

FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
CITIZEN SCIENCE COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
Jekyll Island, GA
March 5, 2018

The Committee approved the March 2018 Citizen Science Committee meeting agenda and the minutes from the December 2017 meeting.

Review formal recommendations from Citizen Science Action Teams

Staff presented a summary of the development of the work of the Action Teams as it relates to the SAFMC Citizen Science Program Blueprint recommendations; an overview of the development and membership of the Action Teams; the draft program recommendations from the five Citizen Science Action Teams and an overview of 2018 tasks to be completed by the Action Teams. Additional supporting details and rationale for each draft recommendation was provided in **Attachment 1**.

a. Recommendations from Communication/Outreach/Education Action Team –

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Projects should consider pre-testing and post-validation of the data collection method to be used.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

The Program needs to establish training guidelines for projects to follow.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

The Program should help support evaluation of volunteer expectations and attitudes.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

The Program should establish guidelines for disseminating results of projects.

RECOMMENDATION 5:

Projects need to have a clear plan for sharing data and results of projects.

RECOMMENDATION 6:

The Program should support and develop guidelines for project promotion and sharing results that considers audience type.

Guidance – The Committee members felt the recommendations were on track for moving forward with effective communication and engagement of volunteers participating in the Council’s endorsed citizen science projects. Staff provided clarification that the recommendations brought before the Council would now be applied and put in motion through the work of the Action Teams and their help with development of the scamp pilot project in 2018.

b. Recommendations from Finance & Infrastructure Action Team –

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The Council should retain operational oversight of the Citizen Science Program and identify options and pathways for securing the necessary funds to do so.

Guidance – The committee discussed the importance of the work of this Action Team and the need to continue to work on developing ideas for how to support both the operational and programmatic activities of the Council’s Program. Staff discussed the different funding models that could possibly be utilized by the Program to support projects. However, finding external sources of funding for operational/administrative costs continues to be a challenge.

The committee also discussed developing a document that outlines the potential cost-savings of using a citizen science approach to address the Council’s data and research needs as compared to the traditional research approach. Specifically, documenting the pilot project cost-savings using a citizen science approach could provide important rationale for getting buy-in from potential funding partners. Additionally, the committee recommended documenting the cost savings incurred through the use of webinars for the Action Team meetings and the volunteer time contributed by members of the Action Teams through their participation in the Action Teams. This documentation could demonstrate the value and efficiency of using these virtual meeting methods for program development.

c. Recommendations from Data Management Action Team –

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The Program should consider use of the Data Management Resources Inventory as a reference for development of proposal review criteria and project/data standards.

d. Recommendations from Projects/Topics Management Action Team –

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The Program should use existing resources, such as the Council’s Research & Monitoring Plan, to identify priority topics and project ideas for the Program.

RECOMMENDATION 2:

The Program should develop a Citizen Science Research Needs document and develop a process for soliciting additional input and review of the document on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATION 3:

Project criteria should be incorporated, when possible, into a SAFMC Citizen Science Project Endorsement Program.

e. Recommendations from Volunteers Action Team –

RECOMMENDATION 1:

The Program needs to support development of a Volunteer Interest Form to serve as the initial mechanism for engaging volunteers in the Program and to better understand the demographics, interests, skills and experience of potential volunteers.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Program needs to develop Training Plan guidelines to help projects develop initial and continuing training efforts for different types of projects.

Guidance – The committee discussed the importance of developing a comprehensive training plan for projects. Ensuring a well-designed training plan on data collection methods and the science behind the methods will be critical for getting buy-in from scientists and the SEFSC about the methods used to collect data for a project and provide credibility to the project.

f. General Recommendations – All Action Teams –

RECOMMENDATION 1:

Designate A-team liaisons to coordinate collaboration between A-Teams.

No motions were made during the discussion.

Other Business

No further business was brought before the committee.

Note: Council staff drafts the timing and task motion based on Committee action. If points require clarification, they will be added to the draft motion. The Committee should review this wording carefully to be sure it accurately reflects their intent prior to making the motion.

Timing and Task(s)

No additional motions were made.