the capacity such as yourselves, should stand up and say the data we're getting is not good. We're messing with people's recreational rights as fishermen. We're messing with the economy and the economic impact that's gonna be creating by closing a fishery, in this part of the state, from January to April. And yes, federal government, you've told us we have to do this but you're making us, you're forcing us into a decision that's not based on good, sound data.

As a conservationist and a fisherman, a recreational fisherman, if the data is good and supports the drastic measures that were being proposed, I would be standing here supporting them. I believe the data is significantly flawed. I believe that decision are being made poorly and they're gonna affect a lot of people's lives. Thank you.

Tim Fletcher:

That's fine. That's okay. My name is Tim Fletcher. I've lived here since 1990, been very active in the offshore fishing arena since, diving. I have had an offshore charter operation since basically 1998, '97-'98, 11 years. I also am involved with some of the local academia. I work for FIT in their marine operations department. So I know a lot of the folks down there, and I'm kinda - somewhat dialed in with some of the research that's going on.

I just wanted to say a few things that everybody has - I'll be parroting some things. Business-wise, I'm probably down 70 percent this year. I typically average anywhere from 20 to 25 charter trips in July. I've done six this year. Very, very depressed. That has been the case for most of this year. Started off okay but it really tapered off starting in about March or April.

Typically from February through August is when I get the meat of my business, can book just about every day from February through the end of July at least. A lot of business travelers, conventions and things going on in Orlando. That has dropped off tremendously, tremendously. On top of that as Mr. Griffiths pointed out, profit is down - it's horrible, it is really horrible when we're paying \$4.50 a gallon for fuel, and I can barely make it some days.

I have increased some of my pressure to the commercial side of the fence, which I do fish all three sides, by the way, commercial, recreational and charter. Have lobster permit, I have king mackerel permits. I use them when I can to try to supplement what I can do.

I am somewhat fortunate that it's not my only source of income. Some of the other guys have pointed out, but it was a choice I made. It was a supplemental type of income. So I've been able to survive, but I've noticed the pinch this year.

Some of the things that I have some problems with is that it seems like on top of fuel costs, insurance costs are going up. I know you don't have anything to do with that but they're going up nonetheless. Permit costs, every time I turn around there's a new permit to pay for, whether it be a - okay, I didn't have a federal dolphin wahoo permit or actual federal permit until two years ago, prior to that I was catching them just the same rate that I am now, but now I got to pay 50 bucks for an operator's permit card that I never had to have. Kind of a sore spot with me, but I pay it nonetheless.

The Coast Guard is after me for a TWIC card now, which is a Transportation Workers Identification Card, same thing that the airport workers use. To be able to even access some of the ports you have to have a TWIC card. Starting in September we're going to be very heavily regulated. We've already got signs up. There's a locked gate leading to my boat.

Another little thing that just rubbed me raw in a time when things are really tough, I read through the red snapper SEDAR 16 or whatever it was, that Amendment. I read through most of it and I just noticed some things that really bugged me. I get the phone calls all the time from the people that actually work 200 yards from me in Melbourne for the MRFSS data. They do the phone surveys; they ask what I did that week. Not every week but randomly picked. How did you do, how many trips, how many hours of effort.

George Geiger:

That's the charter boat survey?

Tim Fletcher:

Correct, correct. And so they take that amount of data and then they apply the dockside survey to whatever I tell them to assign a level of catch. I have a little bit of problem with that when I know when they come down to do the dockside surveys it's usually on a beautiful afternoon when the weather's nice, catch is probably high. They want to go - they being the surveyors, they want to go down and maybe have a frosty drink when they're all done or whatever. It's a nice afternoon. I think that they get dockside data that's higher than what is actual and they're applying that data to every phone survey, is the way I understand it.

Every time I fill out a log book report for my commercial efforts, I always see these letters, the effort of time to complete is one to three minutes or whatever. It's not a big deal. I'm being told it's not a big deal, yet if I've got to renew a permit and I've missed a logbook report for a month, I get a letter stating, no, we're not gonna renew your permit because you missed this letter. So it's not a big deal until it has to be a big deal.

What would be the big deal of these phone surveys folks spending one to three minutes of their time to just ask me what I caught? Okay. They're asking me all the data about how many people that fished that day, how much effort was expended, how much time. What did we catch? What's the big deal? I think it would add a lot of credibility to your data if they would just actually ask us what they're catching.

And I'm only making a big deal of that - about this because some of the regulatory proposals impact the charter captains very gravely. For example, grouper/snapper catch limit, you want to exclude the captain and crew. You want to treat us as recreationals in one sense, but then when it comes to allowing us to keep our captain and crew limit, which Gregg Waugh told me at the last meeting, very rare that that ever happens, that you even get into that situation, you're gonna cut us 100 percent out of the picture, and it's a - it just makes me wonder why, okay, are you gonna cut us 100 percent when the impact is gonna be very minimal. Those were Gregg's very own words. So I'm a little bit disappointed in that. If we're recreationals treat us as such.

Other things that I noticed in the SEDAR data, I read in there where there's a sampling team that is comprised of scientists that work for you guys, they're a part of your internal team and they go out and they fish. It even described that they use squid on chicken rigs and -.

George Geiger: What you're referring to are probably the MARMAP program out of South Carolina. That's actually the - administered by the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.

Tim Fletcher: Correct.

George Geiger: And they have a survey vessel, and they randomly use chevron traps and they use bottom tending gear -.

Tim Fletcher: Correct.

George Geiger: To sample -.

Tim Fletcher: It describes some electric reels and things - I'm sorry. I know that it was excluded from the assessment, but I also know why. They caught 80 or 90 something snapper in 15 or 18 years or whatever it was, and almost half of them were caught in 1982 or 1983. So you know, when you're someone that's out there everyday and you can catch snapper regularly and 80 or 90 snapper I can catch in a week, pretty easily right out here. To hear that they've done that in 15, 18 years whatever it was and half of em were caught in one year that makes me question their ability to fish.

And so, again, I understand that their data was excluded from the process but why are you picking and choosing? It makes me wonder that you're picking and choosing what fits your needs.

George Geiger: And you're exactly right, which is how the SEDAR process works. The first week is - the first meeting is a data workshop where they sit down and people, including members of the fishing public, we have recreational and commercial representatives at the meeting, review all the compiled data since the last dock assessment. And they determine the appropriateness of the data and its value to be added into the stock assessment.

And exactly what you described happens, happens. Data that's considered to be inappropriate or not usable is excluded from the stock assessment, so that they only, hopefully, when they move into the process, they only have a pile of data that's applicable and will be useful in assessing the stock and the superfluous data has been eliminated.

Then they move on to a data - or an assessment workshop where they actually take this data and break it down and run it through several different models, okay.

Tim Fletcher: Okay.

George Geiger: So that's how the data -.

Tim Fletcher: And I understand and I appreciate your explanation, but to the lay person, the one that's being regulated, for lack of a better term, you guys are all on the same side of the fence. And when you say that you're just taking your ineffective pieces and ignoring them and only picking and choosing the effective pieces, some of us kind of look at that, you know, with a little bit of skepticism as to, okay, maybe they're just picking the stuff that supports the agenda that they want to support. May not be the case, I'm just pointing it out, okay. It struck me when I read through that, that it was odd that you ignored some things or set aside some things.

Again, the charter captains - I don't know that I've ever been in a situation - I carry no more than four people. I - that's a personal limit on my boat. I can carry six. I cap it at four. I'm a small boat but I love bottom fishing. I don't know that I've ever got in a situation where I exceeded my client's bag limit and kept my own, but it'd be nice some days if that were to occur that I could do that. It may have happened a few times but I haven't really kept good records on it.

I feel that that's the situation with most of the guys that I know here in Canaveral and Sebastian, rarely do they exceed the client's bag limits. So as easy as it is for you to say why are you worried

about it if we're cutting your bag limit when you never need it, it's just as easy for me to say, then why are you doing it. So I have a little bit of a problem with it. I'm kinda disappointed that they're taking 100 percent of our bag limit away. We're a user group and you're cutting our throats 100 percent.

Enough on that. One other thing in the SEDAR data I noticed and Greg tried to explain it and maybe I didn't catch it all last time, kinda talks to the validity of the data. He threw up a slide, he actually sent me the PowerPoint on it later. I was never able to open it for whatever reason. But it showed vermillion snapper harvest by method and spear was higher than anything if I remember correctly. And personally I don't know anyone, and I dive a lot, that has ever shot a vermillion snapper.

And maybe this is a problem with the logbook reporting and the method of harvest that you have to record in the books and they pick the predominant method and apply it to all of em, I don't know. But it really struck me odd that here were vermilion snapper method of harvest, one of the highest methods was spear. Point being, I don't trust a lot of the data, especially on the MRFSS side, the recreational side.

I think the commercial side, as far as I know, they want their fish to count, especially when they've got - you know, this thing of catch limits looming in the air, they want every pound to count because if you go to individual quotas, it's gonna be based on their history. I don't think they're cheating over on this side of the coast. I have pretty good confidence in the commercial data. I don't have good confidence in the recreational data. I just think it's a mistake to legislate based on inaccurate data. And that's really all I have to say.

Mark Robson: Thank you.

Tim Fletcher: Thank you.

Tony Boob:

Thanks for the opportunity to speak. I know you guys have a very tough job and I'm not here to rant and rave. I'm just - I've been involved in the fishing and diving industry since I moved to Florida 26 years ago. Just had a lot of unique opportunities, having fished and dived with people like Ron Rincones and some of the other guys in the room and I'm just passionate about the sport. So I got a little memo I put together.

I'm in strong opposition to the proposed new actions 1 through 4 to Amendment 16. I'd like to go on public record and state I strongly feel that the SAMFC has both a legal and moral obligation to have an unbiased, professional body conduct an economic and social analysis prior to implementation of any changes. We have entered into some very unique economic and social times. You cannot ignore this fact or use previous data that does not take into effect any of the factors into account in today's society. To do so would simply be our officials' managing our resources while asleep at the wheel.

The fishing and diving industry has a direct exposure of over \$3.5 billion on the recreational saltwater fishing in the state of Florida. Reference is made numerous publications; Florida is the fishing capital of the world. The proposed actions based on your rules that are obviously over-pessimistic stock assessment, precaution of measures and fatally flawed recreational landings will cause severe social and economic disasters to the fishing and diving industry.

Immediate results that will be locally, charter captains will suffer and many going out of business. Gag grouper is a prime target for these businesses during January through March till the dolphins start to show up in mid-March. Taking the prime target off the table will be devastating to the charter industry.

Rising costs of these businesses in six-pack charters are approaching upwards of \$900.00 a day in our area. It is simply insane to think folks will pay that much money to participate in catch and release. Basically, the six-pack charters will go out of business out of Port Canaveral you take the groupers off the table, no questions asked.

Head boats, Port Canaveral make a living off bottom fishing. Winter is a prime target for bottom fishing. Taking the grouper off the table, head boats will go out of business out of Port Canaveral, no questions asked.

Both areas identified have huge economic blows to the economy. These boats offer immediate employment but also are directly related to the fishing and tackle sales, bait, fuel, industry, marine mechanics, etc. Local marinas will be hit hard. All these boats starting pulling out of business, marinas will lose dockage fees, baits, tackle, ice and fuel sales. The \$3.5 billion economic direct exposure will drop at an alarming rate.

It is obviously to any angler out on the water today that fishing pressure has dropped. I can tell you two quick stories. Mini-season, Sebastian Yacht Club, arrived at 7:30 with Ron Rincones, in this room, me and him went diving and Cliff Hagen. Arrived at the ramp at 7:30. First day of mini-season, insane. Forth in line at 7:30 in the morning, Sebastian Yacht Club, in the water in 10 minutes. Twenty-six years I've been doing it, you couldn't find a place to part the truck. I was able to easily park the truck and trailer at Sebastian Yacht Club after dropping the boat in 10 minutes after arriving at 7:30. Insane if you've ever been to Sebastian Yacht Club mini-season, doesn't happen.

First two days of regular lobster season this year, on my way to dive with Cliff Hagen just south of there where his boat's docked, rode by Sebastian Yacht Club. The actual lot there had less than 12 trucks and trailers in that lot. Typically it would be full, totally full. A friend of mine, Tim Fletcher, Cool Beans Charters out of Port Canaveral - there's a couple more guys in here that are charter captains out of there. Have been fishing and diving with him the last few days as well. I can tell you those guys are being hard hit by the economy.

Typically during the summer months those guys are out charter fishing every single day. Tim Fletcher will tell you, and he'll probably be in here to testify in a minute, that he'll get back in and he'll have 10 to 12 messages on his cell phone about charters. These guys are sitting at the dock now during the summer because the economic conditions. Maybe out on the weekends, but the boats are sitting at the dock.

I'll make a bold statement and I'll turn in my notes, but I would venture to say almost guaranteed that fishing pressure, and this is a bold number, is down 70 percent right now. First two days of lobster season, we saw five boats on the water, the same five boats every day. Two were commercial king fishing boats, one was a head boat and one was a pleasure craft that was doing recreational diving and one was a commercial lobster boat. Five boats we saw all day. First two days of lobster season, previous years, you

would see hundreds out there. You could walk on the boats out there.

But people who haven't been out on the water, and I'm not slanting this at you guys because that's probably not your job, but the drop in boats out on the water right now is tremendous. I mean unless you're out there everyday looking at it, I mean it's tremendous.

I have a full-time job. I know how the government works. I've worked for the government for my entire adult life since 1982. But I can tell you the boating pressure is ridiculously low right now, mainly to fuel costs, but there's a lot of other social economic factors too. Guys have to be able to buy groceries, feed the kids, pay mortgages, all those things have increased where the actual recreational dollar has dropped and you've seen it almost in every recreational industry today, whether it be golf, golf is down, you know.

But the fishing is the lowest I've ever seen it, and I don't claim to be an expert, but I am very fortunate, I get on the water at least two days a week, and I'll tell you, the boating and fishing diving pressure, I would say is down 70 percent. So to say that the fishery is over-fished, I think, is incorrect. I think the fuel costs today and the other economic and social factors have reduced the over-fishing. It will take care of itself.

I would like to say some other things about the fish counts and I don't want to get into a lot of rebuttal, but I'll go back to our last public hearing here. Captain Mike Cane, he's tuna fishing in Louisiana, but he can't be here. He testified, and it should be on the public record, that the guys doing the fish counts out of Port Canaveral were counting the recreational catches against the charter boats. He personally walked up there twice and confronted those guys.

And these are some of the best guys in the industry. You got Scott Bussen back there. You go - start counting his catch as a recreational catch, those numbers are gonna skyrocket. It's gonna make it look like those guys are some pros. They don't catch groupers and snappers like that, none of those guys. And you take that data, if that's going on, let's use that for instance and say that that kinda counts going on at every marina and you're looking at some of the top guys in the marinas, and you'll start catching - taking the charter captains that are really good and hone their skills and count those in the recreational catches, that data has to be skewed.

But Mike Cane went on record and he personally confronted the guys down there doing the fish catches twice. So that should be on the record from last time.

I'm very passionate about this. I think that the whole industry, the SAMFC, everybody needs to be accountable and do their own recordkeeping. I know there's a lot of rebuttal to this, but a lot of this is tied into the environmental elitist. You know, we can sit here and debate that into the next century, but I really think a lot of this is tied into environmental elitist. I think the whole Magnus and Davison Act is tied to that, you know.

But the real shame to this is gonna be our local fishing industry. The blue collar workers, the fishers, the divers, those are really gonna be the ones that suffer because we're taking just such a knee-jerk reaction and not really looking at the actual what's going on out there today. It may be that that might have been the best available data at the time, but there's so many things going on today that we're not even operating today as we were a year ago, not even six months ago, probably even on our personal lives. So I really think that we need to really stop and pause, collect new data, look at the social and economic impact, really do a good study there. Maybe tell the Secretary of Commerce, hey, we need to slow down. We don't have - we can't take into account what's going on, you know. If we can't do it then we'll let you do it and let him take the downfall.

I have a new proposed Alternative 5 that I'd like to throw on the table. I would like to say that the current grouper controls measures in place for gag, black grouper, red grouper, scamp, red hind, rock hind, yellow-mouth grouper, tiger grouper, yellow-fin grouper, grasby and coney, remain in effect at the current recreation and commercial bag and trip limits due to the current economical and social factors, which along with the current controls on the fishery have appeared to have significantly impacted the fishery to the point where groupers are not potentially over-fished as previously thought.

A more scientific approach is required to obtain the data as related to today's industry to include but not limited to an updated social and economic impact study prior to any action being taken at this time.

In closing, I would like to say that I think that the grouper fishery is as good as I've seen it since I started doing this 26 years ago.

Like I said, I don't claim to be the pro but I've spent a lot of time with some guys in this room who are fishing and diving off their boats. The restrictions that we have in place have been good. I can tell you that the grouper fishery and the snapper fishery is as good as it's been since I've been doing it. Thank you.

Mark Robson: Thank you.

Mark Robson: State your name and where you're from and so forth.

Walt Eismann: I will do that. My name is Walt Eismann. I am the president of the Central Florida Offshore Anglers, and I echo Mr. Winn's sentiments exactly. I do want to assure you that unfunded mandates are at the top of our agenda and fighting that politically through out local representatives and senators is gonna be at the forefront of our agenda for next year and this year as well.

George Geiger: And if I may, that's extremely important. The thing I didn't add is that as a Council, we are precluded from lobbying Congress. So we can't even go to Congress and identify these as tantamount issues that have to be identified. You know, you have to be a private citizen and the Council cannot lobby Congress.

Walt Eismann: In my business everyday I'm faced with these unfunded mandates and it has nothing to do with fishing. So I feel your pain. But we, as a fishing club, are going to start taking that on as - take a more politically active role and start to band together the other fishing clubs in the area as well, which is more important with the numbers to get out there and make sure that those concerns are voiced and that we're actually bending somebody's ear and they're paying attention to what we're saying, because we are the voting public.

I wanted to talk a little bit about some of the options and banning long-lining, I think is going to help this process. Terry talked a little bit about the economic impact. There has been an economic impact from our standpoint. Just to talk to club members. We have 160 families, which equates to close to 400 people, and each month we have our fishing club meetings and talking to them. And while it may be somewhat anecdotal information, the pressure is down. The people aren't getting out. The way we start our meeting every month is, you know, tell us a fishing story. Last month we had three and 110 people showed up for the meeting. We had three fishing stories for people who had been out in one month's time.

And I even made it a point to question them. Is it because we're not fishing or because you didn't catch anything? And it was they're not going out. So the pressure is definitely out and while it may seem anecdotal, it's - we take that survey every month, and I wish there was some way for us to pass that information along to the scientists so they could see it and it would be accepted as real data. But that's something that our club has offered up as well at any point to supply data for the commission.

One of the others is that the prohibiting of shrimping, I believe, is one of the alternatives as well under 60 fathoms, I believe, is one of the alternatives. The Central Florida Offshore Anglers were in support of that. And the circle hooks, it was in one of the - I don't have my notes with me. Do you have that one - and we support that. And that one was removed and the dehook - I'm sorry, the venting tools as well.

Mark Robson: I'm sorry, you supported the original discussion of the use of circle hooks, venting tools and dehooking devices?

Walt Eismann: Yes, absolutely. We did support that. And one other thing was to prohibit all shrimping inside of 60 fathoms. The statistics and options for scoping documents ignore the fact that the major cause of juvenile fish mortality is shrimping, and that was one of the things that we had looked at from a club standpoint, and one of our members had brought that to our attention and we had supported that as well.

Mark Robson: So just to be clear, your recommendation on the shrimp prohibition inside of 60 fathoms is your club's recommendations.

Walt Eismann: Yes.

Mark Robson: That's one of your suggested changes?

Walt Eismann: Yes.

Mark Robson: Okay.

Walt Eismann: That is correct. And the bycatch that's affected by that. So - and that concludes my comments and thank you very much for your time and listening to us.

Mark Robson: Thank you, thank you very much. All right, I have -.

George Geiger: One other thing that we didn't - we failed to mention in the beginning because we had people walking in and out, that these are all being videotaped, these comments, and a CD of the videotape gets presented as a gift to each of the councilmembers for their pleasure and enjoyment with a bowl of popcorn on a Friday night. And you haven't lived -. You haven't lived until you've sat down with public comments on videotape from North Carolina to the Keys.



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Scott Osborne

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

772-263-3548

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1814 SE MANTUA ST., ~~FLA~~ FL, 34952

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

MANTUA ST. Port of Luge

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Tim Steuber

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

407. 831-8119

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390 Diane Court Casselberry, FL 32707

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ANDY GRIFFITHS

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

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MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

40 KEY HAVEN RD KEY WEST FL 33040

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

ANDY GRIFFITHS CHARTERS

Key West
Charterboat ASSC

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES

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NO

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~~Shrimp~~ Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Tim Fletcher

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321-432-5875

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275-5 SPRING DRIVE Merritt Is, FL 32953

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

COOL BEANS CHARTERS

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

BARRETT Coby

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

(321) 453-4583

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1950 N TROPICAL TRL

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

MELNITY ISLAND FLA

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

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Gregory DeBrango

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2036 CoCo Palm Dr

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Flying Tiger Fish Co

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

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1029 23rd St., Orlando, FL 32805

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES ☒

NO ☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES ☐

NO ☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Scott Bossed

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321-863-2838

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

2793 GLENRIDGE CIRCLE *MERRITT ISLAND, FL 32953*

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Jim Gillespie

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321-514-0712

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441 SANDY KEY, MELBOURNE BEACH, FL 32951

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Tony Bob

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321-951-4661

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

467 Ocean Side SW Palm Bay FL 32909

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Ron Runcos

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321 727 1036

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

3950 COREY RD

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Retired

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Stephen Gillespie

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321 - 693 - 6677

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

104 Venus Ct

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Indian Atlantic FL 32903

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Russ Lowers

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321-759-6022

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

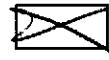
1084 Kingfisher Way Rockledge FL 32955

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES



NO

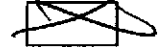
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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO





SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

CAPT. JOHN ADAMS

321 537-5218

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55 YACHT HAVEN DR., COCOA BEACH, FL 32931

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

CHARTER BOAT / HEAD BOAT INDUSTRY

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES

☒

NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Richard L. Shields

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

772-201-5703

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

705 Kearney Rd. Ft. Pierce FL 34982

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Blue Water Diving

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES ☒

NO ☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES ☒

NO ☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

JEFF PATE

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

401 856-7853

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

11220 CREMO CT ORLANDO FL 32837

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES ☒

NO ☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES ☐

NO ☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ADRIAN MARTINEZ

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321 - 543-8625

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

677 DAVE NISBET BND # 117

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

HANDLER CUSTOM FISHING BOATS

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Stanley L. Mickk Jr.

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321 383-9019

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

4671 Nader Lane Titusville, FL 32780

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Sea Leveler Charter Port Canaveral

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

Jeff Coutant

407-767-9376

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

908 Parson Brown way Longwood, FL 32750

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES

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NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Dave J. Huber

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

(504) 745-1979

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

8773 SE Water Oak Pl., Tequesta, FL 33469

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Recreational Fishing Alliance - FL Chapter

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES

☒

NO

☐

~~Shrimp~~ Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

Shawn Dick

877-411-4272

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

P.O. Box 730248 Ormond Bch, FL 32173-0248

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Angler Conservation Education (A.C.E.)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES

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NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Jess H. Dick

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

877-411-4272

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

121 Ogden Blvd Daytona Beach FL 32118

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

ARC-Dehooker

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES

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NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

WALTER EISMANN

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

407-822-3700

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

2220 FOGAR CT OVIEDO, FL. 32765

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Terry Winn

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

407-321-0664

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

PO Box 190 Osteen FL 32164

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Central FLA Offshore Anglers-

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

GALE M. NELSON

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

(321) 453-4363

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

233 VIA HAWAII MERRITT Island 32953

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

FSFA

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

☒

~~Shrimp Amendment 7~~ (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Richard Kluglein

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

772-812-1598

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

240 S.W. Marathon Ave Port St. Lucie FL 34953

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Fins Sport Fishing

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

John Barber

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

407 834 4228

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1331 Boyer St Longwood FL 32750

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DBS

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

☐

~~Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)~~

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Russell Sinclair

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321 302-4626

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1376 Bermuda Ave Merritt Island FL 32952

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Big Game Fishing LLC *[Signature]*

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

Patrick MAGERSY

407 324 7573

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

845 Conch Lane Ct Sanford FL 32771

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☒



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

BEN MARTIN

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

COASTAL ANGLER MAGAZINE

321-777-2773

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1290 HWY 1A, SATELLITE BEACH, FL 32937

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

COASTAL ANGLER MAGAZINE

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Paul Golub

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

407 3759896

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

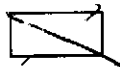
104 Butternut Ln Longwood FL 32779

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES



NO



Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES



NO





SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

FISH, ANDY

321-684-2746

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1723 HARBOR DR. MERRITT ISL, FL 32953

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

POINT BLANC FL 25338F

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

Add to
mailing
list

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

mail Janice Kowalski, Kowalski

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

402-282-7125

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

846 Excalibur Ct Orlando, FL 32822

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES ☐

NO ☒

~~Shrimp~~ Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES ☐

NO ☒



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Mark Koumaki

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

407-282-7125

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

8046 EXCALIBUR CT ORLANDO, FL 32822

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☒



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

Donald Drenauha

321-7843609

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

580 S. Brevard Ave #834

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Cocoa Beach, FL 32931

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES ☐

NO ☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES ☐

NO ☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

CARL F. ANDREN

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321-725-4115

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

906 S. RAMONA AV, INDIAN LANTIC, FL 32903

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

ANDREN SOFTWARE CO.

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☐

Shrimp/Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☐



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Lisa Frederick

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

772-589-3297

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

13275 OLD DIXIE Hwy Sebastian, FL 32958

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

☒



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Ken Frederick

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

772 589 3297

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

13275 Old Dixie Hwy Sebastian FL 32958

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

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NO

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Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

PAT MURPHY

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321 278 9852

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

4122 MT VERNON AVE

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

TITSMUE FL 32780

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

☒



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Roger Manzey

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

407-359-5988

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

3761 Heirloom Rose Place Oviedo, Fla. 32766

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

None

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☒

NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☒



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Edward Leonard

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

(321) 474-0528

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

3695 Lake Drive Cocoa 32926

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

UF Extension Sea Grant

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermillion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

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SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

JAMES GREEVER

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321 208-7028

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

650 SOMMERS HAMMOCK LN MERRITT ISL, FL 32953

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

F/V ODYSSEY

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES ☐

NO ☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES ☐

NO ☒



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

HARRY D. PRESTON

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321 639-7890

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

4265 VANCOUVER AVE, COCOA, FL 32926

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

USCG AUXILIARY PREVENTION DEPT

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

☒



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Claudia Dennis

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

386-427-6562

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

PO Box 2025 NSB FL 32170

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

NOAA Fisheries

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

☒



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Thomas J. Doherty

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

(321) 242-9282

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

2340 Honeybrook Creek Dr Melbourne FL 32935

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

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NO

☒



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201

NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

CHRIS SPRINGER

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321-453-1207

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

65 N. KENNETH CT. MERITT ISLAND, FL 32952

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

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Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

Peter C. Springer

(321) 453-6551

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

212 2nd Street Merritt Island, Fla. 32953

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

F.S.E.A.

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☒

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

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YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Laurilee Thompson

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321-268-5000

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1475 GARDEN ST Titusville, FL 32796

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Dixie Crossroads Seafood Restaurant

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☒

NO

☐

written - turned in + emailed



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NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Cape Canaveral, FL -- August 8, 2008

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Rodney Thompson

TELEPHONE NUMBER(& AREA CODE)

321-267-3202

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

860 N. Singleyok Ave., Titusville, FL 32796

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Cape Canaveral Shrimp Co. Inc

Please check the "yes" box below if you wish to make a statement.

SG Amendment 16 (gag and vermilion snapper)

YES

☐

NO

☐

Shrimp Amendment 7 (rock shrimp and reporting)

YES

☐

NO

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