



# SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston SC 29405

Call: (843) 571-4366 | Toll-Free: (866) SAFMC-10 | Fax: (843) 769-4520 | Connect: [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net)

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Trish Murphey, Chair | Jessica McCawley, Vice Chair  
John Carmichael, Executive Director

## AGENDA

### Citizen Science Operations Committee SAFMC Office – Charleston, SC

**Wednesday, October 30, 2024 from 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Thursday, October 31, 2024 from 8:30 a.m. – 12 p.m.**

Webinar Registration Link: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/3034686618951572054>

1. Welcome & Meeting Overview
2. Citizen Science Initial Evaluation Plan (*Attachments 1a – 1e*)
  - a. Researcher findings & recommendations
  - b. Committee discussion and development of recommendations on ways to incorporate research findings into the Citizen Science Program
  - c. Citizen Science Program Planning – progress update
3. Citizen Science Program Update (*Attachments 2a and 2b*)

Other Business

Adjourn

#### **Operations Committee Members**

Scott Baker, Citizen Science Projects/Topics A-Team

Wally Bublely, SSC representative / SCDNR

Rob Cheshire, SEFSC representative

Michelle Duval, Fisheries Consultant

Will Heyman, LGL Consulting

Kathy Knowlton, GADNR

Nikhil Mehta, SERO representative

Bob Zales, Fisherman / SFA

#### **Attachments**

**Attachment 1a: Citizen Science Initial Program Evaluation Overview**

**Attachment 1b: Decoding the Motivations of Fishers Considering Participation in Citizen Science Projects - Sweeney Tookes et al. Final Report**

**Attachment 1c: Survey of Scientists & Managers Working in the Region Covered by the SAFMC – Bonney Final Report**

**Attachment 1d: Comparison of Research Findings & Citizen Science Program Efforts**

**Attachment 1e: Citizen Science Program Planning Progress Update**

**Attachment 2a: Citizen Science Program Update Presentation**  
**Attachment 2b: SAFMC Release & Best Fishing Practices Outreach Progress**

Staff Lead: Julia Byrd

# OVERVIEW

## Citizen Science Operations Committee

### 1. Welcome & Meeting Overview

Overview of webinar agenda, materials, and goals for the meeting

Meeting Goals:

- *Committee member introductions and meeting logistics.*
- *Researchers share findings from Citizen Science Program evaluation work. Discuss findings and develop recommendations for Citizen Science Program response.*
- *Review Citizen Science Program Planning document and progress made toward addressing Program goals, objectives, and strategies. Provide guidance on Program priorities.*
- *Provide update on Citizen Science program and project activities.*

Public Comment

### 2. Citizen Science Initial Evaluation Plan (*Attachments 1a-1e*)

- a. At their December 2020 meeting, the Council supported working with Rick Bonney on an initial evaluation plan for the SAFMC's Citizen Science Program (Program). The detailed evaluation plan can be found [HERE](#). The plan focuses on gathering baseline data on knowledge, attitudes, collaborations, engagement, and trust from various stakeholder groups to help evaluate the Program's fourth goal to 'foster mutual learning, collaboration, and program engagement'.

In the original evaluation plan, baseline data was proposed to be collected in three phases: 1) interviews, 2) the development and piloting of an online survey, and 3) the implementation of the online survey. Rick Bonney presented [findings from the phase one interviews](#) to the Operations Committee in May 2023 and to the SAFMC in June 2023. Conclusions from the interviews noted the fisherman audience needed to be studied in much more detail and that research into the needs, desires, and motivations of fishermen and how best to reach fishermen will be critical to the Program. Bonney also noted that when collecting information from a broader group of fishermen, scientists, and managers deploying an online survey to scientists and managers should not be too challenging, but deploying an online survey to fishermen could be challenging.

During summer 2022, additional funding was obtained for this project through NOAA Fisheries and the SAFMC. Staff consulted with Rick Bonney on how best to apply the funds to these evaluation efforts. The decision was made to have Rick Bonney lead the research to gather information from a broader group of scientists and managers through an online survey and to put out a request for proposals in December 2022 to gather information from a broader group of fishermen. [Jennifer Sweeney Tookes and Tracey Yandle's proposal](#) was selected for funding. They collected information from a broader group of fishermen via interviews.

Over the past 1-2 years, Bonney and the Sweeney Tookes' et al. research team and Yandle team completed their research and final reports (*Attachments 1b and 1c*). The researchers will present their findings along with recommendations for the Citizen Science Program based on their efforts.

- b. Staff will provide an overview comparing key findings from the Bonney and Sweeney Tookes et al. research and share efforts the Citizen Science Program is currently undertaking that may address report recommendations (*Attachment 1d*).

The Committee is asked to provide input focused on the following discussion questions.

- What are ways the Citizen Science Program should adapt or be refined based on these research efforts?
  - What points of confusion or stakeholder concern do you think we should prioritize addressing in our communication? Should we develop some additional communication products (e.g., online document, video, etc.) to address key issues?
  - How can we try to address the power dynamic at play for the Citizen Science Program?
  - What issues, challenges, and recommendations should the Program prioritize addressing in the short term (1-3 years)? In the long term (> 3 years)?
- c. During 2020, the Citizen Science Operations Committee developed and/or refined the Citizen Science Program's Planning document which included a vision, mission, goals, objectives, strategies, and draft indicators of success. The Council reviewed and adopted these in December 2020. Since then, Council staff have used the Program Planning document to determine annual work plans and guide the overall direction of the Program. *Attachment 1e* provides an overview of the Citizen Science Program's activities under each goal and objective from 2019-2024.

The Committee is asked to provide input focused on the following discussion questions.

- Have the Citizen Science Program activities to date focused on the appropriate objectives and strategies for the Program?
- Are there any objectives whose strategies should be adjusted and/or edited?
- Are there specific objectives or strategies that have not been addressed or that haven't been addressed fully that should be a priority for the Citizen Science Program?
- What objectives and/or strategies should the Citizen Science Program focus on prioritizing in the short term (1-3 years)? In the long term (> 3 years)?

### **3. Citizen Science Program Update (*Attachments 2a and 2b*)**

Staff will provide a brief update on the Citizen Science Program highlighting recent programmatic and project activities.

Other Business

Adjourn