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Outreach and
Communications
Advisory Panel Chair

THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Outreach and Communications Advisory Panel Report

June 2026



Updates



AP Member Share



Habitat FAQ: Updates on Flow Policy and updated FAQs.
New focus on habitat webinar series development.
Webinar on sargassum?



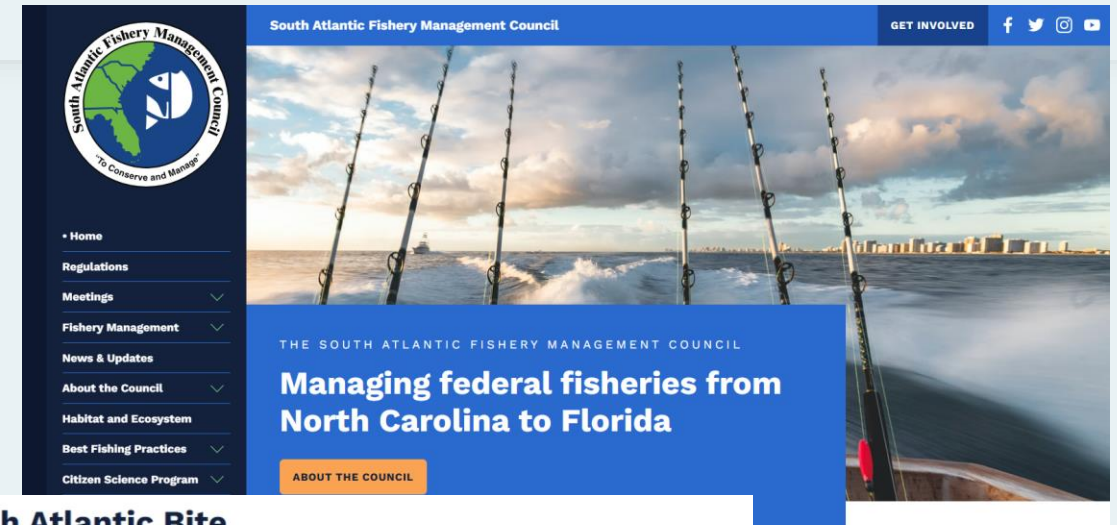
Red Snapper Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs): Florida, North Carolina, and South Carolina presented details.



Magnuson-Stevens Act 50th Anniversary

Digital Communications Analytics Feedback

- Continue the South Atlantic Bite newsletters.
- How do Council metrics compare to other Councils?
- Are open and click through rates for emails good? YES
- Include FishRules analytics at the next AP meeting.



South Atlantic Bite



[The South Atlantic Bite](#)

May 14, 2026

The South Atlantic Bite is a biweekly newsletter with timely updates on offshore fisheries from North Carolina to the Florida Keys. It brings together management actions, science news, regulations, and key dates in one place, your one-stop shop for staying informed on South Atlantic offshore fisheries.



[The South Atlantic Bite](#)

April 30, 2026

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April 9, 2026

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Draft Goals, Objectives, and Strategies Feedback

-  Need to improve quality and usefulness of comments, not just quantity.
-  Strong support for a clear outreach and communications structure.
-  Personal testimony and storytelling can be good for outreach, but also evaluation.
-  Continue collaboration with local captains (building trust the primary goal).
-  Explore evaluation methods and outreach approaches used by outside organizations.
-  Consider an agency page on FishBrain.

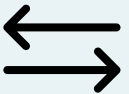
Engaging MREP Alumni and Council Workshop Participants in the Council Process Feedback



Collect phone numbers (with permission) while simplifying sign-ups through online forms and digital tools.



Diversify communication methods; use attention-grabbing language and trusted community contacts to share information.



Allow participants to customize communications options.



Provide participants with simple “next steps” materials.



Lines of Communication

Conversations with the Council

- Aspire to continue engagement beyond a single meeting. Use personalized communication tools.
- Use comment cards rather than sticky dots.
- Capitalize on word-of-mouth recruitment.
- Shorten meetings to ninety minutes.
- Move the tabling session to earlier in agenda.
- Highlight Council members present and encourage follow-up engagement.

Increasing Public Comment Attendance, Engagement, and Accessibility Feedback



Barriers to participation: lack of trust in the process, perceptions that comments do not influence decisions, and difficulty navigating online comment tools.



Simplify outreach and public comment tools through clearer language, fewer acronyms, streamlined forms, concise resources, and more accessible “bite-sized” information.



Consider radio shows, voicemail systems, voice-recording apps, and social media reels.



Strive to have consistent engagement, evaluate outreach effectiveness, and demonstrate how public comments inform Council decisions.



Evaluate both quantitative and qualitative public comment data.

Sea Grant Reef Fish Fellowship Feedback



- The AP emphasized the **value of outreach and engagement fellowship positions re: recreational fisheries** in the South Atlantic.
- Project staff **prepared fellows to transition** into their roles quickly!
- Fellowship was **successful, low-cost and could be replicated.**
- **Future topic areas ideas** include public comment accessibility, long-term engagement, social science outreach, among others.

Sea Grant Release Rodeo Feedback



- Consider push notifications, FishRules banners, videos, and social media promotions.
- Encourage participants to share through their own social networks.
- Expand partnerships (businesses, tackle shops, and fishing clubs).
- Provide clear guidance on how to participate.

SAFMC Release Participant Recognition Program (PRP) and FISHStory Feedback



- **Use PRP milestones** to track engagement and inform future efforts.
- **Expand outreach** to tournaments, captains' meetings, and family friendly events.
- **Develop a video** to highlight the PRP.
- **Custom artwork** could be a unique recognition item.
- App fatigue is real, **so branding and visibility** is evermore important.

Citizen Science Program Indicators Feedback



- Continue to demonstrate how Citizen Science data are being used.
- Indicators align closely with program objectives; Track a broad range of metrics for long-term evaluation.
- Clearly communicate the value and relevance of the Program to different stakeholders – but don't overwhelm them with technical information.



QUESTIONS?