

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

DOLPHIN WAHOO ADVISORY PANEL

**Town and Country Inn
Charleston, South Carolina**

November 6-7, 2023

Transcript

Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel

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Jonathan Reynolds, Vice Chair
James “Chip” Berry
Robert Frevert
Jay Kavanagh
Daniel Owsley

Paul Pancake
Time Scalise
Rom Whitaker, III
Bill Richardson
Richard DeLizza
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Meg Withers

Attendees and Invited Participants

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Martha Guyas
Alana Harrison

Thomas Newman
Dewey Hemilright
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Observers and Participants

Other observers and participants attached.

The Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened at the Town and Country Inn, Charleston, South Carolina, on November 6, 2023, and was called to order by Chairman Chris Burrows.

MR. BURROWS: First of all, welcome. Things you did to get here are appreciated, and it's wonderful to see more people here than we've seen at a meeting in a while, and so I'm happy. Let's introduce ourselves, and we'll start over there.

MR. HARRIS: Richard Harris, Oregon Inlet, North Carolina.

MR. KAVANAGH: Jay Kavanagh, Hatteras, North Carolina.

MR. SCALISE: Tim Scalise, Charleston.

MR. REYNOLDS: Jon Reynolds, south Florida and Florida Keys, charter fisherman.

MR. HADLEY: John Hadley, South Atlantic Council staff.

MR. BERRY: Chip Berry, Wilmington, North Carolina.

MR. BURROWS: Chris Burrows, Brunswick County, North Carolina.

MR. WHITAKER: Rom Whitaker, Hatteras, charter boat fisherman.

MR. FREVERT: Bob Frevert, south Florida, rec fisherman.

MR. OWSLEY: Dan Owsley, north Florida.

MR. PANCAKE: Paul Pancake, Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.

MR. RICHARDSON: Bill Richardson, Virginia Beach.

MR. BURROWS: All right. Well, welcome, and thank you. I'm sure that everyone has read the agenda by now, and is there any objection to anything that you have seen on there? Seeing no dissent, can we approve by consensus? The agenda is approved, and I'm sure that everybody has read the ninety-nine pages of the minutes. Does anybody feel they were misquoted or out of context? Okay. Any dissention at all? Then we will approve that by consensus, if no one says anything else. I will turn it over to Kerry, I believe, or it's that time.

MR. HADLEY: If there is -- This is the time for public comment, and there's no public in the room here, but, if there's anyone online that would like to make a public comment, please raise your hand, and I will unmute you. We'll give it just a second. All right. Seeing no hands online, I believe there is no public comment at this time.

The request is to go over who is online, and, before handing it over to Kerry, who is in the room here, I do want to acknowledge a few of the council members that are online, and we have Tim Griner, who is online from -- A council member from North Carolina, and also, from North Carolina, we have Trish Murphey, who is the vice chair of the council, and also Tom Roller as

well, who will be here in-person later on in the meeting. I will run down the list of other participants that are on the webinar. We have David Wamer, Julia Byrd, Martha Guyas, Matthew Bunting, Meg Withers, Myra Brouwer, Nik Mehta, and those are the webinar attendees.

MS. MARHEFKA: Hi, everyone. I'm Kerry Marhefka, and I am the chair of the council's Dolphin Wahoo Committee. If you don't know me, I'm also from Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. My husband is a commercial hook-and-line fisherman, and we own a seafood company here locally. Thank you for taking the time to be here this week. I really, really appreciate it. The council -- You know, I know it's a lot to come here, especially coming from the Outer Banks and south Florida, and I know that's a haul, but I want you to know how much we really do appreciate our APs, when they come. We learn a lot, and it's where we really get our best information.

We're spread out, obviously, all four states, but we don't know everything, and we don't pretend to, by any stretch, and so it means a lot when you guys come here and have really good discussion. I think you will be going over sort of where the council is right now, but, you know, briefly, I will just tell you that we're working through this management strategy evaluation process, or it's going through NOAA, and the council is getting updates, and hopefully you've heard a little bit about it, and, as that works through the process, we will sort of keep checking in and decide if we're going to pick up Regulatory Amendment 3, which is something the council has talked about a little, which was sort of the -- After Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10, there were still some issues that our constituents brought up, as far as trip limits, bag limits for trips, and other things.

As this MSE process continues, the council is paying attention, and the council is trying to figure out what's going to come out of that, and sort of how we should respond to that, and so we're really paying attention to all these inputs that are going on in regard to the dolphin fishery, and we're trying to hear what everyone has to say and respond appropriately.

The other thing we're doing is having conversations and getting updates on what's going on with -- I always mess this up, but WECAFC, the Western Caribbean Fisheries Management -- It's a really hard acronym, but that's the group that is sort of looking at dolphin outside of the U.S., and in other places, where we all know some of the things we're seeing are originating, and the council doesn't really have control over. As you all know, we can sort of only control our area from North Carolina to Florida in the EEZ, and so I think we're getting an update from those folks in March, but there will be some conversation about that.

We're here to listen to what you have to say. Thank you for being here. If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to John, who is the staff person responsible, or myself, and you can also call anytime, or email me anytime, because that's my job, as the chair of the committee, and so thank you all for being here.

MR. BURROWS: Thank you, Kerry. We're now at Item 2, which is an Update on the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Citizen Science Program, and we have -- The staff will be -- There's no name, and so --

MR. HADLEY: We have Julia Byrd, who is going to be presenting remotely. If you give me just a minute, I'm going to transfer over the presentation screen to her, and we will get underway with the citizen science presentation. All right, Julia, I believe -- There we go. We see your screen now.

MS. BYRD: All right, and hopefully you all can hear me as well. Good afternoon, everyone. I'm sorry that I'm not able to be with you there in person. For those that I haven't had an opportunity to meet yet, I am Julia Byrd, and I help run the council's Citizen Science Program, along with Meg Withers, who I believe is the room with you, who is the Project Coordinator for the Citizen Science Program.

What we wanted to do today is just give you a quick update on what's been happening in the Citizen Science Program since you all met last year, and then, hopefully, get some insight from you guys, and feedback from you guys, on our FISHstory project.

The first thing we'll talk about is kind of citizen science advisory groups, and we'll see if we have anyone who may be interested in getting involved in those, and I will give an update on a new kind of online tool that the Citizen Science Program will be launching later this year, and then an update on a couple of our projects, and then, with our FISHstory citizen science project, we were going to share some results from our pilot project with you, to share a little bit of what we learned through the kind of historic photos that were included as part of that pilot project, and then talk to you guys a little bit about how we're working to expand the project and gather new historic fishing photos, and so I believe that Meg Withers is set up in the room, and so, if any of you guys brought historic photos, we would love for you to connect with her, to help us continue to grow our FISHstory project.

First off, just a little information on the citizen science advisory panels. We have three different advisory panels, and all of the members of our advisory panels are either members of other kind of council advisory panels or they're members of what we call a citizen science pool, and so the first of these kind of advisory panels is called kind of our Operations Committee, and this is a group that provides kind of big picture kind of programmatic guidance for our Citizen Science Program, and it's a group that meets a couple of times a year, and they have three to five-year terms, and the council will be making appointments to our Operations Committee in December. If you're interested in getting involved in kind of the big-picture aspects of our Citizen Science Program, as it grows and continues to move forward, this is a great committee to be involved with.

The second of our advisory panels is our Projects Advisory Committee, and so this is a group that's made up of members of all the different other council advisory panels, and kind of one of the main roles of this group is to help us develop kind of research priorities that could be addressed through citizen science projects, kind of across all of the council's fishery management plans, and so the term for kind of folks serving on this committee is dependent on an individual's AP tenure. This is a group that typically meets just once a year, via webinar.

Then the last group we have are ad hoc committees, which are kind of short-term committees that are formed to address a specific kind of issue, and so an example of this type of ad hoc committee is, when we started the Citizen Science Program, a number of years ago, we had different kind of ad hoc groups, and we called them action teams, that helped us develop the program and our policies and best practices and that sort of thing.

One of the reasons that I wanted to share information with you guys about our advisory panels is due to kind of the Projects Advisory Committee, and, again, this is a group that's made up of members of folks on all the different council APs, and Jon Reynolds has been the Dolphin Wahoo

AP representative for a number of years, and he's provided really helpful, valuable feedback, but we're able to have up to two members from each of the different council advisory panels join this group, and so we're really lucky that Jon is interested in continuing to serve on this group, but I just wanted to put a plug in that, if any of you guys may be interested in kind of serving on this group, and it's not a heavy lift, and it just meets via webinar once a year, and I would love to hear from you. If you're interested, or you just want to learn more about it, Meg Withers is in the room, and you can ask her. If you're interested, you can contact me or Meg or John Hadley, and we would love to have another member of the Dolphin Wahoo AP involved in this group, if someone is interested.

Moving on, the next thing I wanted to update you guys is a new kind of online tool that our Citizen Science Program is developing, and it's something we're calling the projects idea portal, and so, basically, what this is, it's an online form that can gather citizen science project ideas from stakeholders throughout the region, and so fishermen, scientists, and managers can kind of submit their kind of project ideas to help fill some of our data gaps in the region using citizen science, and so how this information will be used is our program will kind of review all of the ideas submitted twice a year, in May and October, and then, when we update our citizen science research priorities, which we do every two years, and those kind of guide the types of projects that we develop, we'll kind of compile all the ideas that have come through this citizen science projects idea portal to be considered when we're updating our research priorities, and then we're also hoping that, by putting this project idea portal out there, it maybe will help us connect kind of fishermen and scientists that may have similar research interests to kind of work together to develop projects that way as well, and so the council kind of approved the launching of this tool back in June, and so we're building the online forum, and hopefully we'll get it off the ground and available on the council's website later this year.

Next, a quick update on one of our pilot projects called SMILE, and, as a quick reminder, this is a project where we are partnering with recreational divers to collect length information on data-limited species, using kind of a hand-held stereo camera that divers can use. This project is being led by REEF, which is a really successful citizen science program that's been working with recreational divers for decades, and, as part of this project, they're developing kind of an underwater stereo camera, and so they're using -- They are using kind of an Olympus underwater camera, and they are mounting a laser on top of it, and then divers can use this camera to take video and images, and then that video can be analyzed to get the size estimates of different fish species, and this project is being pilot tested in the Florida Keys.

These camera prototypes went in the water for the first time in August and September this year, and there are a few more kind of field testing trips later this year. The cameras seem to be working pretty well, and folks are able to gather images of a number of fish, like some of the larger grouper species, and hogfish, as well as some of the parrotfishes, which are really important for the kind of reef habitat down there.

Next, a quick update on our Release project, and this is the project where we're working with for-hire recreational and commercial fishermen to gather information on released snapper grouper species, and, in particular, shallow-water grouper and red snapper. Fishermen are using this free app called SciFish to gather this information, and so this project has been going on for a couple of years, and so we're kind of recruiting new folks to the program, and people are continuing to log information on their released grouper and red snapper within the app.

Meg Withers has really taken the lead and done an awesome job doing outreach for this project, kind of sharing what we've learned through our kind of participants logging of information and doing a lot to kind of recruit new participants to the project and make sure that everyone in the program kind of knows what is going on, and there are clear lines of communication. Meg, this year, also developed a participant recognition program to really highlight the accomplishments of all of the folks who have been participating in the program, and then, each year, we've put together an annual data summary, and I don't think that I shared that with you all at your spring meeting last year, and so I just wanted to mention that quickly.

Again, I mentioned that Meg has been doing an awesome job doing outreach for the Release project, and she's been working really closely with the council's Best Fishing Practices campaign, and, in particular, Ashley Oliver, who you will be hearing from later in your meeting, and David Hugo, who is the Sea Grant Reef Fish Extension Fellow, and so they've been visiting tackle shops, and have been doing seminars and collaborating with fishing clubs to share information on best fishing practices and the Release project, as well as we've been working to have partnerships with many of our state agency partners as well, and a special shoutout to Chris Burrows, who has an awesome column in *Carolina Sportsman*, and we actually collaborated with him, and he did a wonderful article on best fishing practices, in particular descending devices, and also kind of highlighted our Release project.

Again, the last thing that I wanted to quickly mention about Release is, at the end of each year, we put together a data summary, and it includes kind of a summary of all the information that our participants have logged within the app, and so, on the screen, you can see kind of a list of the type of information that folks are submitting. At the bottom of the screen, and in your briefing book in this presentation, there's a link, if you want to check out our 2022 data summary, and we'll be putting together our 2023 data summary in early January, and, once we share it with our project participants, then we'll make it available on the council's website, and so, if you're interested in keeping up with the program, a great way to do that is by looking at our annual data summaries.

Then the last project that I wanted to talk about really was our FISHstory project, and so this is a project where we're using historic fishing photos to have a better idea of kind of what was caught, and the size of the fish that were caught, back in the 1950s and 1960s and 1970s, prior to when catch monitoring programs were in place in the South Atlantic, and so we wrapped up our pilot projects, I believe it was last year, and we didn't have results in time for your April AP meeting, and so I wanted to share some of what we've learned through our FISHstory pilot project and then talk a little bit about how we're expanding the project moving forward, and so one of the key things in expanding this project is getting more historic photos, and so that's one of the reasons that Meg has set up kind of a scanning station in the room, to hopefully scan any photos that you all may have brought in.

For those of you who have been on the AP for a while, I know you've heard a couple of updates on the project, and you probably know what a large role kind of the retired captain, Rusty Hudson, played in the project, and he kind of donated all of his family's fishing photos for our pilot, but this image on the screen is a small Rusty with a red snapper.

As a quick reminder, just the FISHstory project has three main components, and one is digitizing and archiving these historic photos, and, as part of the pilot, we digitized over 1,370 photos, and,

actually, Rusty is the one who did that work, scanning everything in, and there's a second component of the project that's getting for-hire catch composition data gathered from these images, and we're doing that using an online crowdsourcing platform called Zooniverse, and so it's a platform that allows you to kind of upload your images and then train people to analyze them from around the world, and so, in our case, we're uploading these historic fishing photos, and we've put together kind of training materials, so that folks can help us identify and count the fish in these photos.

As part of this pilot, we had over 2,100 volunteers that made over 35,000 individual classifications, and so that's in individual species IDs and counts, and we have multiple volunteers, or citizen scientists, looking at each photo, and, when there was substantial volunteer disagreement, we had a validation team of fish ID experts that was really a mix of fishermen and scientists that kind of reviewed those photos, and, through the pilot, they reviewed 180 photos.

Then the third component of the project is developing a method to estimate the size of fish in the photos, using the lumber in the leaderboard kind of as a scale, and so, as the pilot, all of the photos were reviewed, and king mackerel were measured whenever they were present, using this kind of length estimation method that we developed.

First off, I just wanted to give you kind of a little bit of information on the photos that we gathered through the pilot project. They were all from the Daytona Beach, Florida area, and they mainly were from trips departing from two locations, Inlet Harbor and Timmons Fish Camp, and so the orange kind of star on the map shows you about where that falls along the Florida coast. Photos ranged from 1949 to 1975, and so the kind of donut graph on the left-hand side of the screen shows you kind of the percent of photos by decade, and so the majority of photos are from the 1960s, but we had a good number of photos from the 1950s and 1970s as well.

The graph on the right-hand side of the screen kind of shows the photos that we had per month, and so you can see that the kind of highest number of photos were between April and August, which likely mimicked the effort in that fleet.

We had photos from over fifteen different vessels, but the majority of photos came from these five vessels on the screen, the Flamingo, the Mako, the Broadbill, the Maryann, and the Miss Juanita, and, before getting into kind of results, I wanted to show you some of the example photos that were archived as part of this project, and so there is kind of a range of difficulty of photos, and so the photo on the screen right now is one that is kind of pretty easy to count and identify the fish in the photos. There are not a ton of fish, and they're all spread out. There are no people standing up and kind of blocking the fish, and you're able to see the whole fish. There are only a couple of species, king mackerel and little tunny, and so this is what we consider more of a kind of easy photo for our volunteers, or citizen scientists, to analyze.

On the other end of the spectrum, this is an example of a photo that we very lovingly call kind of a dumpster fire. Even though this photo is color, the resolution isn't great, and there are a ton of different fish, a ton of different species. If you look closely in the back, you can see that there's stringers of fish, and so fish lying on top of one another that make it really hard to identify those fish. There is a wheelbarrow of fish, and then there are people standing in front of fish too, and so I just think it's helpful, as we start showing you some of the kind of results, how data were collected

and some of the results, it's helpful to know there is kind of a wide range of difficulty in the photos that we have as part of the archive right now.

Before getting into results, just to give you a little idea on how the data were collected by our citizen scientists through the Zooniverse platform, we have kind of two ways that people could help us identify and count the fish in the photos, and those two tasks were called workflows in the Zooniverse kind of lingo, and so, the first one, we had volunteers count just the total number of fish and the total number of people in the photos, and so this was an easier workflow. They used a marking tool and just kind of marked each individual fish and each individual person in the photos.

We had ten volunteers looking at each individual photo, and, after looking at some of the preliminary information, our validation team didn't need to review anything. Folks were really good at counting the fish and the people in the photos, and all of the photos in our archive were kind of analyzed through this easy workflow.

Then we had a second workflow that was a little harder, and that's where people were actually identifying fish into sixteen species or species groups, and then we were also asking them to document any obstructed fish, and so fish where kind of people were standing in front of it, or there were big piles of fish, where they weren't able to get identifications, and so, since this was a harder workflow, we kind of did this through a tiered, two-step data collection process, and so, first off, we had folks kind of mark the species within four species or species groups. They marked red snapper, an amberjack group, kind mackerel, or grouper. These were some of the fish that appeared most frequently in the photos, and ones that we manage, and so we had folks initially kind of mark those four species and then mark any obstructed fish.

Then, before moving on to the next photo, they would then be asked to provide bin counts of all the other species, and you can see the kind of species listed here in the table on the left-hand side of the screen. Since this was a harder workflow, we had twenty volunteers looking at each of these photos and then had a validation team review the photos when there was substantial volunteer disagreement. Through the pilot, we had a thousand photos that were completed as part of this process, this harder workflow.

Now I wanted to share just some of the results from the pilot project, and so, first, I just want to kind of orient you to the graph on the screen, and so, on the bottom, you can see the sixteen different species, or species groups, that we were asking volunteers to identify within the photos, along with obstructed fish, and, kind of up and down the graph, on the left-hand side, there's a difference, and so what this graph shows is it's comparing species counts for the 180 photos that our citizen scientists and our validation team, our fish ID experts, both reviewed.

The closer the boxes are to this zero-difference line, the closer the counts were between those two groups, and, if the boxes are above the zero-difference line, that means the validation team, or fish ID experts, counted more. If they're below the zero-difference line, that meant that our citizen scientists, or volunteers, counted more of that particular species, and so, in general, when you look at things, agreement was pretty good between these two groups.

There were a couple of species that had fairly large differences, and two of those were black sea bass and other snapper, and there were also some biases in these kind of counts of those two

species. The kind of boxes are above the zero-difference line, and so our validation team tended to count more than our volunteers, and we think there are a couple of reasons for that. One is black sea bass typically occurred kind of hanging lower on the leaderboards, or they were the species that were in the wheelbarrows, the big piles of fish, and so could have been more easily missed by volunteers, and then, for the snapper other category, and that's any snapper besides red snapper, we think that there could have been some misidentifications in there with red snapper that could have caused kind of citizen scientists to count less than our validation team.

The two other species groups where you saw the biggest differences were in obstructed fish, although you don't see the same bias in these two. Obstructed fish, we learned, was pretty subjective, and different folks had different ideas of which fish they were able to identify or they weren't, and then, with red snapper, red snapper was one of the species that occurred most frequently in the photos, which likely played into the larger kind of variation we saw there, but, again, with obstructed fish and red snapper, you didn't see the same biases, where kind of one of these two groups, the validation team or the citizen scientists, tended to count more or less.

Since the agreement looked pretty well, we're able to look at the data from these photos, in particular for the four species that occurred most frequently in the photos, grouper, amberjack, king mackerel and red snapper. We're able to look at things like catch per trip over time, and then I quickly wanted to kind of share a little bit of information on the third component of the project.

Again, this is the part of the project where we estimated the size of fish, using the lumber in the leaderboard as a scale, and so we have kind of a multistep process, and we were able to have five analysts from different places in the South Atlantic help contribute to the analyses of this component of the project, and, after we developed kind of the methodology to measure fish within the photos, we tested it out on king mackerel.

Just to kind of show you some results, this is kind of king mackerel length composition from these history photos by decade. We can put together annual length compositions, but the number of photos per year varies quite a bit, and so looking at them at years grouped together could be more helpful, and so you can see this is the length composition from the 1950s. The mode, and so the size of fish we saw most frequently, were twenty-nine-inch fork length fish. In the 1970s, you can see that shift to slightly smaller fish, and then, if you look at the 1970s, you can see that shift to slightly larger fish.

The kind of key take-aways from the project are, really, the kind of methods that were developed to analyze these historic photos showed a lot of promise. Volunteers are making valuable contributions, and, you know, fishermen, in particular Rusty, for the pilot, with sharing photos to archive, and we had volunteers who helped us count and identify fish in the photos through Zooniverse, and then we had kind of a validation team of scientists and fishermen who are volunteering to help us kind of analyze any photos where there was substantial volunteer disagreement, and so volunteers are making valuable contributions in multiple ways to this project, but we realize that identifying fish in this historic photos can be challenging, especially for some of those kind of dumpster-fire-like photos.

As we're working to expand the project moving forward, we're going to simplify data collection, which I think will help us improve data quality, and I think the work done in the pilot is -- We're going to be able to make the project kind of more efficient as it moves into its next stages, and

then one of the most awesome things that we learned through the project is fishermen really seemed to be very interested in sharing their historic photos and stories, and so that's one of the reasons that we're starting to kind of put together scanning events like the one at the AP meeting, to try to gather more historic photos.

As the project moves forward, we're really lucky, and we've been able to find -- We applied for a couple of grants, and we were able to get some funding to expand the project, and so the next step in doing that is really gathering photos from across the South Atlantic region, and so that will make the data collected from the photos more representative of the South Atlantic as a whole.

One of the ways we're hoping to gather more photos is through these FISHstory scanning events, and so the goal of the scanning events is to gather more photos throughout the South Atlantic, from the 1940s through the 1980s, kind of to archive as part of the FISHstory project, and so we've been hosting kind of these scanning events, in collaboration with some of the council and advisory panel meetings, and so we did an event at the September council meeting, at this fall's Snapper Grouper AP and Outreach and Communication AP meetings, and we'll be doing it again at you all's meeting this week, the Mackerel Cobia meeting, which is later this week, and then also at the December council meeting.

At these scanning events, we're kind of asking folks to bring hard-copy or digital photos to the event. If they're hard-copy photos, we're scanning them, and then kind of returning them to the provider. We're saving the digital photos, and then we're collecting some additional kind of details on the photos, things like date or general location, and then, for folks who brings photos in, if they want kind of digital copies of the photos, we'll provide those back to the photo providers.

I wanted to highlight some of kind of the key things we need in photos, so that they can be analyzed as part of the FISHstory project, and so, for photos to be good for kind of analysis in this project, the photos need to be taken at the end of a fishing trip, where kind of the harvested catch is displayed with the anglers. We need to have a little bit of information on the date, in particular the year that photo was taken. If you don't know the exact year, kind of a ballpark year, and a five-year kind of range is okay.

We want information on the photo's location. We have to have at least state. If you have more detail on location, that's even better, and then we want to make sure we're getting the photo provider's name and contact information, and that's more just to kind of be able to make sure we're sharing information on what's happening with the FISHstory project back with folks who are providing photos, who are very generously providing their photos for the project.

What makes photos even better for analysis is if the fish are kind of hanging on a leaderboard, and that helps us estimate the size of fish in the photos. If we have more specific date information, things like month, then we can look at seasonality in catches. More specific location information, things like city and dock, are great, and we love to get information on kind of the vessel's name, or the captain's name, if possible, as well.

Just a few examples of the types of photos that we're looking for, and this first one is one that Rusty provided, and is part of our current kind of archive. It's kind of the gold standard, and kind of you're seeing the fish, harvested fish, displayed at the end of the trip, hanging on a leaderboard, and you're seeing the anglers in front of it. We have a year, month, and date of the photo. We

know the city, the dock, the state, the vessel name, the captain name. We have kind of all the information.

Another example of a great photo is -- This one came from the Outer Banks, and we got it from the Outer Banks History Museum up in Manteo, and it's a great photo, and, again, the fish are kind of hanging on a leaderboard, and you can see the harvested catch with the folks who caught it. We have a year associated with it, and we know the city and the dock and the kind of state.

Another example photo, and this one was provided by one of our council members, Judy Helmey. Again, this photo is good for use in FISHstory. The fish are kind of displayed on the dock. They're laid out, and so you can identify the individual fish. They're not hanging on the leaderboard, and so we have a much harder time trying to estimate size of fish in a photo like this, but it's still really helpful for species composition, and then the last example is another one that Judy provided. Again, this one is a little more challenging to gather information from, since they're kind of fish in a large pile on the ground, on the dock, and so it's harder to make individual fish IDs. You can do it for some of the fish, and then they're also holding some of the kind of large red snapper in the photo, and so any of those example photos are kind of the types of photos that we're really looking for for the FISHstory project.

Then we've also started kind of exploring other avenues to gather historic photos. We started reaching out to some historical societies and organizations that have been recommended by some of our AP members, or our council members, and we've also started reaching out to some libraries, and then folks have also recommended some restaurants that have photos kind of hanging on their walls as other places that we may be able to gather these photos.

The last thing I have was kind of questions for you guys on how we might be able to kind of expand the project by gathering more kind of historic fishing photos, and so I know that John sent out information, and I know I contacted a few of you all, to see if you have historic photos. If you do, and you brought them to the meeting, awesome, and thank you so much. Visit Meg at the FISHstory table, and she can get those scanned. I know that Jon Reynolds has provided some kind of digital photos to me, and so, if you have digital photos, that's great too, and that just saves us kind of the step of having to scan things.

If you have photos, but you didn't bring them to the meeting, but you are willing to kind of share them with the FISHstory project, again, you can check in with me, or check in with Meg at the meeting this week, so we can coordinate with you to figure out the best way to kind of share those photos, and then some questions that I have for you guys specifically are kind of we're exploring holding scanning events kind of outside of council-related meetings, and so, if we did that, we wanted to see if you guys had any suggestions on where we could hold events.

Like, if any of you guys think that events would be successful kind of where you all are, that would be great to know. If you have other ideas, or avenues, you think that we should explore to gather additional historic photos, we would love to know that, or, if there are individuals, or organizations, kind of in your area that may be good contacts to gather historic photos, we would love to hear that too, and so I know we've gotten a lot of great ideas, through our advisory panel meetings that happened this fall, and they were able to provide us some specific like libraries or restaurants, places like that, that may be good to look at in their area.

That was a lot of information in a short amount of time, but I would be happy to answer any questions that you guys have, and I'm interested in hearing any feedback you have kind of on these questions, trying to figure out kind of how we can gather more photos to expand the project.

MR. BURROWS: Julia, thank you. I am not going to say who brought them, but I do see photos on the table, and so thank you. We can discuss this. Does anyone have a comment?

MR. WHITAKER: Well, I did bring some photos, but they probably are not old enough for what really you're looking, but I brought some. If you can use them, fine. If not, fine, but you brought up restaurants. A lot of these old seafood restaurants you go in, and even some of the old pier houses, what few are left, and there are some excellent pictures in there, and I'm sure that you all probably thought about that and covered them, but most of us guys in this room are my age or younger, and so we don't have any pictures back from the 1970s or 1970s, unless maybe our fathers, or grandfathers, were fishing, but, anyway, I do think those -- I know, just thinking of one restaurant in Morehead City, and everybody calls it Tony's Sanitary, but there's numerous pictures on those walls in there, and even a couple others around the area, but I'm sure every old seafood restaurant probably has some good ones, and so that's a good idea.

MS. BYRD: Thanks, Rom. I appreciate you bringing photos so much, and The Sanitary was one that some guys in the Snapper Grouper AP mentioned as well, but, if anyone has any other kind of restaurants that you can think of offhand that may have these photos, it can help us maybe narrow down our universe of folks to reach out to, and so thanks so much, Rom.

MR. BURROWS: Julia, one quick question, and what date range would be too recent for what you're trying to accomplish, and is there any thought of moving that date more towards the present?

MS. BYRD: When we originally were doing the pilot project, we were figuring we would need photos through the 1970s, but then, when we kind of shared some of the pilot project results with some stock assessment analysts -- After seeing the results, they reached out to us, and they said, you know, we really would love to get photos, in particular from kind of like headboat and charter boat photos, from the 1980s, and maybe even into the early 1990s, and the reason for that is -- A lot of the stock assessments, they put together kind of an index of abundance, and so looking at trends and catch rates over time, and there is kind of the headboat logbook survey that was put in place in the 1970s, and I think it started in different years, depending on where you were along the coast, but, if we can get some photos that overlap that time period from when the headboat survey, or when kind of catch monitoring for charter boats started taking place, then we can compare --

We can kind of develop an index from the pictures and compare it to the index from the logbook, to kind of calibrate them with one another, and so I guess that's a long-winded way, Chris, of saying we would love to get photos at least through the 1980s and 1990s, are what we're looking for right now, and I know -- Like Rom said, I know other folks at AP meetings mentioned this too, and said, you know, we really -- It's folks' kind of fathers, or grandfathers, of the folks on our APs, that really might have these photos, and they suggested reaching out to senior centers and things like that. Really, it's through the kind of 1980s and early 1990s that we're looking for right now, although that could expand more into the future, but that's kind of the time range we're looking for right now.

MR. BURROWS: Thank you. Jay, you had your hand up?

MR. KAVANAGH: Yes, and a book just came out, and it's called *Images of America: Sportfishing on the Outer Banks*, by R. Wayne Gray and Nancy Beach Gray, and I got a copy for my birthday recently, and it is full of well-documented photos of sportfish from the Outer Banks.

MS. BYRD: Thanks so much, Jay, and I think that's the same book -- Alana Harrison reached out and mentioned that to me, and so thank you. I will definitely add that to my list, to look into kind of getting that book and seeing where those photos came from. Thanks, Jay.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: I just want to encourage anyone else who will join, and this is a pretty cool -- I mean, there's a lot of motivation for new management strategies with this project, and thank you, Julia. You guys are doing a really good job, everyone involved in this, and so anything you guys can bring or -- You know, this is like motivating a lot of different ideas, and just like, you know, some newer techniques that we might be able to use in management. Then I was going to say that Flanigan's, and Flanigan's is like a restaurant that's loaded with pictures in Miami, and it's just loaded with old fishing pictures.

MS. BYRD: Awesome. Thanks, Jon, and so Flanigan's, and I guess I will echo what Jon said, too. If someone else -- I mean, thank you for all the great feedback, and for some of you guys who brought historic photos in, and, again, if someone else from the Dolphin Wahoo AP is interested in serving on our Projects Advisory Committee, and I think it's really important that we have representatives from all of the different council APs, and so, if there's certain kinds of research priorities for dolphin that would work with citizen science, that we kind of bring those to the table, and so, again, Jon has done a great representing this AP, but, if there's anyone else who is interested in joining, we would love to have you get involved, and it's not a huge time commitment. It's one webinar meeting a year.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks again, Julia. Does anyone else have a comment or a question? Chip.

MR. BERRY: Hello, Julia, and thank you very much. That's a great project you all have going there, and I was just curious. I grew up in Murrells Inlet, South Carolina, and I fished in Georgetown and Murrells Inlet. Back in the late 1960s, and I was a teenager then, I guess, and I was born in 1957, and we started fishing about the early 1970s, my family, but, back then, you know, running to the shelf break, sixty miles, there was only one headboat, that I recall, called the Captain Alex, out of Murrells Inlet, and I don't know if you've gotten anything on the Captain Alex, but they fished real heavily through the 1960s, and I have never seen such big fish in my life, bottom species. Well, they were catching some pelagics on top too, but one thought came to mind.

Back when we started fishing, in the early 1970s, and, other than that one headboat, nobody else had the capacity to run sixty miles, until we got into the 1970s, and that's just a comment, and a thought, because maybe some of the more recent pictures might show some trends that you might be looking for as well, but, anyway, great project. I will try to follow-up on the Captain Alex, if you haven't already discovered that treasure.

MS. BYRD: Hi, Chip. Thanks so much, and that's super helpful. We haven't gotten photos from Captain Alex yet. I know that there were a couple of publications, and I guess this was a little bit north of Murrells Inlet, and it was the Little River sort of area, where they're kind of -- I guess the hurricane fleet, up that way, and there's kind of a couple of publications that have a lot of photos, and we're trying to trace kind of who has, or kind of owns, those photos, to ask if we can use them for the FISHstory project, and so we haven't gotten anything from the Captain Alex, and so, if you can do anything to help point me in the right direction, I will start Googling that vessel, once I get off the webinar today, but anything you could do to help there would be great, and that's one area -- There's someone on our Snapper Grouper AP who helps kind of manage and run the hurricane fleet up from the Little River area, and so we've been in contact with him, to try to help figure out how to get some of those same kind of older photos from just up the coast from Murrells Inlet.

Then we also have another kind of Snapper Grouper AP member who is from Murrells Inlet who is trying to help connect those dots too, but I really appreciate that feedback, and then, if you can figure out any other details about the Captain Alex, that would be greatly appreciated. Thanks so much, Chip.

MR. BERRY: I will follow-up.

MR. BURROWS: Thank you, Chip. Anyone else have anything to add? All right. Well, we'll progress with our agenda then and recognize John Hadley for an Update on the Status of the Amendments and Dolphin-Wahoo-Related Efforts, Attachment 3.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Thank you very much. Give me just a second to transfer back over here. All right. Thank you, Julia. We appreciate the presentation. Let me bring up what is Attachment 3 here. All right. The idea here is just to bring everybody up-to-speed on kind of everything happening in the world of dolphin wahoo and then some other South Atlantic Council actions that are happening that may be of interest. I'm going to start with some of the South Atlantic Council actions, but there are some other things that are happening outside of the realm of the South Atlantic Council itself that I think the AP will be interested in.

You know, to kind of kick it off here, I just wanted to bring everyone up-to-speed on Regulatory Amendment 3 that Kerry gave a good introduction to in her opening remarks, but just to kind of follow-up on that, and, as you may recall, this was one of the -- I guess probably the big-ticket for the AP, last time you met, and we went through this.

We went through the different actions that were in the amendment, and, as you may recall, for those of you that were here, this amendment was brought up after Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 went into place, with the idea of kind of furthering that discussion on whether or not to extend the minimum size limit for dolphin, potentially all the way up the east coast, and so through North Carolina and northward, potentially changing the bag limits, or vessel limits, for dolphin, and where they may differ by vessel, and so the type of vessel, whether it's a private vessel or a for-hire vessel, six-pack or headboat vessel, and so potentially modifying the recreational bag and vessel limits based on the subsector that is represented, and also removing the captain and crew bag limit for dolphin.

You know, the AP spent a good amount of time talking about this last time, providing your input, and the council received your input that following summer, after your spring meeting, and really,

you know, had a very in-depth discussion about this, and what has come up, in the meantime, is that the Southeast Fisheries Science Center is conducting what is known as a management strategy evaluation for dolphin.

This is really taking an overarching look at the dolphin fishery and seeing if there's any sort of information, among other things, that can help inform which direction management should go and if there's any sort of information on catch levels, how catch levels should be set in sort of a dynamic fashion, with the idea that, if there's a lot of fish around, then, you know, we can take advantage of that. If there's not a lot of fish around, then things may need to be cut back a little bit.

You really have these two items going on at the same time. You have the council discussing Regulatory Amendment 3, and then you have the management strategy evaluation effort that the Southeast Fisheries Science Center is conducting, and you'll hear more about that tomorrow, and so this is kind of teeing-up that discussion, but the council decided to put Regulatory Amendment 3 on hold, because, really, they would have been finishing up with Regulatory Amendment 3 when they would have been getting the results of this management strategy evaluation, and so the timing would have been pretty poor for the two items, if they were to move along at the same time.

So the council has really put discussion of Regulatory Amendment 3 on hold, pending the outcome of the dolphin management strategy evaluation. As far as timing for that, the report for the management strategy is expected to be available by December of 2024, and so this MSE, or management strategy evaluation, is -- The work is ongoing, and will be ongoing for the next year or so, and so that's really the timing of when the council is -- At least as of now, when the council will be deciding which road, so to speak, they would go down, whether or not they go down the road for Regulatory Amendment 3 or down the road with the MSE, and that's when they will have the information in front of them to be able to make that decision, and so that's where that amendment stands right now.

Moving along, and I will come back for questions on that, and I just wanted to mention the other dolphin-wahoo-related item that the council has been working on since you last met, and that is a joint commercial logbook amendment, and so, essentially, this is an amendment that would make commercial logbooks electronic, and so bringing them up-to-speed and changing from a paper form over to an electronic form, and this is a comprehensive amendment. It's taking place along with the Gulf Fishery Management Council, and so it really affects all the council's managed commercial fisheries, and so looking at, in the South Atlantic, the snapper grouper fishery, dolphin wahoo, and then the coastal migratory pelagics, as well as the Gulf Council's reef fish fishery, and, really, there again, what this is doing is transferring from paper forms over to electronic forms, and so that's something the council has developed.

They approved it for final approval in September. Assuming that this does move forward on the rulemaking side, this would likely go into place sometime next year, and so that's the major item on the council side, and the items that have been underway, and so I'm happy to -- I have some other items that I wanted to get into, but I wanted to pause, really quickly, to see if there's any questions on either one of those amendments.

MR. REYNOLDS: Are we going to be able to -- I mean, I can see, in the eTRIPS, that we can log commercial trips, but we're not doing it yet, and is that app going to be -- Is that going to be

applicable, that we can log both of our commercial and for-hire trips in the same app, or do we know that yet?

MR. HADLEY: That is a good question I'm going to follow-up and get back to you for-sure on that. I believe that eTRIPS is being used as the primary app for it, but I don't know if it will be kind of the same exact program, and so I will have to get back to you on that, but good question. Thank you. Any other questions? If not, I will move along to some of the other items. We can always come back if, you know, anything pops into your head that you wanted to follow-up on. The next item is there's sort of --

AP MEMBER: It does have a designation for commercial in there, and I do commercial fish some, and I've never gone in, and I always do a written ticket, and so that's interesting, and that answer might already be -- You might already have an answer, but, when I go commercial, it asks for my vessel number, and so maybe you could do it that way, and I'm not sure.

MR. HADLEY: Yes, absolutely, and I know it's the same program, but I'm just not -- I don't want to give the wrong answer that it's the same exact app, you know, where you can toggle back and forth, but maybe Kerry could -- She's coming up to the table, and she could weigh-in a little bit more.

MS. MARHEFKA: I don't specifically know the answer to that question, but I would say don't start -- If you have to submit commercial logbooks, do not start just submitting them on eTRIPS versus your paper one until our commercial logbook amendment has gone through. I'm the one who does it for us, and I'm ready for it to happen, but I don't want anyone to get in trouble because they're doing it on eTRIPS and thinking that it's going through. I believe that that's probably available in eTRIPS right now, because I think they're using it for the GARFO boats, and so it is coming, and I think -- My understanding, and John will get the real answer, but my understanding is that you will be able to do it in both, but just a caveat right now of continue, please, to send in your paper logbooks.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Myra, I see your hand up. I'm going to unmute you on this end, and I believe you could provide a little bit more information and help answer that question.

MS. BROUWER: Hi, everybody. This is Myra, and I just heard eTRIPS, and so I figured that I would give you guys a quick update on where we are on that amendment, and so that amendment is being finalized. The council is going to submit it this month, or next month maybe, but the Science Center basically is going to need at least a year to develop -- What do we call it, but I guess they're called the technical specifications, so that vendors who want to develop an application, similar to eTRIPS, can develop an application and have it be available in the Southeast, and so, as Kerry said, eTRIPS is currently available, but, if you are a dually-permitted vessel, you still have to submit the paper logbooks for your Southeast permits, and so I would echo what Kerry said. Even though eTRIPS is available, your paper logbooks are still going to continue to be the requirement for at least another year, and then we'll definitely keep you guys updated on how that process goes. I hope that helps.

MR. HADLEY: Thank you, Myra, and so I think the take-home there is that, you know, this is in the works, and it's towards the final end of that, but it's not a requirement just yet, and so, for those online that may be listening, please do continue with the paper form until the electronic form is

completely ready to go and this has made it all the way through rulemaking, and so this is something that is coming up very soon, but it's not in place just yet, and thank you again, Myra and Kerry.

All right, and so I wanted to go over a few additional items, to just bring everybody up-to-speed. There's kind of an indefinitely-postponed pelagic longline amendment that the council has sort of set aside that they do want to take up at some time. When they discussed Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10, which was a really overarching amendment, this was something that was being discussed in there, and there are really so many items, so many decision points that go along with this, and, essentially, what the council was looking at was trying to mirror the HMS requirements in the dolphin wahoo longline fishery, so there's sort of a level playing field there between HMS-permitted vessels fishing longlines as well as dolphin wahoo vessels that may not have the HMS permits, but are fishing longlines, and so there's a lot of actions that are in there, and so they removed it from Amendment 10 and decided they would take it up at a later date.

That later date has not necessarily been specified, but there are two major items that are coming along that are sort of, I would say, items that would make that come more to the forefront. One, there is a biological opinion that has been in the works for a while, but is expected to be issued for the dolphin wahoo fishery, and presumably that would likely touch on the pelagic longline fishery, and there would be some sort of recommendations coming from that, and so that would be something that the council would likely take up in this amendment, and then, also, there's the management strategy evaluation, the results of that, and that's another sort of potential action item that would make the council bring this up again, but it is something that the council has discussed, and it's sort of indefinitely postponed at this point, but there are a couple of items, in the near future, that may bring it back to the forefront.

That's all for the South-Atlantic-Council-directly-related items, and I did want to update the AP on some of the other council items and what's going on in the greater world, I guess you could speak, of dolphin wahoo management.

The Caribbean Fishery Management Council has been developing dolphin and wahoo regulations, and so this would cover Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, and so the Exclusive Economic Zone in that area. Previously, these were largely unmanaged species, and so they will become managed kind of upstream, if you will, of the fish that tend to head up this way, and up the east coast, and so it really varies by island, and so it's being discussed within the Caribbean Fishery Management Council's island-based fishery management plans, and it hasn't been finalized, but it is possible that they could be taking final action as early as December, as their meeting in December, and so they're looking at implementing -- The Caribbean Fishery Management Council members are looking at implementing a minimum size limit for dolphin, for both commercial and recreational sectors, between twenty or twenty-four inches, and they're looking at establishing recreational retention limits of five to ten dolphin per person, with vessel limits between fifteen to thirty-two dolphin per vessel.

There again, that varies a little bit between -- A lot of these measures vary a little bit between the island-based FMP being discussed, but that's sort of the range. They're considering establishing a thirty-two to forty-inch wahoo minimum size limit, both recreational and commercial, and then implementing wahoo retention regulations, on the recreational side, ranging from two to five wahoo per person, potentially six to twenty wahoo per vessel, and, again, that combination varies

by island, but that is something that's likely to go into place sometime in the next -- I mean, we may be looking at the next eighteen months or so, assuming that the Caribbean Council continues to move forward, but that is a new set of dolphin management regulations in the U.S. Caribbean, and so in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Then, as also mentioned, there's discussion, kind of preliminary discussions, on dolphin by the Western Central Atlantic Fishery Commission, and so that is WECAFC, as mentioned earlier, and, you know, we certainly love our acronyms here in the world of fisheries management, and that's a new one, but WECAFC really is -- It operates as a regional fisheries body under the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

Really, it's an advisory body that's looking at fisheries issues, and fishery management and marine conservation issues, in the wider Caribbean, and WECAFC has developed a Flyingfish and Dolphinfish Working Group, which is really kind of in the preliminary stages of getting together and getting underway. The idea -- This really isn't an organization that would have -- That would create a binding agreement, at least right now, the way it's structured, but it could help lead to coordinated efforts in dolphin management, you know, assuming everyone is onboard that's at the table. It's sort of more of a gentleman's agreement, if you will, more than a truly binding agreement, but, if everyone is working collaboratively -- You know, the idea is that this is taking a larger, high-level view of the dolphin fishery in the Caribbean area.

That's sort of another dolphin-related management look, if you will, at the fishery and coordinating efforts. I think, at the very least, and really the starting point of this, will be to get a better picture of the dolphin fisheries, and so what's being extracted from the dolphin resource in the greater Caribbean area.

Then, on the dolphin front, one last thing that I did want to mention, and there is the Hudson Canyon Sanctuary Advisory Committee, and so NOAA, the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, has established a sanctuary advisory committee to provide input on a proposed marine sanctuary in the Hudson Canyon, and so this is an area off of New York and New Jersey, really very regionally focused, but the idea is that this advisory committee, or council rather, would bring together members of the local community and provide advice, assuming that NOAA moves forward with designating this area as a national marine sanctuary.

There is fifteen voting members, and then, on top of that, there are also ten government agencies that are serving in a non-voting capacity. South Atlantic Council staff is on the non-voting side of that, and so keep kind of following that, and the reason being is that some of these measures may impact the dolphin wahoo fishery, and so this is a popular area for pelagics and, among others, dolphin and wahoo, in particular, and so we're really in the early stages, and this has gone through scoping, and so it's not really clear exactly, at least to my knowledge, exactly -- The really detailed measures that may be put in place, but those are in the works, and then there will be probably an environmental impact statement put together that explains those details and some of the likely impacts of any measures that may be put into place, but that's something that is, again, regionally focused, but may affect the dolphin wahoo fishery moving forward. Any questions on any of those items, before I jump into a few -- I know some of you, many of you, participate in the snapper grouper fishery, and so there's a few items that I did want to mention, but any questions on those?

All right, and so two other items that I just wanted to briefly mention, and bring the AP up-to-speed, and this is in the snapper grouper realm with the South Atlantic Council, but the council is looking at Amendment 46 to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan. This would look at establishing a private recreational permit and education requirement, and so this is specifically geared towards private anglers, or private fishing vessels, and the idea is to better estimate, or better identify, the universe of private anglers, or vessels, participating in the snapper grouper fishery, under the notion that, if you do have that information, the Marine Recreational Information Program, MRIP, can use that information to improve the precision and accuracy of some of the estimates for the private recreational sector, and so that's something that the council is working towards potentially developing.

Then, of course, an education component to go along with that, and looking at things along the lines of improving fish handling practices, trying to reduce some discard mortality, which is certainly an issue for some snapper grouper species, and so that was a discussion the council had a while back, when they were first developing this, whether or not to have it more overarching, and it was mentioned that the dolphin wahoo fishery could have been brought in, or the coastal migratory pelagics fishery could have been brought in, but they really wanted to focus on the snapper grouper fishery, at least to start out with, and so it's really snapper grouper focused right now, and it's not branching out into the council's other managed fisheries. The council -- I will mention that the council will be discussing this in December, and maybe approving this amendment for public hearings, which will be early next year.

Then the last item I wanted to mention is you will be given an update, and really an overview, of the management strategy evaluation that's being developed for dolphin, and that effort is being led by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, and the council has also contracted out a snapper grouper management strategy evaluation that's underway, and, really, this is sort of a larger effort to take more of a holistic approach to management and look at it in an overarching -- In an overarching way.

You know, typically, when you get into these amendments, they typically are on a single-species basis, and a specific management item for those for whatever species is at-hand, and this is sort of, among other things, an effort to take a step back and say what should the fishery look like and then maybe tailor some areas of management towards that sort of end goal and take a more high-level approach and overlook of the snapper grouper fishery, and so that's a very, very high-level overview of it, but that's an effort that's underway right now, and the council will be discussing that kind of ongoing through the next year or so, and will be provided updates on it, and so that is the update on sort of what's going on in the council world, and in sort of the dolphin wahoo management world, for the western Atlantic and the Caribbean.

AP MEMBER: I should have done it a while ago, John, but who manages dolphin above North Carolina?

MR. HADLEY: The South Atlantic Council does, and so there's a Dolphin Wahoo Committee on the South Atlantic Council. All of the South Atlantic Council members are on that committee, and there's also representation from the Mid-Atlantic and New England, and so the South Atlantic Council is the main, the lead, council, but it cooperates with the Mid-Atlantic and the New England Councils, and so all the way from Florida up through -- Essentially Key West, approximately, up through Maine.

AP MEMBER: Okay. Well, I guess my only comment would be that that's getting to be -- You don't have to look at many pictures, or look at many tournament reports, but there are a lot more dolphin being caught up there than there used to be.

MR. BURROWS: As an add-on to that question, will there be a movement, in the future, in your opinion, to create an advisory panel, and committee, in the Mid-Atlantic and New England for dolphin?

MR. HADLEY: We have brought in -- I saw we, but, really, the council, the South Atlantic Council, has brought in and worked with the Mid-Atlantic Council and New England Council to have two representatives from the Mid-Atlantic and two representatives from New England added to the Dolphin Wahoo AP, and we have Bill Richardson, who is one of the representatives from the Mid-Atlantic Council, and then you also have, I believe -- He couldn't make it today, but Randall Morgan will be tuning-in tomorrow morning, and providing his input, and he's out of Maryland, I believe, and so getting a little bit more input from further up the coast and trying to take into account, you know, some of the new, or additional, catches that are happening further north.

MR. BURROWS: So let's begin our discussion. At this time, we would like to recognize Chip for the SAFE report, and I've got to dig that out, real quick, but it's all you, sir.

MR. HADLEY: I need to hand over the reins here to Chip, but I did want to -- This is Chip Collier, and I have a Chip next to me here in the room, and it's a different Chip, but Chip Collier is going to be presenting to you remotely. He couldn't be here today, but he'll be presenting to you remotely, and, before I hand it over to him, I did want to bring up a few discussion questions to kind of introduce the topic here.

What we'll be going over is the Stock Assessment and Fishery Evaluation report, and so, really, the idea here is that this is a report that's required under National Standard 2 of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and so it's a federal requirement to provide this information, but this is something that council staff has been working on, and we've run it by the Scientific and Statistical Committee, and we've run it by the council, but there's going to be these reports made available for each group of species, and we're going to focus on, obviously, the dolphin and wahoo components of this and what sort of information should be put together to characterize the dolphin wahoo stocks, at least the information available, as well as the dolphin and wahoo fishery.

A couple of questions that I just wanted to run by you now, so you can kind of be thinking about it as Chip runs through the draft SAFE reports that have been put together, is, out of the information provided, is there something that stands out to you, that's going to be presented as really -- That you think will be very useful for managers to know, or very useful for constituents to know, and this is information that's going to be updated on a regular basis, you know, specifically for dolphin, and specifically for wahoo, and are there any additional pieces of information that you wish you saw in this report that aren't available, and, you know, what could be added, that could be updated on a regular basis. Without further ado, I am going to hand it over to Chip, and make him the presenter, and he'll run you through the SAFE report for both wahoo and dolphin.

DR. COLLIER: If there's any -- As you're looking through this -- Well, I'm online, and you guys probably aren't, and so never mind, but, if you are online, you can zoom-in to any part of the screen and see some of these pieces of information in greater detail. Just remember to zoom back out, because you might miss other pieces.

We started creating these SAFE reports last year, in order to at least get the snapper grouper one done in one year, given that it had fifty-five species, and it was going to be a bit challenging to do everything, and then we also wanted to do another one, and it's hard to say, but, you know, dolphin wahoo are a data-limited species, and so we also wanted to look at what a SAFE report could look like for something like the dolphin wahoo fishery.

You know, the goal of these is to get information to fishermen, managers, whoever is interested, information that they can look at and readily understand and potentially make interpretations of the information and provide comments back to the council. One thing that has always concerned me is we have some other data-limited species that we haven't looked at in maybe ten years, and I think this is just a way for us to look at information every so often, make sure things are on track, and, if they're not, people speak up and tell us what needs to change, whether it's in the SAFE report or in management, and so this is just draft, and please let me know what you think of it, but we'll start here with the introduction.

In the first part, what I'm doing is just trying to introduce where we're gathering all this information, and, here, I also wanted to develop another piece that I put together for the snapper grouper SAFE report, and what this does is it gives a quick overview of all the information that you're likely to be seeing in the following sections, and so let's take Atlantic spadefish. It's likely a data-limited species, just like dolphin and wahoo, and so, for Atlantic spadefish, we have a question-mark, because we're not certain if overfishing is occurring, and we're not certain if it's overfished, but we will know what the ACL is, whether or not that's being exceeded, and we do not want to exceed the ACL.

We also want to achieve the optimum yield, and then looking at trends in the last ten years, and then, once again, for Atlantic spadefish, we have a question-mark. Now, the first thing that most people would look at, as they're looking at this table, is saying, well, how in the world did you come up with this, and so we also have the ratings that we developed for snapper grouper, for all the snapper grouper species at once, and we could use something similar for dolphin and wahoo, and the goal is to really look at the data and try to figure out what is going on in these populations.

The other thing that we did for that is we had -- Because we did have those fifty-five species in there, we had catch landings and rec number, and we were able to do that for all the species combined, and so that's an additional piece of information that I think I will add into the dolphin wahoo SAFE report.

Now getting back to the species, we do include the stock status criteria and the fishing level recommendations. Unfortunately, these aren't all that informative, because, although we have the criteria defined in the fishery management plan, the values for these, for the most part, are unknown. We don't have a stock assessment for either dolphin or wahoo, and, therefore, we don't have an FMSY or sustainable spawning stock biomass, and all those values are unknown, but we're still going to incorporate this table into it.

After that, what we're looking at is the overfishing level and the ABCs for both of the species. When the ABC was developed for dolphin, we only had the ACL in landings, in whole weight, and we did not have a discard ABC. You will also notice that we don't have an OFL for this species. Because it was put through the ORCS, or third-highest, approach, the SSC has determined that that does not provide you an overfishing level.

Being the biology nerd that I am, I always like to put some of the biology of the fish in, and so you can read about dolphin. It's just very general information on the species, where they can be located, some information on reproduction. Then a description of the stock assessment, and we also included recent management changes. In talking with John, what he wanted incorporated into this document were recent management changes, and he wanted all of the recent management changes, going back to 2010, and so those are all listed here, describing what they are, which amendment they were included in, and then getting into more of the landings information.

We do have combined landings here, the ABC that was established in 2022, and you can see the dolphin landings are well below the ABC. We also have information on number of releases. We only have this for the recreational fishery. We do not have commercial releases for the discard, for the commercial releases that are available to us right now, and we generally get those through a stock assessment.

Then we further break it out into the two different sectors, the recreational and the commercial sector, and you can see what you guys have all been describing, this declining trend in the dolphin fishery, and then we also include some of the economic information. If you have questions on this, John can talk to you about it, but, for the most part, for the recreational information, the economics, what we're looking at is directed trips. That goes directly into some of the products that John develops. He uses directed trips in order to estimate the economic benefits to the fishery, and then, for the commercial side of things, we look at the value, and so this is pounds of fish, the value associated with the pounds of fish, and we provided for the last six years.

Social trends, the two things that we look at for the social trends, at least for the dolphin wahoo fishery, is we have been looking at whether or not there have been closures, and so we provide the dates of the closures, when they have occurred. The "N/A" means that there's not a date available for that closure, and the other thing that we've been incorporating into these SAFE reports has been the fishery performance reports, and so this is based on your April 2022 meeting, and it describes what you guys had talked about, and it just does it in a quick synopsis there.

Another thing that we put in this one, which is different than most, is we were able to look at the NMFS participatory workshops and put some of the information from that into this SAFE report, and so looking at annual temperatures, and these temperatures were south Florida temperatures, and looking at it, and you can see a dramatic shift in the temperature around 2014, and then you can see how hot it gets in the summers, and it's exceeding some of the past values.

Now we're switching to wahoo, and I realize that this is a drawing of a wahoo, and I apologize, and this was -- Obviously it's a coding error, and so I'll get that fixed in the next version. Similar to dolphin, we have information on the distribution of the species, the spawning of the species, and how long it lives. It is a very interesting fish. They are pretty short-lived, much like dolphin are, where the last estimates I had read was talking about a maximum age of five years old.

Similar to dolphin, we have all the management measures, and I'm not going to go through the landings for this one, or, no, I will go -- I won't go through the landings for this one, but you can see that they're closer to the ABC than the dolphin were. There's a very low number of releases, and the sectors -- It's seems to be a bit more stable than what we were seeing in the dolphin fishery.

Then another really interesting part of this SAFE report is we were able to take the information that was presented in the McPherson et al. tech memo and look at that, and so this is taking the stakeholder participatory workshops and looking at the information that was provided. Let me zoom out just a little bit here, so you can see the entire circle. There won't be any tests on this, and so don't worry about not knowing everything, but you can look at it in the link, and, if you want to see where impacts of bag limits go, you can follow those down, and it ends up going to charter demand and customer satisfaction, and so it's really interesting on following how the stakeholders perceived where things would go.

With different regulations levels, it leads to public information campaigns, the accountability, and so it's just really neat seeing where -- How these different pieces interact with each other throughout the circle, and so you can see fuel costs impact profits, and also recreational fishing effort, and so, if there's different things that you find interesting in there, you can follow it through. If you're having a hard time with that piece of the model, you can actually go down to the 4.1.3 and actually track it here, where you're looking at dolphin season length had a positive impact on customer satisfaction. An increased ability to catch dolphin throughout the year leads to increased customer satisfaction, and this was reported in the Beaufort participatory workshop.

The first one here that I present is the North Carolina/Virginia, and then we also have a similar model for the Florida, and so it's really cool that we're able to get this information from National Marine Fisheries Service staff, and incorporate it into the SAFE report, because I think it is a valuable piece of information to be displaying.

Then, as you're going through this, and I know people might have had questions on where can I find the fishery performance report, and we do provide links to the fishery performance report, as well as recent amendments, and then to the essential fish habitat, if you're interested in finding that, and so that is the SAFE report, and that is what we're proposing to include it in. Please do not feel like this is all the information that we would supply in it.

What I was hearing, during this conversation, was you guys would be interested in hearing about landings by state, as well as potentially looking at maybe the size distribution of dolphin up and down the coast, and maybe, like I do with the fishery performance reports that you're going to be seeing in just a second, maybe group it by region, where one region would be Florida/Georgia, North Carolina/South Carolina, and then the final one would be Virginia and north. That's what I have for the SAFE report, if there's any questions or comments. I know it's a lot of information, and don't worry about the information. What we want is what you guys would like to see in the content.

MR. BURROWS: Jon Reynolds.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thanks, Chip. Yes, and I would like to see, if possible, sizes, through tournament catch data, through maybe, I don't know, a twenty-year span or something like that. You know, if we could do that, and we might also be able to add some pictures, through like, you

know, FISHstory, you know, for some hard -- Just some hard stuff to look at how size distribution has changed so drastically in the last -- Especially fifteen years, but, you know, twenty to thirty years, and that will give us a better idea too, and I think that would be helpful.

DR. COLLIER: Thank you for that, John, and are there certain tournaments that you would recommend getting up with, because my goal is to keep this fairly simple, and I can definitely pull the information from MRIP, looking at size distributions, and I can also pull information from the commercial fishery, and so those two wouldn't be a problem, and it's just trying to figure out which tournaments would be the best to get information from.

MR. REYNOLDS: I can follow-up with a list of tournaments, for sure. I will follow-up in an email.

DR. COLLIER: Thank you.

MR. BURROWS: Anyone else? Jon again.

MR. REYNOLDS: Sorry. One other thing that I forgot, and I think it's important -- The new FES reports are showing -- I mean, I've been saying this for years, that especially with the spike in, you know, recreational boats, and that was kind of a trend. I mean, that's not lasting in our area. I mean, there was a very large spike, an influx, of recreational boat purchasing. It's not holding up, and a lot of those people were not exerting effort on the dolphin fishery to the level that we believe, and so the new FES reports are definitely showing that recreational efforts, and catches, are probably more like 40 percent less than first anticipated, and so we've taken those numbers, and we've made an ABC so outrageously high, based upon those numbers, and now we're in kind of a pickle, and a predicament here, that now we have no stock assessment, and we don't really know where our stock is, and now we've anticipated that our stock, and our ABC, should be at 24,000 pounds, which is probably nowhere near, you know, what those old estimates -- Where we ever should have shot at it. I think that should definitely be taken into consideration, the new FES reports and numbers on effort. Thanks.

DR. COLLIER: Yes, and, just thinking about what you were talking about there, do you think it would be good to look at -- Well, we do have directed trips in the recreational fishery, and, for this, what we're referring to as a directed trip is it's going to be a trip that either lists dolphin as the primary or secondary species, as well as landed dolphin, and so those would be the three categories that we were looking at for the directed trips, and we can extend the time series for that. What we could do is extend this time series all the way back to 2000 for directed trips, and we could also do that by area, if needed, if the group wants it.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you. It sounds like you guys are putting a lot into it, and we appreciate it, and I think that would be a good idea, yes.

MR. BURROWS: Any other questions or comments? I don't see any hands up. Would this be a good time for everyone to take a little breather and internalize what we've just heard? Seeing no dissention, we'll take ten minutes.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MR. HADLEY: Thank you, everybody. I'm going to cue this up, the next agenda item, and, for those of you that are following along on the webinar, this is Attachment 5, Attachment 5a, and so what we're going to be doing here is updating the fishery performance reports. We're going to start out with wahoo, since this one is the most out-of-date, and this is one that the first one was put together, for the first time, in 2020, and so we're really looking for information along the lines of what you're seeing on -- This is where we talk about what you're seeing on the water. What are you seeing with wahoo, and then we'll get into dolphin afterwards, but we're going to focus on wahoo right off the bat here.

I will walk you through a few discussion questions, and then also what's in the existing report, and then I will turn it over to you to say, you know, is that right, is that wrong, does this need to be changed, here's some additional information, based on what we're seeing on the water, but, before that, I wanted to go through and present some information, really quick, and I will start out with wahoo, with some information on -- You know, a little bit of biological information, and so we're going to look at life history and growth rate information, some of the landings, and then some of the economic statistics that we have.

Again, this is sort of intro part, if you will, the background information, and then we'll jump into the discussion questions to update the report itself, and so there's an app that's been put together with some information, and you can toggle between dolphin and wahoo. Again, we're starting with wahoo, and I just wanted to present, again, some basic information on the fish. Ideally, maybe it will help stimulate some discussion, once we get to the discussion questions, but first up is the general information on the length-at-age for wahoo.

Wahoo is a pretty -- In the greater realm of things, it's a fairly short-lived species, and the max observed age is ten years, and you can see they have a fairly fast growth rate. Within the first year or so, they're up around forty inches, and they keep growing thereafter. As far as the length-weight relationship there, you can see, you know, it's not quite linear, and it's a little bit -- You know, there's a little bit of a bend to that curve. As the fish get longer, of course, they do fill out, and this is just a general growth and weight curve. You know, the different specimens will vary, based on their diet, based on their genetics. Some are thicker, some are skinnier, some are longer, but this is just kind of an average weight to length ratio for wahoo.

Then another thing about wahoo that's pretty interesting, and this goes for dolphin as well, is they mature very quickly, and so they are -- You know, it's a characteristic of a short-lived species, and they need to mature quickly, in order to reproduce, and so wahoo are typically mature, sexually mature, by age-one, and so they reach sexual maturity fairly quickly. There again, it goes along with that growth rate, and so you can see, right here, this line is flat, because it shows the proportion of females that are mature at a given length. It starts around forty inches or so, and so, around age-one, they are all mature.

Looking at landings information on wahoo, we'll start off with commercial landings. They are relatively low overall, at least in the greater scheme of total wahoo landings, and commercial landings kind of bump around between -- Typically between 40,000 and 60,000 pounds. You can see, in recent years, the past couple of years, they have dropped down in the 25,000 to 30,000-pound range.

As far as state commercial landings, it varies -- Again, it varies by year, and you do see typically sort of a split between the Carolinas and then Florida, Florida and Georgia, kind of almost a -- Not quite a 50/50 split, but it's darned near 50/50 in many years, and you do have a slightly smaller Mid-Atlantic and New England component popping up there each year, and so they are observed further up the coast as well. On the commercial side, we do not have information on commercial releases of wahoo.

Moving over to recreational landings of wahoo, again, it's very variable from year to year, but you do kind of tick upwards or downwards of that two-million-pound mark, and you can that 2016 was an exceptionally high year, but then it has come back to that sort of two-million-pound mark, kind of bouncing around that in recent years, and so, you know, again, a lot of annual variability, but, generally speaking, the trend is probably fairly flat there on the recreational side.

Looking at state recreational landings of wahoo, what's kind of interesting there is you do have some years, particularly latter years, where you do see more wahoo being landed in the Mid-Atlantic, and I should point out that pink bar, the red-pink bar, is representative of Florida and Georgia landings. The green bar is representative of the Mid-Atlantic landings, and then the blue bar is North Carolina and South Carolina, and you can see it sort of varies from year to year. Last year, it was pretty much near a 50/50 split, and then, in some of the recent years, you have the Carolinas having higher landings, and some years you have Florida having higher landings, and so it does vary, but that's sort of the landings trend broken down by state.

Then, looking at the number of wahoo releases, there's probably a very high error estimate with this, and there's typically -- As you can imagine, wahoo tends to be a pretty desirable fish, from a culinary standpoint, and so there's typically not a large amount of releases, generally speaking, but you can see, when those are observed, you do see the released numbers sort of tick upwards and then come back down in the fairly low range from year to year.

Looking at how the fishery performs on a seasonal basis, and so looking at the monthly landings, and what's in front of you is commercial landings of wahoo, and you can see the late spring, early summer, and into early fall months are sort of the peak there, and it drops off quite a bit in the wintertime, into early spring.

Moving over to recreational, a little bit different picture there, and you do have the peak in the summertime, but you do have a pretty strong fall fishery, an early winter fishery, that shows up in the recreational wahoo landings.

Looking at commercial revenue and price, the ex-vessel value does track the landings. If you remember, the commercial landings have been fairly low over the past couple of years, and so you can see the total ex-vessel value, and so the gross revenue from those landings has dropped down around the \$100,000 realm, but it has sort of bounced between \$100,000 and approximately \$300,000. However, you have seen an increasing ex-vessel price for wahoo, kind of jumping up there in recent years, and I should mention that these are static dollars, and so 2022 dollars that have been adjusted for inflation, and so you have seen an increasing price for wahoo.

Then, finally, I will go over some of the economic impact information that's available for the fishery. Looking at the commercial economic impacts for wahoo, this largely tracks the trends in the ex-vessel value, and that's one of the main inputs for the economic impact model for

commercial landings, and so you can see that it kind of varies there, upwards of \$3 million in sales impacts to, down towards the bottom there, around a million dollars in sales impacts. That supports between a million and approximately \$300,000 or so in income, and the estimated jobs supported by that fishing activity is between -- Approximately thirty-five and -- Well, seventeen or so jobs.

Moving over to the recreational side, being a fairly popular recreational fish, some of the economic impacts are notably large, and this really tracks effort, and so one of the main inputs to estimate this are the number of directed trips. The measurement of directed trips, in this case, were for trips that targeted, indicated targeting, wahoo, and it was the primary or secondary target on the recreational trip, or there was a wahoo harvested on that trip, and so that's -- The trends in directed trips tend to mirror the trends in economic impacts, and, there again, it's variable by year, but approximately \$65 million to upwards over \$100 million in sales impacts, approximately \$20 million to \$35 million in come, and approximately 350 to 600 jobs supported by that economic activity.

That's the sort of baseline information that I was going to present. Before I get into the report discussion questions, are there any questions on this information? I can always come back to it too, if there's any questions.

All right, and so, with that, I'm going to jump over to the fishery performance report questions themselves, and, as I mentioned, what we're really looking to do here is there are some discussion questions, and I'm going to go over the discussion questions, and I'm going to go over the existing input that we have, and, really, again, we're looking for feedback on is that right, is it not right, is there something else that needs to be added in there in relation to wahoo, and so the first set of questions focuses on catch levels and effort over the past ten years, and so trends in catch level and effort, as far as when dolphin and wahoo are available, and has it changed in recent years, you know, looking at the seasonality, the timing, the geographic range of wahoo catches, and has that changed over the past decade or so, and has the average size of the fish changed? If so, how has it changed? Then the same thing for the abundance. Has the abundance changed over the past ten years? Have there been effort shifts to or from wahoo, and has there been a considerable change in fishing techniques or gear used to target wahoo?

To answer some of these questions, some of the previous input that the AP provided, again several years ago, and we do have new participants on the AP, new AP members, as well as a little bit different geographic perspective, and so there might be more to add on that end, but the previous AP input was the average size of wahoo landed has been steady or increased, and no AP members felt that the average size was decreasing.

As far as timing and abundance, the timing of runs and general location has not notably changed, outside of typical season variations. There seems to be a general increase in wahoo abundance and availability in the South Atlantic region. As far as effort shifts, there's been some shift in effort towards wahoo, and it was particularly noted that it's been increasingly prevalent on social media, and there's been a lot more sharing of methods to target wahoo.

Looking geographically, in the middle part, and southeastern part, of North Carolina, there's been a shift to wahoo, given the decline in the yellowfin tuna fishery in the area, and, in south Florida, it was noted that there was some concern over increasing fishing pressure, particularly from divers using spearfishing gear, where it was thought that they were targeting spawning aggregations of

wahoo, and that could account for a notable number of wahoo harvested either directly or a delayed mortality from fish that were speared, and the spear pulled out, and the fish escaped and subsequently didn't make it. With that, that was the previous AP input, and I will turn it over to the AP. Do you have any additional thoughts on these first sets of questions?

MR. BURROWS: Jon Reynolds.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thanks. Yes, we definitely have seen a lot -- I would definitely say that that's true, and we've definitely seen a lot more pressure from the spearfishing community, but, also, recreational -- Kind of like inexperienced, newer anglers are keeping really small wahoo lately, and I mean like this big, and so it might not be a bad idea to consider some sort of size limit, and, I mean, it doesn't even have to be big, but, I mean, you know, some of the fish that are being kept recently are -- They're small, and there's more effort towards that, more like jigging on debris and, you know, just trolling with smaller stuff, and you will tend to catch -- You know, like if you're trolling feathers around, like trying to dolphin fish, you will catch like a really small wahoo, and I just don't -- You know, we might run into a little bit more of a problem in the future, if we keep killing fish that small, and so I just wanted to put that in there.

MR. BURROWS: Paul Pancake.

MR. PANCAKE: Kind of piggybacking on what you're saying about the inexperienced angler, it's easier for somebody who bought a boat three years ago to hop online and look up how to high-speed fish with pre-made rigs and go out there and troll three lines around and catch wahoo, because that's been extremely popular here in Charleston.

Somebody who didn't grow up fishing may not be able to rig the best ballyhoo, or kind of have any other experience, other than looking online, to learn something, which isn't a bad thing, and I'm glad that there are people getting out there, but they can go to Haddrell's Point, or a tackle shop here, and those guys are great. They can get a new boat owner set up, and here's premade rigs, and you put them on a couple of eighties, and here's the ledge, and go up and down, and it's been an extremely effective tactic here, and I'm sure just like anywhere else, to catch wahoo.

MR. BURROWS: Robert.

MR. FREVERT: Kind of -- I will agree with Jon. Down in south Florida, wahoo has definitely become much more popular, and the tackle stores all have cowbells, very expensive ones, to sell you, and we see a lot more people doing it, the last five or so years. I mean, twenty years ago, nobody high-speed trolled, and now it's like it's pretty easy to do, and everybody goes on the full moon in the summer, and they're doing real well with it.

The other thing is we see a lot of wee-hoos on the weed lines in the summertime. I went with a guy last year, and we caught four, and we let them all go, but there are a lot of wee-hoos, if you target them, using speed jigs, while you're trying for the dolphin, and so the wahoo fishery has been very good for us in south Florida. It's consistent. I agree with notes taken, and it's consistent to better.

MR. BURROWS: Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: Well, my comment is I don't think there's -- There's very few mates out there that can twist wire anymore, and I guess they just don't like it, but I've had some here lately that I've said, hey, man, rig up for wahoo, and you've got to twist some wire, and they look at me like I'm crazy, but, anyway, they do learn how to do it, but you're right that the -- Well, just the advances in technology, with the swimming plugs and braided line, and just a lot of different ways. The wahoo fishing, they are a more targeted species than they used to be, and the yellowfin is not around, and sometimes the blackfin is not being around, and it certainly causes more effort to be on them, and so that's my only comment.

MR. BURROWS: I have a question for Jon. What we saw in North Carolina, if you go back twenty years, is wahoo fishing has supplanted yellowfin fishing, and I think every North Carolina fisherman would agree with that here. Are you seeing the same trend, where -- With diminishing dolphin returns, are you seeing wahoo take more of a share of the recreational anglers' time out there?

MR. REYNOLDS: I don't know. You know, there's definitely more effort, and I don't know if it's necessarily, you know, because of dolphin. We exerted a pretty good amount of effort towards wahoo, on the way in or out of dolphin fishing, I guess, and I think we're probably -- There is probably more effort exerted on the reef now, where we're at, and, you know, a lot more bottom fish are getting hammered, but there's more effort overall, for sure, regardless.

MR. FREVERT: But I wouldn't say it's because of the lack of dolphin. It's different guys that are targeting the wahoo, from my perspective, right, and, just because I can't catch a dolphin today, it doesn't mean that I'm going to go wahoo fishing. We look at a full moon and say this ought to be when they're there, and let's go out and do that today, or a couple hours in the morning.

MR. OWSLEY: To your point, I will never be out targeting dolphin without having a planer rod in the right corner and a downweight in the left corner, and I have typically -- You know, on a good dolphin day, you usually have one or two wahoo, and I typically never -- You know, even a lot of people will just pull a planer when they're closer into the ledge, and I have even gone out deep with a planer and, surprisingly enough, have caught wahoo in 600 to 800 feet of water, and I don't know why they're there, but they just are, and, if you can -- Sometimes, when you get into the scattered weeds, it's a real pain to get it back up, but I have seen a lot of people -- I know south Florida, with your wire lines and everything, but I know there's been a lot more like marketing, advertisement, for the pre-assembled planer rod kit, like Paul said, and, I mean, it's like every email advertisement I get, and it's like get your meat stick planer rod, and I think a lot of the entry-level people buying a boat want to go somewhere and get outfitted, and, I mean, it's great, but, you know, I think a lot of people also get discouraged with that method, because you've kind of got to babysit it, too.

You know, trolling heavy planers, there's a lot of drag, and, as soon as it trips, you've got to back off the drag, or, you know, pull a hook or something, and so it's definitely like an art to it, but I always have it, and, if anyone trying to recruit new fishermen or anything, and trying to shed some knowledge on them, I always recommend having a planer rod in the corner.

MR. BURROWS: I second that. I wouldn't go without a planer rod. It has turned so many terrible days into decent catch days, and I think maybe the second-biggest dolphin I've ever caught ate a planer bait, for some reason, and so, yes, I wouldn't go without it, but I think it probably does

increase the incidence of catching wahoo at times that you would not typically think of as wahoo productive times.

MR. WHITAKER: My only comment to add, as far as the wahoo availability and size, would be that I felt like it's been pretty consistent, and I can't tell you that they're smaller or -- I mean, we still catch some small ones, but, you know, the average size, I would say, around the Hatteras area, is twenty pounds, but it's not unusual to catch one that's sixty pounds, and so, as far as that goes, and the amount, like I said, I think it's been pretty consistent. The wahoo fishing is -- You know, you have peaks and valleys during the year, but, overall, I feel like it's been pretty good.

MR. BURROWS: Chip.

MR. BERRY: I will agree with every comment that I heard in here, and I'm just listening, but I feel what you all are feeling, you know, just to throw my two-cents' worth.

MR. BURROWS: I want to hear from you all's corner. Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: I would say the answer to 1a through 1e is no change.

MR. HARRIS: I will echo that. Up in Oregon Inlet, which we're not very far from Hatteras. You come around the bight, and there we are, and it's a bycatch. I fish a planer, just like you said, about every day, but I'm fishing it for tuna, and we catch a wahoo. A good day there, or great, would be six, but we're fishing so much mono. Everything is mono, but I think the fish at our end have been bigger, the last couple of years, than they have been in the past. I know that Rom fishes with Buddy, and he's never caught a twenty-pounder.

MR. BURROWS: I have always wondered, if Oregon Inlet, if you made a directed effort to target wahoo -- The last time I went on a trip there, I think we had seven wahoo bite-offs, and I wonder what you would come home with if you didn't mess with the yellowfins.

MR. HARRIS: If you didn't mess with the yellowfins, you wouldn't get many charters off of Oregon Inlet. That's the target species for us, and, of course, everybody knows about the sharks and how bad they are up there. Occasionally, we'll go down to the south, towards Rom, but we just get down there, and we don't have the bottom they do, and you've got to get down there by what we call the Diamond Shoals Tower, and that bottom off of there, to start catching them, and maybe up as far as the 400-line, that you call it, there's some good bottom to do it on, and the point, where we fish most of our tuna, but it's just we concentrate so hard on the tunas, and people would be disappointed if we put out all wire, and you caught two wahoo, and everybody else caught a box full of yellowfin.

MR. BURROWS: We're in a really wahoo-rich area, where I am, and it's gotten to a point where we have a captain guaranteeing a wahoo every trip, or your trip is free, on a \$2,400 trip, but we have such a wide swath of water, from thirty to a hundred fathoms, and it's -- It's a long way, and so that all holds wahoo. We have no tuna, but that has supported our charter fishery there for, you know, fifteen years now, and so it's not getting worse, and I can say that. Paul.

MR. PANCAKE: Just one other comment on the wahoo. There seem to be more wahoo-based tournaments, in the past ten years, than there have been. You know, you've got the northeast

Florida tournament, that they do a great job advertising, and that could be driving some of this, where guys are, okay, I want to do something competitive, and they may not want to do the king mackerel circuit, and maybe don't have the bank account to do the blue marlin circuit, but they've got a really good wahoo event in their area, and so they may take their time and go wahoo fishing and kind of get better at that, to be competitive.

MR. BURROWS: Robert.

MR. FREVERT: One of the things the West Palm Beach Fishing Club has done recently, the last couple of years, is we have a wahoo tournament now in the summer. It's a one-day tournament, the full moon in July, August, and September, and they've been more and more popular. I think we have like sixty or seventy boats now that fish that one-day tournament each month. We don't catch one every day, you know, and it might be -- Some years are better than others, but nobody catches a wahoo each month, you know, and so -- But we did get a seventy-pounder this year, and so that's a nice fish, and there are people that want to do that now. You know, it's not a very expensive tournament, and it's more of a fun thing, but it's popular, and so anything we can do to get more people enjoying fishing recreationally, that's good for us.

MR. OWSLEY: To both their points, with the tournaments also, you know, I think a lot of people want to do something too, and so I've always -- You know, we can target wahoo in the early winter, when you have your weather window. You know, you see your boat out back, and you're not using it, for Thanksgiving and Christmas or whatever, and, you know, before the dolphin bite, and so it's like, hey, you know, we've got a weather window, and it's better if it's a couple of days around the moon, but, you know, like, to Paul's point, there's -- Just in northeast Florida, there's probably four -- They're already advertising for like Don Coombs Wahoo Roundup, and, I mean, in north Florida, you've got the Elite 60, and I know I used to bring my boat up to Charleston to fish the South Carolina wahoo series a lot, and, I mean, that's where I fished it out of, and, I mean, I'm like one of the wahoo tournament fishers, and I think there's --

You know, an average day, when any boat can really go fishing in northeast Florida, there could be like literally -- Like you really have to pay attention, because of people zig-zagging all over, and, I mean, it's -- You can have a wreck, but it's really gained some popularity, especially to Paul's point, and it's like it's easy to do it, and there's a lot of people selling the equipment, and it's -- The cost of entry, it's not cheap, but, you know, there's a lot of YouTube videos, and then all the seminars, and people put it on, and it's a really good fishery for someone to go do.

MR. BURROWS: Anyone else? It sounds like we've got a pretty good consensus that wahoo fishing is growing in popularity, and it's not declining in productivity. Chip.

MR. BERRY: I've always just wondered, with dolphin and wahoo, actually, just the fact that they -- You know, they spawn at such a small, young age, and does that just kind of keep it going, and, no matter how much pressure we put on them, they'll be there, or are there other things that are more of a concern than how much we actually catch of them, like climate change and -- You know, sometimes I wonder about, when a fish spawns, you know, if you get a couple of degrees difference in temperature in the ocean, you know, and how much of that is actually more mortality, you know, that's going to affect us more than how much effort we actually put into them, because we --

They just spawn at such a young age, and so much, that they just seem to keep producing, versus, you know, just in relationship to some of the older living snapper and grouper species that we seem to have so much problem or, you know, they seem to have a lot of issues with. I'm just throwing that out, you know, and it's just -- Which would be a good thing, you know, as long as the supply keeps coming, but I will agree too with Number 1, a through e, I think it is, and I agree with everything that was said. I think it's stable and growing.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Chip. Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: This is just a question, from my ignorance, and is there anywhere in the South Atlantic that -- Does anybody target wahoo commercially, or is it sold as a bycatch, or --

MR. BURROWS: John Hadley, can you help us with that one?

MR. HADLEY: To my knowledge, I think it's caught mostly incidentally. I mean, they don't lend well to being caught with longlines, and there are some longline catches, but not large numbers, and so I'm not aware of anyone who is -- They may target them from time to time, if there's an aggregation of them somewhere, but I'm not aware of any regular commercial fishery for them, and I think it's oftentimes, you know, a bonus catch, and maybe you're out there snapper grouper fishing, and a big wahoo swims up, and you know, that's a bonus fish, that sort of thing, or you're catching them bycatch, if you're trolling for something else, but others may have more input than I do on that as well.

MR. BURROWS: Jon Reynolds.

MR. REYNOLDS: The only thing I can speak to that with directed effort is recently with the spear, because, on our wrecks -- You know, you would never have seen that, and hook-and-line commercial guys, like me, when you're dolphin fishing, you might catch a couple of wahoo and get rid of them, but it would be more of a bycatch, but now, yes, there kind of is a targeted spear effort, because they can go to those wrecks, where the big ones are lining up, and, when the money gets involved, it gets a lot more aggressive, and so that's the targeted commercial effort in our area in the last few years.

MR. BURROWS: Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: Are those guys legitimate? I mean, are they documented with the right paperwork and everything, or is it undocumented sales?

MR. REYNOLDS: I couldn't tell you all of it, but I know we see them at the fish houses, you know, and so --

MR. BURROWS: Just one comment on that, and I do know a lot of the guys that fish with snapper grouper permits -- They actually high-speed troll from spot to spot, and is that a directed fishery? I mean, it's a good way to make the trip more exciting at twelve knots, but I guess that counts, and so -- Paul.

MR. PANCAKE: The commercial comment made me think of a gentleman in the north Myrtle Beach area that his -- For better or worse, his only real game was he wanted to go commercially

catch wahoo, and he got to be very good at it, to the point where he would fish by himself, in a twenty-three-foot center console, and there were trips that he had ten, twelve, fifteen fish, and he was going through a fish house up there. I fished two trips with him, and he just went. I mean, he wasn't doing anything crazy or anything like that. He just went, and spent a lot of time researching it and understanding the fishery.

MR. BURROWS: Anyone else? Back to you.

MR. HADLEY: All right. I appreciate that. I'm going to move on down here to the next set of questions, and so this is focusing on social and economic influences in the fishery, and the first set really focuses on what you're seeing as far as demand, and so thinking of demand from the commercial side, and, you know, has the dockside and/or retail restaurant price and demand for wahoo changed in recent years, and, you know, is there increasing commercial demand, decreasing commercial demand, about the same, and the same thing for the recreational sectors.

What are you seeing as far as demand for recreational trips for wahoo, specifically looking at for-hire trips, and so charter trips, and then also onboard private vessels, and, also, among the species targeted, how important are wahoo to your overall businesses, looking at charter, commercial, or retail, and how important are wahoo to trip satisfaction on recreational trips, and so those are questions focusing on demand for wahoo and wahoo fishing.

Switching gears a little bit, over to importance to community, are there any communities that are dependent on the wahoo fishery? Have changes in infrastructure, such as docks, marinas, fish houses, affected fishing opportunities for wahoo, and how have fishermen, or communities -- Have there been any adaptations to changes in the wahoo fishery?

Looking at the previous AP input on these topics, from the recreational perspective, it was noted that there is demand for customers onboard charter trips that want to target wahoo. There appears to be increasing general demand for wahoo sort of across-the-board, recreationally speaking. It was noted, in South Carolina, that trips targeting wahoo help fill in during times that are typically the slow season, which we got into just a little while ago, and think of the late winter or early spring, at least in that region, particularly in the month of March, and it was noted that, several years ago, the selection of wahoo tackle and lures, in many tackle shops, is fairly sparse, but now you go into some tackle shops and you see an entire wahoo wall, so to speak, sort of a dedicated section in a tackle shop to wahoo.

Switching gears over to the commercial side, it was noted that wahoo tend to have a relatively short shelf life, and so commercial prices are greatly affected by the demand from restaurants and retail outlets that utilize the fish fairly quickly, and so, with that, I will turn it back over to the AP. If you have anything different to add, or if there's anything in there that you want to change, or, you know, further kind of flesh out answers to those questions, that's what we're looking for at this point. Thank you.

MR. BURROWS: Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: Well, in our area, I would say ten years -- Of course, my memory is bad, and it might have been fifteen years ago, but we ran straight to the fishing grounds, I want to say thirty or forty fathoms, and set our lines out, but, for three reasons now, we maybe get to a hundred feet

of water, or some days eighty feet of water, if we've got pretty water, and we put out fast trolls, and that serves three purposes for us. I would say that wahoo is probably one of the most sought after pelagic fish in our industry, and people are tickled to death to get them, because they're pretty, and they're delicious to eat, and it's something for them to take home.

The second reason is we figured out, when we slow down from -- Most of the boats in my area are twenty or twenty-four knots. If you slow down to fourteen, twelve or fourteen, and you're saving fuel, and fuel, at four and five and six dollars, that we've got here lately -- It's not a lot, but you save some fuel every day, if you slow down and fast troll for ten miles, and it really only makes about ten minutes difference in your time arrival, and, if you catch a couple of wahoo on the way, well, you've made your day, and so you've killed three birds there by it, and so there's hardly a charter boat in Hatteras now that doesn't fast troll at least out, and some of us do it back in, if we're having a tough day, but, that being said, it certainly is a very important fish to us, just for all the reasons that I just mentioned.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: I'm just echoing what's up there, pretty much. It's extremely strong charter demand, and recreational demand, in south Florida, in our area. Everyone wants to do it. People ask about it a lot more, and the demand is very high.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: I can speak for some of the islands. I went down, this past winter, to Barbados, and we decided to take a half-day trip, and they said, look, we're going to go high-speed trolling, and their high-speed trolling isn't high-speed trolling compared to what we do, and they're getting it done, but we caught seven, and we couldn't keep them for ourselves, but they weren't long getting to the market. I watched them take them off the boat and go right to the market, and so, you know, we're not the only ones selling them, and they're being sold, but I'm sure it's just a local market. You know, they can't ship them anywhere, and so it's not -- But he said that's pretty regular, for them to go out there and catch five or six wahoo in a half-day.

MR. BURROWS: So what I've heard is that everybody in the world wants wahoo except for your customers.

MR. HARRIS: They want them, but they don't get them very often.

MR. BURROWS: Understood.

MR. HARRIS: Like Rom, they talk about putting about, you know, short like that, ten miles. Recently, they've been -- We just haven't had -- We haven't had good water in a month, and we've been fishing in cold, green water, and that's just not real conducive for the wahoo.

MR. OWSLEY: Just to your point, I would have never -- I would have discounted colder, green water if -- I mean, I know, from just specifically targeting them in tournament fishing, I mean, if I had green water with bait in it, and if I decided to work it, and, obviously, you've got other species to go for, but I think I've caught some big ones, probably down in the sixty-six-degree dirty, gray water, and so, if the bait is there, they, you know, find the bait, find the structure, and, if you're on

good bottom, you're going to still get them in that, but, you know, a lot of people want bluer and seventy-two-plus or something, but they can still be got in there.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: I mean, usually -- I mean, when I tournament wahoo fish, I exclusively high-speed. I mean, with a planer, I mean, if you're definitely in a little shallow or something, I mean, you're dealing with some bycatch, and, if I'm tournament wahoo fishing, it's eighteen-plus knots that I'm running.

MR. BURROWS: As another part of this topic, I can comment that the demand in restaurants for wahoo is obscene. I mean, there are a few more fish that we can put out social media posts about, and they will go quicker, but wahoo is really close to the top of the list, and it's solid. We don't have wahoo go to waste, and we generally buy in fairly large quantities too, and so it's -- People want it. You can do anything with it. I guess you could burn it, and that would be bad, but, you know, there's a tremendous amount of things you can do with that, and it sells more than fresh tuna with us. To be honest, with wahoo, we tend to turn it so fast that, if it's there for more than three days, something -- We had a hurricane or a cold snap or something like that, and everybody stayed home, and we don't have a problem with it getting to that point. Paul.

MR. PANCAKE: The how important are wahoo to a satisfactory trip, in the fall time, if we get out there and we catch a bunch of blackfin, and we don't catch a wahoo, it's just like, man, we sucked today. We can have fifteen blackfin in the box, and just not catch a wahoo, and it's not like complete letdown, because the consolation prize is you've got fresh blackfin to eat, but catching a nice wahoo in the fall is just kind of what we've always really enjoyed, and so I wouldn't base it as, if I didn't catch one, it was a complete bummer, but it's always extremely nice to have at least one or two good fish in the boat, on top of the other fish that are out there.

MR. BURROWS: Any other comments or questions or clarifications? Seeing none, John Hadley.

MR. HADLEY: All right, and so this question is for Bill, and, Bill, I don't mean to put you on the spot, but, you know, further up the coast, is there -- You know, Virginia Beach, or even further north, is there much of a wahoo demand on the charter side, or the private rec side, or is it more kind of a happenstance sort of fish, where you come across it?

MR. RICHARDSON: I mean, it kind of starts out real slow in the summer, and, if we're lucky, we get a few. Then, in August, they might show up a little bit, and they tend to be a little bit bigger, and, you know, like maybe forty or fifty pounds, sixty pounds, and seventy pounds, would be a couple of weeks. In October, we get a real good run, and anything floating out there has got nine or ten of them underneath it, but it's like everything goes that way, and you end up with one or two. You know, the wind blows, and a cold front comes through, and a storm comes by, and then you don't get to do it, and so -- But they get them good down in Hatteras, that's for sure.

MR. BURROWS: Back to you, John.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Thank you. I appreciate that. All right. The next set of questions, and, I guess, before we move off of that, if I could have one more follow-up, and, Chris, this is something that you said earlier, as far as, you know, kind of getting at that community question,

and you said southern North Carolina, and so the Wilmington area I guess you're talking about, or referring to, and is that sort of -- Does that become sort of a wahoo community, you would say, and like a lot in the fishing community are targeting it?

MR. BURROWS: I would say most of our charter boat crowd promotes wahoo fishing most of the year, as this is your chance to catch a trophy fish that also is delicious. I would say it's the number-one -- With the boats going to the blue water, and, you know, we have a lot of king mackerel fishermen too, and occasionally they catch a wahoo in eighty feet of water, and the blue-water boats -- That's the mainstay, really, for most of the year. Most of our charter boat guys would -- They would rather promote wahoo fishing over catching a sailfish, because you can bring the wahoo home and fillet it on the dock and get a great picture with it, and it goes back to what Paul said.

It's very achievable to have a good day of wahoo fishing. You don't have to go maybe quite as far as you would for, you know, during good dolphin time. They're always there, to some degree, and, obviously, the lunar phase plays a -- Bob touched on that earlier, but, consistently, overall, I would say we're kind of the -- I'm not going to say we're the wahoo capital of the world, because that's giving us way too much credit, but we have really good wahoo fishing, and the boats that have the range, and the customer base to get out there, that's what keeps them rolling.

AP MEMBER: I have one more thing. Sort of with the high-speed trolling, it's more the recreational side, and who has really benefitted is the tackle shops and the fuel docks. I think, in the wintertime here, you know, it's been a serendipitous bonus, you know, but, as far as for-hire, I mean, you can't make money trolling twelve knots, more or less eighteen knots, and so I think, as far as the recreational sector -- Especially, you know, triple-quad-engine outboards, and we sort of touched base on it, but it's easy to figure out how to do it, and it's not much skill involved, and, you know, it's -- But that is strictly recreational, and it doesn't affect for-hire.

MR. WHITAKER: The only thing I would add is he's exactly right. I burn one-gallon an hour at trolling speed. At wahoo speed, twelve to fourteen knots, I burn about twelve to fourteen gallons an hour, and so, if my charter wants to high-speed troll all day, they better come up with an extra \$300 or \$400, but, to add to the importance, we've not had many tunas around, the last couple of months, and so, on my fishing report -- They always ask you, every day, what's your targeted species, and, unless I was live baiting, where king mackerel would be the target, it's been wahoo for September and October.

AP MEMBER: To kind of piggyback on what Chris said about the charter community in his area, which I was a part of for the better part of ten years, when a charter shows up to the dock, and they ask you basically what a successful day is going to look like, it was really hard to tell somebody that we were going to go blue marlin fishing, because, one, I didn't have the experience in blue marlin fishing at that point, and, two, the boats that we were on just weren't capable of going the extra thirty miles, just with the way that our coast is there.

If we defined success by catching some wahoo, well, that was a whole lot easier to do, because it was a more achievable goal, and just helping educate, whether it's a rec guy, or a charter client, or just getting better at charter fishing, that's -- But we spent a lot of time on learning and doing, and because of the accessibility of it.

MR. BURROWS: All right. Does anyone else want to sound-off here? Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: I just don't tell them we're going blue marlin fishing.

MR. BURROWS: We're giving all our secrets away in here today, and there will be a transcript of this, by the way, and so -- John.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Thank you. I have a couple more items to hit on, and one sort of is looking at the ecological, environmental, and habitat influences that you've seen, and then we'll get, a little bit, into some of the regulations, if you have any thoughts on that, but, focusing on the environmental-related aspects, have you noticed any unique effects of environmental conditions on wahoo? You know, this is kind of getting into what's already been discussed, as far as abundance, and do you think it has changed over the past ten years, and it sounds like the AP is pretty much in consensus that it's been pretty steady, if not ticking upwards a little bit, but what do you see now, in terms of recruitment? Where are the small fish? Are large and small fish found in the same locations, or are they in different areas? Have you noticed any change in the species that are caught with wahoo over the years or seasonally?

Some of the previous AP input on this is it was noted that wahoo tend to prefer specific habitats, based on their size, and larger specimens are often found closer to shore, around the shelf break and over structure, and smaller specimens are typically found offshore, and in deeper water, and these smaller fish orient themselves around floating structure, such as sargassum mats or marine debris. Occasionally, very small specimens, wee-hoos, which I think was mentioned earlier as well, are caught on sabiki rigs around sargassum mats when catching bait, and then, in the Outer Banks, it was noticed that small specimens sporadically migrate through the area all at once and are seen in large numbers, but they may not appear again for a very long period of time. With that, I will hand it back over to the AP, if you have anything else to add on the environmental side.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: This is for the Florida guides, and I noticed that we kept getting reports of how hot the water was down there this summer, and did that affect the wahoo at all? It did not?

AP MEMBER: I would say that the warmer weather has definitely affected the dolphin, but not the wahoo so much.

MR. HARRIS: That's what I was wondering.

AP MEMBER: To your point too about the water temp, I did notice, even getting out there in January and February and earlier, it seemed like we had warmer water sooner, and so I remember that I was always out there and like, okay, dolphin are going to be here any day now, any day now, and I kept saying that for like a couple of weeks, but there was plenty of wahoo this year, and it seemed -- I don't know, but it seemed like the bluer water was also in a little closer, and, I mean, it was -- It was really good fishing for them.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: My mate caught his first quad of wahoo on live bait this last year, I mean, and so -- On spin reels, and, you know, we had six on at once, and there was a lot of fish there, and so, that being said, there's a lot of fish, and we haven't seen any ecological factors that have affected our stock, except for maybe a dolphin abundance decrease, along with the species that they migrate with and spawn with possibly causing an increase, because one of the most voracious species in the ocean isn't eating as many of them. I mean, that could be something that's biological, or ecological, and a reduction in dolphin stock causes an increase in wahoo stock, but, besides that, nothing else that we've seen.

MR. BURROWS: Thank you, Jon. Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: Well, my only comment is I disagree with that, up there about larger fish inshore. If we catch a wahoo out there in a hundred fathoms, eighty or a hundred fathoms, it's usually thirty-five pounds, or maybe a fifty or sixty-pounder, and so I totally disagree with that statement, but, as far as small fish, you do find them around floats. I mean, we'll put out a spoon sometimes, and you might catch twenty of them around there, but they do congregate around a float, but it may be in twenty fathoms, and it may be in eighty fathoms, but it will hold smaller fish, you know, than what we call free-rangers, and, as far as environmental conditions, where we are, the water -- If you go look at the weather buoy here for the last two weeks, you might see eighty-degree water, or, if you looked at it here in the last few days, you might see sixty-three-degree water, and so the wind and weather pushes the water in and out big time in Hatteras, and so that certainly changes where we catch wahoo.

It's not necessarily because they're not there, but the water clarity certainly has a tremendous effect. I think wahoo feeds by sight, and so, obviously, the clearer the water, the better, and you can catch them, and that's not to say you can't catch them in green water, but not as well, usually, but I think -- I can't tell you that I've seen a big change in that, and I think we just -- It's been about the same, in my opinion, and I've been doing it for about thirty-seven years.

MR. BURROWS: I've got a question, and, Rom, you might be well suited to answer this, or Jay, or Richard, even though you don't like catching wahoo, but I have always thought that, you know, North Carolina had this resident population of fish inside of the break, and it might be a down-by-us thing, but does that -- Maybe that's the case in Florida too, and I think we have a much bigger change, obviously, in water temperature when the seasons change, but have you noticed anything like that, that you feel like these inshore spots are productive?

AP MEMBER: Well, we do catch larger wahoo while live baiting for king mackerel, and often that's in cooler, greener water. Clear water, but cooler and greener, but we catch quite a few on the high speeds, you know, eighty feet on out to the break, and, a lot of times, there will be a lot of bites in there, you know, eighteen to twenty fathoms, but that seems to be seasonally. I mean, I don't think they hang around when the water cools off.

MR. BURROWS: I only bring this up because we see this rash of big wahoo caught in the area you're describing, which we've got a lot of it, and it runs into January, and like there's guys that will try the bluefin thing and strike out, and then they go live bait, and they come back with a 110-pounder, and I've seen that more times than I think would be -- You know, anything can happen, right, but I keep seeing that, and I'm thinking, in January, that seems very odd to me, but there's something that I am missing out there.

MR. HARRIS: I can honestly say, and this is my forty-fifth summer, and I've never caught on in January out there, and we've fished a lot in January, with big baits, to bluefin, and we just -- I don't know if they just -- Even when we're in the warm water, they don't see to congregate like they do on the break. They go down there and fish the break, or the rocks, and we -- Just we've got the point, and that's what we've got. We've got the area called the point, with big sharp drop-offs, but you get inside of that and there's many a day we troll in, trying to save fuel, and you just don't seem to come up with one, and most of them are out there on the bottom, and, like you said, we just pulled it up, and it was -- I fished yesterday, and I looked at the tower, and it was sixty-eight degrees, and Diamond Shoals just kind of gives us a judge of where it's going to be, and today it's eighty. That's how much it changed in one day.

MR. BURROWS: Anyone else want to sound-off on environmental conditions for wahoo? Seeing nothing, John Hadley.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Thank you. The next focus is just general feedback on management measures, and so just getting a feel of does the AP feel that the current management measures are appropriate, given the fishery that you have at the moment and the observation on fish stocks, and so, specifically, are the recreational retention limits appropriate, two fish per person, no vessel limit and no size limit? Are the commercial retention limits appropriate, a 500-pound trip limit, no size limit, and are the current sector allocations appropriate, and so you have the total annual catch limit for wahoo, and it is allocated 97.55 percent to the recreational sector, and 2.45 percent to the commercial sector, and are there any new management measures that the council should consider, and are there existing management measures that you really think the council should consider changing for wahoo?

As far as previous AP input, last time this was reviewed, there were no specific management measures that were identified that really needed to be changed at the time. Some AP members mentioned monitoring spearfishing landings of wahoo and practices of targeting the species to mitigate potential future negative impacts on wahoo stocks, and I will turn it over to the AP.

MR. BURROWS: I think we had a comment related to this from Jon Reynolds earlier, about potentially looking at the smaller-sized wahoo, if you want to expand on that.

MR. REYNOLDS: It seems like we're all kind of gearing towards wahoo more, and more reliance upon them, and we don't -- There's not much value in those really small fish, I think to most, I mean, those real small fish, and so, even if we came up with some sort of minimum size limit, just to avoid -- You know, we're looking for our future here, and, if we're building a business now based upon wahoo fishing, and tackle shops, and recreational guys, are leaning more towards it, and everyone is doing a lot better, and making a lot more money on them, and we're becoming more reliant upon them, and we might want to think about a little bit of conservation, and, you know, just those super small fish -- I mean, they don't have any value, you know, but they're being killed, and, I mean, I know I had some customers the other day, and they went on another trip, like the week before, and the guy was holding two schoolies and a wahoo in his teeth, you know, that was like this big, and, you know, you're not getting much out of that, but that wahoo could -- That wahoo pays off largely, when that fish gets a little bit bigger, to everyone in the fishery, and so I would want to recommend some sort of minimum size limit, you know, I mean.

Then the spearfishing thing really is a problem, you know, where we're at. Where we're at, and it might not be in other places, you know, but, in south Florida, it's getting -- You know, it's getting a little out of control, and, I mean, how do you address that? You know, I don't know, and that would have to be gear-related retention, or something like that, and then how is that -- I don't really know how to go about that, and I just know that it -- They're hitting a lot of fish, and they're doing it a lot more often, and they can see them, and it's a pretty easy target. You know, our water is clear, and those fish are in eighty or ninety feet of water, and you can -- You can go in with a pack of guys, and they were doing it yesterday, and the day before, and, you know, they're dropping a bunch of divers off, and they're, you know, on every single wreck up and down, and they're just moving from wreck to wreck, and so they're exerting a lot of effort at it.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: The guys spearfishing, and that's the question I had, and do they catch 500 pounds? Can they catch 500 pounds in a trip? That's maybe something that can be done there, particularly if you think these are spawning fish, and, you know, you want to give them the chance to spawn before you spear them, and maybe, around wrecks or something, there could be done something done to limit more so -- I don't know if it can be or not, but, if it's a problem, then it should be addressed at some point.

MR. REYNOLDS: For sure, and it's a unique effort, and, I mean, you're not going to have -- The high-speed guys are staying on the outer perimeter, that are targeting them, and then the live-bait guys are kind of drifting by, and you're going to -- You know, you're going to have a pack come up, and you're going to catch a couple, but that effort is extreme. You know, you can hit them all, really, and so if we can do something, and I don't know what can be done, but it sounds like we need to do something.

MR. BURROWS: Tim.

MR. SCALISE: I don't know if it was presented, and, if I missed it, I apologize, but how big is a one-year-old wahoo, a sexually-mature wahoo?

MR. BURROWS: The question was how big is a wahoo at that one-year of age, where they're sexually mature and can reproduce?

MR. HADLEY: So you're looking at about the forty-inch range, based on the age-at-length chart in front of you.

MR. BURROWS: Paul.

MR. PANCAKE: Unhooking a forty-inch wahoo in the boat, when it's mad and you're trying to let it go -- I have no interest in doing it, and there's just -- I've got too many scars from wahoo fishing, and they've sent me to the emergency room more than just about anything else, is just a mishandled fish, which is completely on me, but unhooking a mad wahoo, with the intent of letting it go, could be troublesome, especially depending on the tackle. If you're using treble hooks, that's always fun, but a j-hook and a dehooker is easy to use.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: Yes, I agree, and I'm talking about the real small -- I mean, there's fish being -- I mean, you can just -- I mean, it's like that, and so something -- Like a twenty, or I don't know, but twenty-four inches or something like that, and we're talking about fish that you can just flip in the boat and like grab behind the gills, and that's what I'm talking about.

I guess, on my last comment, that maybe regional management would be the idea for us, because I don't think that everyone else is experiencing that same problem, and so I guess that needs to be something, and regional management on that, maybe.

MR. BURROWS: Bob.

AP MEMBER: My only comment would be I totally agree that the really bad cuts, when I've had to send people to the doctor to get stitches, have been wahoo, almost every single time, but usually, when we catch a wee-hoo, as Jon is referring to, in our area, it's around floats, and, if it's a small fish, I normally let it go. Now, some people keep them, and then you go somewhere else, but, you know, I guess, if you were going to do something -- I mean, a tuna, you can't catch a yellowfin less than twenty-seven inches, and maybe make it a standard with that, and then, that way, your mate doesn't have to remember ten different things, and it would be standard.

MR. BURROWS: Bob.

MR. FREVERT: I just looked it up, and, in the South Atlantic, kingfish are twenty-four inches to the fork, and I can handle a twenty-four-inch kingfish and let it go without killing myself, and, if a lot of those fish you catch are the small ones underneath the floats, you're probably using a speed jig, and so there's only one hook, and, just because there's so many damned numbers on every -- I can't keep them all straight, and kingfish looks like a wahoo, and make it twenty-four, the same as a kingfish.

MR. OWSLEY: I agree with Jon Reynolds about establishing some degree of a size limit, do it now, and I guess maybe I've like self-imposed that in my head, but wasn't -- A few years back, I mean, wasn't there a six-fish vessel limit, or am I just like dreaming that?

MR. BURROWS: John.

MR. HADLEY: So that came up in discussion of Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10. That was an action in there, and the council ended up discussing it, and they -- You know, I believe it was taken out to public hearings, and they received a lot of feedback on that, and they ended up just leaving it at two per person, and so it's based on -- They took the vessel limit out and left it at two per person, and so it's based on how many people are on the boat, but it was discussed previously, yes.

MR. BURROWS: There was talk, in 2008, of going to two fish per vessel, and I will say that I have never seen as many people at a meeting as I saw at the one in New Bern that year, and no one was happy, but, again, it's tied back to that's the mainstay of a lot of North Carolina's charter boat industry, and two fish per vessel eliminates, you know, a lot of possibilities of a successful trip, when you're running sixty-plus miles, and so, thankfully, that was not enacted, and it's been -- Nothing has really changed in that arena since. I mean, there's been proposals on the table, but I think we're in a good place with two fish per person at this point. Chip.

MR. BERRY: I kind of feel like that with dolphin, too. I don't know how many of these weehoos are out there, but it seems like -- I mean, I fish from Wilmington to basically here to Charleston, or in between, and I don't see a whole lot of small wahoos. I mean, I don't know if there's more down there. I mean, there could be a whole lot in that age class that are out there, but I always think too of little peanut dolphins, you know, and what's a blue marlin going to eat, and so I'm kind of all about -- You know, like you said, there's not much food value in a very, very small fish like that, but it might be a great day to the predators and other pelagics that might be feeding on that fish, and that might just be a real important part of their food chain. I mean, I don't know, but that's kind of how I always felt about the peanut dolphin, is don't take all the peanuts off of there, because the blue marlin has got to eat something, you know, and that's just a thought.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Chip. Anyone else want to sound-off? Richard.

MR. DELIZZA: I just wanted to reiterate what John is saying. In south Florida, particularly in the summer months, we have a lot of these small wahoo that are being caught, and I only wish we didn't have so many small wahoo being caught. You know, twenty-four inches would be something that nobody should be too concerned about having to throw back, and, you know, it happens more down there than what you might be accustomed to further north.

MR. BURROWS: Thank you, Richard. Anyone else? Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: I think we're good with the two-fish-per-person limit. You know, we have some of the best wahoo fishing in the fall, and I think -- I haven't caught a limit this year, and I think I caught a limit one time last year, and so, you know, ten fish is a really good day, and so I don't think the limit needs to be any less, because we're usually not catching the limit.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Jay. Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: I guess, just to wrap that up though, just the overall consensus I think we're hearing -- Maybe the best forward though might be a size limit, and then we don't have to worry about the bag or vessel limit, and we're going to get way more out of that, it sounds like, and the wahoo fishery is pretty healthy, and I'm just -- If anyone else has anything on that, but that's what I'm hearing.

MR. BURROWS: I didn't hear really any opposition to the twenty-four-inch size limit. I don't think anyone has stated they want to see the bag limit changed. Tell me if I'm wrong, but -- All right. Cool. If there's any other comments, this would be the time, or we're going to turn it back over to John Hadley.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Thank you, and so we're coming to the end here. You know, just a general question, and is there anything else that you want the council to know about wahoo, or the wahoo fishery? When this was last posed, the AP brought up the notable impact that the increasing shark population is having on the wahoo fishery, and not just the wahoo fishery, but many other related fisheries throughout the South Atlantic region, and it's causing increased mortality on wahoo and other prized species, and sailfish were noted as one of those, and other billfish were noted, as some of those prized species, and that it's changing fishing behavior. It's concentrating fishermen in certain areas, and effort toward certain species, that could be feasibly landed without

the likelihood of extreme shark predation, and so, essentially, it's changing fishing behavior and, also, notably, increasing mortality on target species, and so that was the other category item that was brought up the last time, but is there anything else that we haven't covered, or to add to that, that you would want the council to know about wahoo or the wahoo fishery?

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: I will say this is the first year, in forty-five, that I've caught a wahoo head. I saw he got the gill plates, and I will talk about tuna another time, but they're definitely -- You know, they've got to be, and everybody is going to have a problem with them sooner or later, but that's the first one I've had eaten, and so it's coming.

MR. BURROWS: Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: I've had a couple of wahoo eaten this year, the first time ever, and, of course, I've been screaming about sharks here, and I was on the HMS AP for twenty -- I don't know how many years, but I started screaming about them twenty years ago on there, and I know -- Now I hear they're eating sailfish down in Florida, and so there's -- I mean, there's places we literally cannot bottom fish, and, if you try to jig a tuna, almost anywhere off of Hatteras now, if you get two or three of them in the boat, then you're lucky, very lucky, and usually I think -- Last time I tried it, I lost twenty jigs and finally gave up, but my only other comment is I don't know who made those cookies back there, or if you all bought them or wherever they came from, but Bill told me I couldn't eat just one, and he was right. They're really good.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Rom. Paul.

MR. PANCAKE: I've seen some new grumblings of some piece of legislation called the Get Sharked, or the Sharked legislation, where I think the Bonefish Tarpon Trust has started this, to really delve into the shark predation and hopefully get something done about this.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: We sent a couple of people to Washington, to a meeting this year, with Congress, and it was a committee, of course, but there is real serious thought being put into it, and they're just trying to figure it out, how they can -- Being the commercial value has dropped so -- They can change the law anytime they want to, and they got that no-finning law put in, and it got slipped in, where a lot of people didn't even know about it, and they told the group there, and they might have been just telling them, so they can appease them, but there's a real effort, and it's coming from Florida.

Those guys down there, the sailfish, the people with big money, are starting to get hacked, and they're seeing the problem, and you were alluding to this, and it's being able to sell them commercially, you know, with the no-finning rule. A lot of them don't have a lot of value, other than having the fin and the body with them, and, if you will watch -- I was telling Jon, if you watch TV, you still see that, on the Discovery Channel, thirty years ago, a Japanese boat finning the sharks and throwing them overboard, and so the people don't realize that that's not happening anymore.

That's not the way it ended, and they said there's such a shortage, and, you know, there was a forty-box limit the last night that it was open, and all the boats at Oregon Inlet went out, all the commercial boats, and in one night caught their forty-box limit of blacktips and sandbars, and so there was never a shortage. It was -- You know, I think there was one lady on HMS, or somebody, that has -- I read her statement, and then I saw her on TV, and she says, but they're so beautiful, and it's her favorite reef shark. Well, they're not target reef sharks, and so, anyway, there is a sign that there is a growing -- Going towards finding some way to start controlling them, I hope. I mean, I tuna fish just about exclusively in May and June, and there's days when you get twenty bites and you don't get any of them, and you have to leave. You have to just give it up.

MR. BURROWS: Thank you. Bob, were you still --

MR. FREVERT: I live in Jupiter, and we've got four to six dive boats that go out every day and feed the sharks. They put cages in the water so you can feed the sharks and see them swim around, and the sharks are not migrating through. They just hang around, and it's a big problem in Palm Beach County, because the dive operators -- You know, they say that we saw eleven different species of sharks today, and the sharks are used to being fed. If you go out there to fish, and the sharks swim up to your boat and just hang out. You will see five or six or seven sharks, eight or ten feet long, sitting under your boat waiting for you to catch a bonita, and he's gone.

We've got the same problem in the Keys, and we fish the wrecks in the Gulf, and every wreck has a shark or three, and you catch a cobia, and you measure him, and he's an inch short, and you throw them in, and he's gone. It's disheartening to try and do the right thing and release your fish and see them get eaten, and so it's a problem in the wrecks in the Keys, and it's a big problem off of Palm Beach, and they are eating a lot of sailfish now. They have learned that, you know, they're tasty. Cobias get eaten now, and there's a section, a five-mile section, that you just don't fish, and it's right on the edge of the drop-off where the wahoo are, and the kingfish, but it's unfishable. It's just -- It's terrible, and so I'm hoping the shark act gets some motivation behind it.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: There's a good -- Discovery Channel usually is just against everything we want, but there's a good video, or a documentary, on -- I think it was called Ascension Bay: Island Under Attack, and did anybody see that? It was alluding to the same thing with the divers. The divers started coming, because they could spear the big yellowfins, when they were freediving, and that's on their agenda, or their bucket list, and they would go out there, and the boats would go three or four days ahead of time and start chumming the area, and the yellowfin would show up. They would come.

Well, after about two years of it, the sharks figured it out, and they've started coming, and it got to where you couldn't put a diver in the water, because they were so aggressive, and it wasn't just a blacktip, and it was the -- You see these people grabbing the nose of a tiger shark and pushing them off, and that's not real, and I wish people could see how long they fed them before they let divers go in there and do that, but, anyway, the whole story was that it took three years for them to quit feeding those sharks for them to disappear.

They didn't tag any, and so they didn't know where they came from, and they don't know where they went, but it took three years for them to leave, and they don't allow any chumming there

anymore. You go out there, and, if you see one, you shoot it, and fine, but they don't allow chumming. They were taking barrels of chum out, and so it's a good show, if you can find it.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks. Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: Hopefully we were a big part of that, with BTT and some input and stuff, and so hopefully, looking forward, but I think we need to -- I keep saying this, and I think eTRIPS has been a really, really sophisticated, easy tool, and they're developing it more and more, and I think we need a -- You know, I just keep saying it at meetings, to put it on the record, but, you know, I think we need a selection on there, you know, so we can quantify the amount of shark attacks, and that will help us with stock assessments, you know, and that will give us a better idea of how many fish we're actually losing to sharks and each different species, and so, you know, it would be a pretty easy selector button for them. I mean, the developers can make this stuff pretty simply, and so, if there's any way that we can add that and note to the developers, the council, and management, to be able to quantify shark attacks in some way, that would be good.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Jon. Anyone else want to discuss shark issues? Tim.

MR. SCALISE: In snapper grouper, just this last month, in October, I don't know how many groupers, gags, I had eaten by sharks. I mean, I would just have to leave. I would just have to go to another spot, and it wasn't like that two years ago. I mean, I've been doing it for forty years, and I haven't seen anything like it.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Tim. Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: Well, my comment, and back dealing with the sharks with HMS, and they said, well, you're just in a nursery area, and that's why you're seeing so many, and so I got me a GoPro, and we would be out there jigging for blackfins, or yellowfins sometimes, and, of course, we would lose two or three to sharks, and so we would take the GoPro and stick it down there, and, for every four or five I could see up there eating that tuna, there was about thirty, and they're duskies and they're sandbars, and they're both, according to a lot of my buddies who commercial fished for shark, back when they could catch some, and they're both very high marketable sharks that are good to eat, and then their fins, which everybody thinks, oh, they cut the fins off, and, well, their fins are a bonus, and, at one time, they could get big money, twenty or thirty dollars a pound, for their fins, and so they were a very viable commercial fishery.

They've done a couple of just sample sets off of Hatteras, with local guys that really aren't rigged up near as good as the guys that used to do it, and they would go out there and set 300 hooks and catch 250 of these sharks, and the other fifty hooks were bit off, and, I mean, compared to what they did back when they could catch them legally, and it was just -- We're like, well, how many do they have to catch before you all are going to let them do it, and I personally think that, if they let some of those guys go back fishing, that they could solve some of our problems pretty quick, but, you know, you've got three or four people up there that love the sharks, and, you know, last time I was there, I think the duskies weren't going to be back to a sustainable state until 2073, and the sandbars was like 2050 or something, and so that's the uphill battle they're fighting.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: If I'm not mistaken, they've taken the sandbars off the protected list now, haven't they, where they thought they were going to recover in twenty-seventy-something, and now they think, oh, gosh, there's so many of them that we're going to take them off the list now, and so who knows where it's going to go to, but we definitely need some help there.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks. Anyone else? I guess we have consensus that there are a lot of sharks and that they eat what we want to catch. Has anyone had a shark eat a dolphin? Two for two.

MR. BERRY: Since we're talking about the fish history, my family, we did most of our fishing in the, you know, 1970s and 1980s, and into the 1990s, and, I mean, we still fish, but, back when we did it a whole lot, we used to never have problems with sharks back then, and it seems like we didn't, or maybe I was just lucky, and I heard that -- Well, is it the populations have gotten so big, or -- I heard there's been some research going on about how sharks have trained themselves to listen to -- Well, I guess outboard motors now, but diesel engines at that point, that they were attracted to the diesel engines, because they knew there was a smorgasbord of food around that sound, but, hearing you all, it sounds more like the populations of sharks have maybe gotten out of hand and it's starting to impact the other things, I guess. I guess both.

MR. BURROWS: I think that's definitely the consensus in this room, that there's a lot of them. Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: I think they're definitely trained. I mean, when you're fishing the 230 rocks for blackfin, and you hook a couple, and you slow the boat down, and there will be sharks at the back of your boat waiting for you to bring the fish to them, and they won't go after the fish, but they will just come to the boat, and they'll hang out right behind the boat.

MR. HARRIS: We cover quite a bit area at Oregon Inlet, and we can fish down there close to Hatteras, and we can fish up there with the Virginia Beach boats, and you can't get away from them. If you find tuna, you're going to find the sharks. They follow the -- I guess they follow the tuna, but you can be off somewhere by yourself, and find a school of bonita or some kind of bait jumping, and you go through and hook seven tuna, and you lose seven tuna, and so it's not just localized, and it's over the -- I think it's from Key West to Maine, and so maybe we need to put up some more windmills.

MR. BURROWS: You're just trying to open Pandora's Box, aren't you?

MR. FREVERT: They're a problem in the Bahamas, also. There is spots off of James Point where the yellowfin congregate, and you pull your boat up there, with your live bait, and the sharks just come up, and so people will keep their carcasses from the previous day, and they go to start fishing, and the sharks show up, and they throw the carcasses over, and then they start fishing, and so it's lots of places.

MR. WHITAKER: One other quickie, and it's just a question. Like, if you're high-speed trolling for wahoo, and you're covering a lot of ground pretty quickly, and, you know, you're not set up to draw things in, do you have a problem with shark with wahoo too?

MR. FREVERT: Yes, in the Bahamas, for sure.

AP MEMBER: Some of the fish that we've caught here high-speed fishing, when we've been done tuna fishing, it's been in the same area, but we've lost fish, after the hook-up, to sharks, and it will be almost instant. You know, slow the boat down, and the fish settles into the bite, and we're just reeling dead weight at that point, and there's no kick or no anything to them.

MR. BURROWS: Anyone else? Everybody is getting along today. That's great. We're on the same page here. I will turn it back to you, John.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Well, that's all I have for wahoo. I appreciate everyone's input and thoughtful comments, and, you know, I think that really fleshes out what we have here, or what we had in the existing report. You know, as I mentioned, it was a little bit different at the time, and this was several years ago, and so I think a lot could be added to this. You know, these fishery performance reports are -- They come in useful in many different aspects, but I see them as particularly important for dolphin and wahoo, since we don't have stock assessments, and we don't have the breadth of information that we do have for some of the other species, and so this kind of input I think is particularly helpful. I know, you know, scientists, managers, everyone finds it extremely helpful, and so I just wanted to say thank you for your thoughtful comments on that.

Next up, and, you know, we're coming to the end here, was kind of an express review of dolphin, and I know the AP talked about that quite a bit, and I think, if it's okay with the Chair, we may have to move some things around on the agenda, because we do have the MSE topic first thing in the morning, but I can introduce it, and then we can just kind of leave it off there, as sort of a parting thought.

MR. BURROWS: Sounds good.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. With that, I just wanted to kind of shift everyone's mindset, kind of switch gears here, to focus on -- To move from wahoo and focus on dolphin, and so, tomorrow, you're going to have a presentation from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, first thing, on the dolphin management strategy evaluation, which we've kind of alluded to in a few comments here, but this is sort of a big-ticket item for the AP, and for the council, and for management in general, potentially, if it is successful, and the idea is sort of to come at dolphin management in a little bit more adaptive, flexible structure, and so you'll get a lot of details on what's been done so far, and which direction that's going, tomorrow.

What I will leave as a parting thought is sort of just the basic life history and some landings information, sort of baseline information for the AP, to sort of think about, and maybe it will help with the discussion tomorrow, but I will run through this fairly quickly. You know, the same thing that we saw with wahoo, and we'll go over some life history, and we'll go over some landings, yearly and monthly, and then some of the economic information.

For dolphin, as has been discussed, they are much like wahoo, in that they are -- Well, even more so, and they grow faster than wahoo. They're a very short-lived, fast-growing fish. The maximum observed age is five years, and so you can see this is a length and age-based growth chart, and so a one-year-old fish is -- You know, this is an average, and so there's some that can deviate either below or above this, but a one-year-old fish is approximately thirty-five inches.

Looking at the length-weight relationship, you can see a pretty linear relationship there between length and weight, and so that approximately one-year-old, thirty-five-inch fish is just under fifteen pounds, probably the thirteen or fourteen-pound range, on average. As far as maturity, dolphin mature very early, and I believe it varies based on the study that you use, but dolphin are mature in the eighteen to twenty-inch range, and so that puts them at a few months old, and so, by age-one, dolphin are sexually mature.

Now we'll switch gears and look at landings, and so we'll start with the commercial side, and both the commercial and recreational landings that will be presented are landings for the whole east coast, and so this is looking at the Florida Keys all the way up through Maine.

On the commercial side, we've seen the landings have kind of fluctuated, and there's some exceptions, of course, but between that one-million-pound to 500,000-pound range, and you can see it has dropped off quite a bit in recent years, and there's sort of that peak in 2014 and 2015, and then it has gone downward since. Looking at commercial landings by state, you can see that, at least in recent -- Again, this is the same chart where you have, in the red, the sort of pink color, you have landings from Florida and Georgia. In green, you have the Mid-Atlantic and New England. In blue, you have the North Carolina and South Carolina landings.

In most years, at least most recent years, there are some Florida landings, and some from the Mid-Atlantic, but landings from North Carolina, North Carolina and South Carolina, really is dominated by North Carolina within that dataset, or that's where most of the commercial landings, or the majority of commercial landings, are coming from. It is kind of interesting to see that green area, and so you do have -- From 2010 onward, you do have landings occurring in the Mid-Atlantic and New England on the commercial side, and there is information on commercial releases.

Moving over to recreational, again, this is a dataset of landings represented on the east coast, and so, there again, the Florida Keys through Maine, and these are the FES numbers that Jon Reynolds was referring to, and it's in FES units, which are the same units that the ACL is now in, and you can see that landings sort of fluctuated from year to year, and they were largely in that ten-million to let's call it fifteen to sixteen-million-pound range, and you did have a large peak in 2015. However, in recent years, they have been fairly low, or notably lower, below ten-million pounds, and so, really, in the seven to ten-million-pound range over the past three years.

Looking at landings by state, you can see that Florida, Florida and Georgia, and so those states are combined, and Florida is the dominant factor in that grouping. Most of the landings, typically, on the recreational side come from Florida, and, again, you do have some landings from the Mid-Atlantic, that green portion, and then also North Carolina is the other -- North Carolina and South Carolina is the other major player, but, generally speaking, you do see the majority of landings come from -- They often do come from Florida on the recreational side.

Here is information on recreational releases, and it's variable from year to year. However, if you kind of put a line through it, it's really probably -- It may have a slightly upward tick, but it's kind of fluctuating between that 500,000 to one-million-fish releases.

Those were annual landings, and what I will present now are monthly landings, and so commercial monthly landings, and you can see the commercial landings peak, and there's a really large uptick in that May-June category, and then they fall off precipitously, but you do have some landings in

the early spring, and then late summer through fall. Moving over to the recreational side, you do see the May-June peak. However, it's sort of a wider peak, if you will, a wider triangle, I guess you could say, where you do have notable landings also in the June and July timeframe, as well as the early spring and early fall.

Looking at commercial revenue and price, the revenue, in this case, really follows landings. If you recall, the commercial landings have fallen off quite a bit in recent years, and so going with that has gone the total ex-vessel value, and so that's really the gross vessel -- That's the gross revenue to vessels landing dolphin. In recent years, it's ranged from about \$800,000 upwards to \$2 million. As far as the ex-vessel price, again, in inflation-adjusted terms, 2022 dollars, there has been an increasing price, at least since 2020, observed in the dolphin fishery, where dolphin -- Where the price for dolphin has been increasing.

Looking at the economic impacts of the commercial landings, they largely follow the revenue estimates, and so you have approximately upwards of \$20 million in sales impacts. Depending on the year, and that was 2019, down to around \$8 million in sales impacts in 2022. Fishing activity supported over a range of approximately \$3 million to \$7 million in income and approximately 260 to just over a hundred or so jobs.

Switching over to the recreational side, again, the recreational economic impacts, in this case, largely follow directed effort, and so, as directed effort, and so trips that are harvesting, or targeting, dolphin change, you will see the estimated economic impacts of those trips changing, but, generally speaking, the recreational fishery has supported about approximately \$350 million to just under \$450 million in sales impacts, and that fishing activity supported approximate \$140 million to \$110 million or so in income, and just shy of 2,400 jobs, downwards to just approximately 1,900 jobs, and, again, it's variable by year.

That is sort of the basic baseline information that we have available for dolphin, and I'm happy to answer any questions, and, again, sort of a parting thought, parting primer, for our discussion tomorrow on the MSE.

MR. BURROWS: Any really quick questions? Paul.

MR. PANCAKE: Do you have how many commercial permits were sold when we see the dip in 2019 to 2020, if there was a decrease in permits, or was there a decrease in fish?

MR. HADLEY: I don't know that off the top of my head, but I know it was in the amendment document that was recently put together, and so I can come back to you with that information.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: To answer your question a little bit, we've seen a definitely drop-off, in the last three or four years, of commercial boats. Now, there are some local guys that still go in that spring run, but, this year, we had -- The weather was so bad that it played a part in it, and I know it's going to play a part in the landings, but, once the size started dropping, you know, it's just not -- We had a great -- The last three years, for us, have been good, but not the big fish. That's the fish that everybody is missing, and I don't know if that's related to what's going on below the Keys, or in the Bahamas, you know, how the commercial fishing has picked up over there, because of

the demand, and I don't sell fish anymore, and I just don't participate. I have my license, but I don't, and guys are getting six-bucks a pound for dolphin, you know, if they get them, and so why wouldn't you keep them, but that's the local market.

That's not putting them on the other market, but, yes, I've seen a big drop in the number, where we had -- When it was the big years, when they were catching the big gaffers, they were out there in any kind of commercial boat they could get in and setting on the tide line in front of them, and so there's been a drop-off.

AP MEMBER: My observation of that is the longline boats typically switch gears, switch the type of gear, say in late April or May, and target dolphin, and there's a few that fish out of Cherry Point, and I don't know if they did. It all depends on how good the swordfishing is. They could make more money catching swordfish, and they'll just continue on that, but, you know, if they're not catching swordfish, and the dolphin are there, they'll switch gear, and so it's sort of a fluid situation. I don't think -- The boats that I talked to down there didn't -- They didn't really participate in the dolphin fishing, and they just did the swordfishing, but it would be good to have a commercial, you know, almost a longline boat on here, to find out, you know, when they do swordfish and when they dolphin fish.

AP MEMBER: John, the numbers that you put up there, it looks like it starts back in 2020, and is that just because you just selected that randomly, or do we not have data before that?

MR. HADLEY: 2020 for --

AP MEMBER: Most anything that you put up there looked like it was 2020 to current. That's fine, and, I mean, what went on before 2020 was -- The fishery was probably healthier then than it is now. I think, by almost measure, and that's a good one, and you could just leave that up there, and, the last few years are the lowest landings, commercially and recreationally, that has ever been recorded, right, and that's accurate?

MR. HADLEY: At least in the recent years, or at least since 2000.

AP MEMBER: Okay, and so it's accurate that the last three years are the lowest levels of landings that we have ever recorded?

MR. HADLEY: Yes, for the east coast.

AP MEMBER: Okay. I just think that's important to keep in mind as we tee-up for our discussion tomorrow, and you wonder what the next three years is going to bring, if we just sit here with status quo. That's a preview, by the way.

MR. REYNOLDS: If we're just talking ideas, I mean, another kind of verbiage we've heard lately is, you know, we think about a fast-growing species, right, and, well, the fish grows so fast, you know, but we're not thinking about, you know, what used to cause this enormous abundance of dolphin, and, you know, those large fish -- They are the ones that are loaded with the eggs. You know, they're loaded, and so those large fish had a lot more time in the water back then, and there was a lot more large fish, and they had a lot more spawning biomass, for a much larger period of time, and so, even if we allow these fish to get to that large size, which we're not any more, and, I

mean, there's almost no large fish, you know, but, even if we were just letting them hit that and killing them, which is kind of what happened in recent years, and they never had the same amount of time.

You know, we were talking years, you know, and these fish would make it around that cycle, and you would have slammers running the circuit for multiple years, creating -- You know, you talk about a twenty-pound cow, you know, coming around the whole cycle, and she's dropping six-million eggs, you know, each time, whereas it might be a mature fish, but a keeper dolphin has an egg sack about as big as my finger, you know, whereas, once you get to that twelve or fourteen-pound gaffer-size fish -- I mean, you know, when you cut that fish, man, it's just loaded, and, if that fish only even has a minimal amount of time, and not a couple of cycles, the overall biomass is shrinking annually every single time, and so I'm just kind of throwing that out there. You know, we've talked a lot about fast-growing maturity, but not sustaining a large biomass of fish for a long period of time into the future.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Jon. Anyone else want to sound-off today?

MR. WHITAKER: A quick thing, because I know this came up last year, and we were talking about all the new arrivals that are blue-water fishing now, or just offshore fishing, but I don't know any numbers, but is that a true fact, that there is a lot more people out there fishing than there were ten years ago? I mean, I see a lot more boats than I do now, especially the center consoles, you know, that go forty knots and can run to the break in an hour-and-a-half, or two, you know, easy. That just kind of surprises me, that, you know, it's down like that, yet there seems to be so much more effort, I guess. Is that -- Am I wrong? Is there a whole lot more people out there targeting, just at random, you know, all of our pelagic blue-water fish?

MR. BURROWS: I wrote this down earlier, and think this is very close to what you're driving at. That's a really good question, and we have really no way to quantify what the recreational -- What the true recreational effort intake is, outside of charter boats, which are counted under the recreational sector. We can say that we have sold X many boats, and more boats are registered, and we can say we sold X amount of tackle, and we sold X amount of bait, and we can look at a very limited sliver of what comes back, by whatever methodology we choose, but we don't have the numbers. We have them for the charter boat industry, and we have a good idea of what the charter boat industry takes, and we know almost exactly what the commercial industry takes and sells legitimately. The vast majority of these fish that are caught are from the recreational sector, and we don't -- Private boats, and we don't really know, and so, if there's a better answer out there than that, I don't know what it is.

AP MEMBER: Just for instance, the company that I've worked for, in the past two-and-a-half years, we've made 300 boats, or so, and these are boats that are capable of going anywhere that dolphin live, and the ability to go catch it, and we're just one company, and there's a lot of other boat builders out there.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: There was definitely a spike, enormous, and we've seen that fall off, you know, like to some degree, and I guess, you know, that -- I don't know if all those people are catching that many fish, and dolphin are dumb. I mean, they're easily targeted. They're not like

wahoo, I mean, where you can bail them, and stuff like that, but I don't think they're catching what -- You know, the number of boats that are out there, I don't think the number of fish being caught is equivalent to like anywhere near more experienced anglers.

MR. BURROWS: Anyone? I think the consensus now is that tomorrow will be interesting, and I think -- Is there any opposition to tabling everything else until 8:30 tomorrow morning? All right. We will recess until 8:30 a.m. tomorrow.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed on November 6, 2023.)

NOVEMBER 7, 2023

TUESDAY MORNING SESSION

The Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council reconvened at the Town and Country Inn, Charleston, South Carolina, on November 7, 2023, and was called to order by Chairman Chris Burrows.

(There is a brief gap at the beginning of the audio recording.)

MR. HADLEY: Sorry, Cassidy, and I think I was muted on this end, but I was just kind of giving a brief introduction to the MSE and some of the discussion questions that we'll follow-up with afterwards, but, whenever you're ready, please take it away.

DR. PETERSON: Great. Thank you so much. Thanks, John, and thanks, everyone, for giving me some time to kind of talk a little bit about the management strategy evaluation that we're working on for dolphin. This is a joint effort from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and it's undergoing with a lot of collaboration from private universities, or private foundations, the Regional Office, and I want to acknowledge everyone who has been a part of it, as well as all the stakeholders who have participated thus far and will continue to participate throughout this process.

First, to sort of set the stage as to where this whole idea came from, back in 2020, the council, and the Science Center, both collaborated on a series of dolphin wahoo stakeholder participatory workshops. These workshops were really designed to foster communication from stakeholders to the scientists, so that we could better understand some of the drivers that are influencing regional abundance for dolphin and wahoo.

We found that there were some very clear differences in the use, reliance, and value of these two fisheries by region, and we also perceived that there was clear increases in utilization of the resource, and that came with increased user conflicts, and so this really led to the question of can we design a new management approach that reduces conflicts, maximizes the achievement of stakeholder-defined management objectives, and that is also appropriate for the life history strategy that dolphin employ.

Of course, the dolphin stock, and fishery, is an international one, and so not only does this limit the capacity the Southeast Center, or the Regional Office, has in managing the entire stock, but, also, not all of the other nations report data as accurately, or as thoroughly, as the United States, and so this data limitation really precludes our ability to conduct a full stock assessment.

Currently, dolphin are managed by a static catch limit that was based on the third-highest catches that were observed between 1994 and 2007, and this doesn't necessarily match up with the life history strategy of dolphin. They're an annual crop, and they sort of follow these boom-and-bust cycles of availability and productivity, and so we're proposing a more adaptive approach, by using empirical, or indicator-based, management procedures for dolphin in the South Atlantic. Empirical management procedures are management approaches that we can use without necessitating a full stock assessment, and so, basically, we take an indicator of abundance, typically an index of abundance, and we use that as a measure of total biomass, or stock behavior, and adjust our management recommendations based on that, and this is also a full stakeholder MSE.

To build a little bit of intuition about what the management procedure approach is, it's often considered the sort of fishery thermostat, and so, when we think about what a thermostat is doing, we're setting the thermostat in the capacity of our house, for example, and so our system is the inside of our house, and, when we turn on the thermostat, a series of events happen. First, a thermometer takes the temperature of the air, and we measure the current temperature of the air based on the desired temperature that you set the thermostat to. Based on that comparison, the thermostat determines whether it needs to up or down-regulate the heating or air conditioning system, and then it triggers the associated system on or off, to then regulate the internal temperature of your house.

Say, for example, the internal temperature is seventy-four degrees, and the desired temperature is seventy-two, and the thermostat will upregulate the air conditioning unit to get the internal temperature back to the desired state, which, in this example again, is seventy-two degrees. A management procedure is essentially this very same thing, but just applied to a stock or fishery, and so, this time, our system is our stock and our fishery. We have sort of a process of collecting data about the fishery and the stock, and we're sort of taking the temperature.

We then analyze that data, to determine stock behavior, or stock status, or stock health, and that information is fed into a control rule that adaptively adjusts management advice based on the measured state of the stock, or the temperature of the stock, and the management advice specified by the control rule is then implemented back into the stock, and then everything here highlighted in green -- All of that is considered part of a management procedure. By specifying a management procedure for dolphin, we're including how we're collecting data all the way through how management advice is implemented back into the stock.

Of course, all of these different components have their sort of MSE jargon, which is reflected in this picture, but the steps of a management strategy evaluation start with identifying fishery-specific and stakeholder-defined management objectives. It's really important that we're getting this information from stakeholders, where management objectives don't already exist, and this also includes any sort of legal mandates, like ensuring that the stock is not overfished and that overfishing is not occurring.

The second step is to identify relevant uncertainties over which the management procedure should be robust, and so, for dolphin, this includes things like the level of international exploitation. That's not something that we have good data on, and that's not something that we can necessarily control, and so we want to make sure that our management procedure that we are testing, or implementing in real life, will work whether that international exploitation is high or low.

We then develop operating models, is what they're called, but these are the simulated hypotheses of the stock, and I think of these as sort of separate parallel universes, or parallel simulated universes, and we build in those uncertainties that we identified in step-two into these different operating models, and so, if the level of international exploitation is an uncertainty that we want to consider in our MSE, we build multiple sort of parallel operating models, one with a low level of uncertainty, maybe one with a medium level of -- Sorry. One with a low level of international exploitation, one with a medium, and one with a high level of international exploitation.

We then can test the management procedure and how it performs in each of those parallel scenarios, to make sure that, even though we don't know what the true level of international exploitation is, that the management procedure is likely to work in real life, if it were to be applied. This can -- This often leads to a large grid of different parallel operating models, and so that's what we developed in step-three.

The fourth step of the MSE process is to identify management procedures that are responsive to the stock dynamics. Again, that's everything highlighted in green, and then we go ahead and simulate that into the future, and so we apply a whole suite of management procedures that we're looking to test out to the whole grid of parallel operating models into the future and then measure the behavior of those operating models, to make sure that the management procedures worked, or to identify that they did not work across that full parallel grid of operating models.

The idea is that MSE is really to generate a management procedure, but there's a lot of ancillary benefits that comes with it, and so, first, it really forces us to explicitly identify the management objectives for the system. Often, stakeholders play a crucial role in this process, and so it really gives them a more influential seat at the table, when it comes to fishery management, and it really helps us to understand, and sort of delineate, the tradeoffs that are inherent in managing the system.

One example of conflicting management objectives might be that we want to maximize our catch, but we also want to make sure that we're maximizing the size, or we're still allowing ourselves the ability to catch a lot of big, gaffer dolphin, and so, obviously, there's a tradeoff there, and an MSE will allow us to really be able to put numbers to that and say, in order to make sure that we're catching more and bigger dolphin, we would have to forego a TAC of X number of pounds.

It also helps us to highlight future research priorities. All of those uncertainties that we build into our operating model grid -- Some of those uncertainties are more influential, and those that are more influential are higher research priorities, because they have more of an impact on our ability to manage the fishery, and it helps us to clearly eliminate management approaches that will not work to meet the management objectives of the system. We can take not just a short look at the resource, but also a longer-term view of what these management actions will result in, and it's such an involved process that, overall, we'll certainly improve our understanding of the management system.

I also mentioned that this is a full stakeholder MSE. The level of stakeholder involvement ranges on a spectrum for MSEs. Full stakeholder MSEs are the most involved. They're also the most expensive and time-consuming, and that's just to give you an idea of sort of the amount of effort, and energy, that we're putting into this MSE, is we really want it to be useful, and valuable, and so we are dedicating a lot of our resources to it.

Today, I'm going to go ahead and give you an overall presentation of what we heard from the first round of stakeholder workshops that started in 2022 and went through this year, and then I will talk maybe a little bit about sort of the technical MSE modeling details, or plans, and sort of where we're going to work towards in the future, but, primarily, I'm going to detail what we heard in the stakeholder workshops, and so we had our first round of stakeholder workshops, and these were designed to sort of introduce the idea of management procedures and management strategy evaluation to stakeholders, to develop and understand conceptual management objectives, understand key uncertainties that the management procedure should be robust to, and identify some key participants who wanted to be continually involved in the process.

We started out by going to south Florida, and we then went to sort of -- We went then to the southern Northeast, and then to the Carolinas, and then we hold a virtual workshop, earlier this year, so that anyone who was not able to attend in-person could still provide their input.

Overall trends of what we heard, in terms of some key conceptual management objectives, were to ensure that there was always opportunity and access to catch dolphin and access to the fishery, and preventing fishery closures, and that was sort of first on the list. We also generally heard that larger-sized catches were preferred. There is often a tradeoff between maximizing what we can catch and having more stability in fishery regulations. If we have more stability in fishery regulations, generally, we can catch less cumulatively overall, and so we tested, or we asked participants their opinions on that, and, generally, participants preferred stability in regulations, and we noticed some very clear regional and sector differences in fishery goals and objectives.

To give you an idea of some of the regional trends that we saw, and I will go region-by-region, and, from the feedback that we heard at these workshops, we sort of grouped the coast into these regions that are shown here on the right, and so we have sort of the Northeast region, which is Virginia north, and we have a northern North Carolina region, a southern North Carolina through northern Florida, and then a south Florida region, and these were areas where the fishery was generally very similar within the region, and the stock dynamics were generally more similar, based on the feedback that we had from the stakeholder workshops, and so I'm going to go and present results, region-by-region, according to what we found.

I will also highlight, based on these stars, that we had overwhelming participation from Wanchese and Islamorada, and so these are the regions where sort of the stakeholders were most impassioned, and that's just reflected by those stars.

Starting in sort of the northern region, this is generally a region where catch of dolphin is opportunistic, and it's generally caught as a bycatch fishery, to supplement tuna and swordfish charters. The goal is to bring home a lot of meat, but availability is generally a little bit sporadic, and the overall feeling is that dolphin, specifically in this region, were probably underexploited, because they weren't targeted directly, and so then the associated fishery management objectives

that we heard from this region was that, you know, everything -- The current regulations are good as they are.

There was a general desire for a more consistent, reliable fishery, but there was an understanding that sort of the availability in the ocean dynamics are such that the current regulations are fine, and maybe some sort of area-based management approach will be beneficial, to prevent any sort of fishery closure in the year before the fish got up to this northern-most region.

In northern North Carolina, this fishery is certainly a highly-important fishery for this region. It's definitely a meat fishery, and fishers want to bring home coolers full of fish. There were some mixed reports on sort of what the current trends in abundance and availability look like now, and there was concerns of depredation, and there was also a note of increased private recreational effort, and, overall, the fishery management objectives were to maintain high trip and vessel -- Or high bag and vessel limits. Those high limits were needed to sell charter trips, and they were opposed to size restrictions, and they had concerns that any size regulations might come with a lack of enforceability.

Sort of the southern North Carolina to northern Florida area was characterized by a fishery that's sort of losing access to the fishery, and fish were moving sort of further offshore, with a shift in the Gulf Stream, and there was fewer commercial versus recreational conflicts in this region, and it was still opportunistic, and the desire to bring home coolers full of meat was still reflected, and overall fishery management objectives were more conservation-minded, and so they were open to reducing trip and bag limits, and there was sort of an expression of desire to have a cost-benefit analysis, to see whether size limits, mixed or not, were viable for the charter fishery, and they did like the idea of area and sector-specific management approaches, if that was possible, and they, of course, wanted to maintain accessibility and consistency of catches, and there was the desire to maintain stability in fishery regulations over time and also to allow for a little bit more variability in fishery regulations to maximize catches.

In south Florida, this was a very unique area, because of how easy it is to access the fishery grounds, and so the drivers, for recreational fishing primarily, were for sport or recreation, and not necessarily to bring home coolers full of meat. Availability has very clearly gone down in recent years, and there was an overall increase in effort in this region. Accordingly, fishery management objectives for this region were much more prioritized on conservation, reducing trip and bag limits, implementing a size limit throughout the entire coast. Stability in fishery management regulations was desired here, and it was important that they maintain opportunity, and they generally expressed a desire to reduce the commercial longline, or to impose some additional regulations on the commercial pelagic longline sector.

Some patterns that we saw overall is, in the south, the stakeholders were a little bit more conservation-minded, more exploitation-minded than the north. There was certainly a correlation between how expensive is to go fishing for dolphin and the desire to bring home coolers full of meat. There is an overall reduction in local abundance in sort of south Florida and South Carolina, but the patterns are less clear where the fisheries are more sporadic, like North Carolina and north.

Where fish are less accessible, like we heard in Wilmington, and sort of the northern Mid-Atlantic region, there was the sentiment that dolphin might even be underexploited in these regions, and, overall, there's been a clear increase in recreational effort, private recreational effort, and, of

course, the cost of fishing has gone up, and fishermen who caught dolphin opportunistically as bycatch were more likely to highlight the ecosystem role that dolphin play, because they're food for sort of tuna and swordfish fishes.

To give you an overview of some of the uncertainties that we heard from these workshops, there was a clear list that there is an uncertainty in the total amount of removals, and that includes the way that we're measuring recreational catch within the U.S. and the level of exploitation internationally. There was some uncertainties about depredation and the effect that that might have on fishes, as well as post-release mortality. There were some challenges with respect to enforcement.

The economic drivers of the fishery, which isn't probably something that we can really easily build into our current analysis, but some folks were having trouble selling their fish, specifically in sort of the southern New England region, and that impacts sort of the dynamics of the fishery as well, and we heard that there might be some alternate movement patterns. Typically, we think of the fish as sort of following the Gulf Stream, and the associated sort of North Atlantic gyre, but there was some evidence, brought up in these workshops, to suppose that that might be changing over time.

We've certainly seen some changes to the availability and catchability over time and with the different regions, and so there's some that proposed that this could be related to temperature, some that this could be related to a shift in the Gulf Stream, as well as changes in sargasso health and availability, and there were also some projections of how anthropogenic impacts might change the catchability of dolphin in the future, and so, up north, lobster pot buoys congregate dolphin. If the lobster pots move to ropeless technology in the future, maybe that will reduce the catchability of dolphin.

Contrarily, with the influx of offshore windfarms, that's additional structure that might serve to congregate dolphin, and so these types of issues were also brought up, and, again, overall, the dynamics, like the catchability and the selectivity of the different fisheries across each region, were certainly different.

Some management recommendations, and this certainly is not a consensus of what we heard in all the regions, was to expand the minimum size limit to the entire coast, to employ area-specific management, with associated quotas and paybacks for each area, and there was some suggestion of sector-specific, or even gear-specific, management, including the potential to sort of separate our regulations for private rec versus for-hire recreational fishers. There was a desire to collaborate across the Gulf, Caribbean, and New England Councils and to regulate importing, and the latter two are things that certainly are outside of the realm of our capacity at the Southeast Center, but those were certainly brought up, and so we do want to report them.

Some sort of noteworthy tidbits, that I sort of flagged, was there was a clear link between weather in Central and South America and the availability of fish in south Florida, and so this gives us a little bit of confidence in our thinking that we could take indicators from Central and South America and use those as a proxy to measure anticipated availability of fish in the United States, and we can build that into our empirical management procedures.

The desire to maintain really high vessel limits was not necessarily because fishers wanted to catch and keep the full limit, but they do need those high limits to sell charter trips, and so that was really important, and there was also this sentiment that management sort of takes away and doesn't give anything back, and so I think, with this MSE, it will be really important to show those tradeoffs of, you know, what management is doing, not just in the short-term, but the impacts that it could have in the long-term.

That's what we heard from the stakeholder workshops, and I will transition now into sort of the plan that we have for the technical modeling dynamics. Right now, we're currently developing the operating model, the base operating model, that we'll use for this MSE. It is spatial, and so it incorporates all of those regions that we highlighted in the stakeholder workshops, but, also, it will include some additional non-U.S. regional boxes as well, and it will have a seasonal timestep, and it's a length-based operating model, and so we will be able to very clearly look at length-based management approaches, and, again, we're looking at an empirical management procedure.

To-date, we've been doing a lot of work to develop the operating model, gathering data, gathering indices that we could use for predicative ability, and really building and refining those indicators and how they might work. We're developing movement matrices, and we're -- We've sort of recruited a developer to build a Shiny app, so that we can really clearly present and publicize some of the findings of this MSE more broadly, and so that's something that we're really excited about.

I will take a moment to say that where we're at right now is that we're currently looking for additional analytical support. Our lead analyst, who has been doing the bulk of the work developing this operating, and his name is Matt Damiano, and he's really doing a great job for us, but he's currently split working between this project and a separate full-time post-doc project, and so we're working on ways, right now, to get some additional analytical assistance, and expertise, to sort of speed up this process.

Here's kind of a flow chart of the -- Of the whole MSE process. It starts with that first round of stakeholder workshops in the top-left. From that, we're trying to equitably select a small group of volunteers for continued involvement in the process, and that small group is going to work iteratively with the MSE analytical team, and fishery managers, to build and refine the MSE and management procedures, and we're also using the input that we took from the first round of stakeholder workshops to build our operating models and make sure that the structure and framework of those operating models is sufficient to explore all the complexity that we need to, based on what we heard from those workshops.

From this repetitive, iterative communication between stakeholders and managers and the MSE analytical team, hopefully we'll be able to develop a few best-performing management procedures that optimize, to the extent possible, the stakeholder-defined management objectives, and we will use that as sort of our best-performing management procedure that we will present down the road.

In terms of the small group, I appreciate the few of you that have applied to participate in this group, and that's great. We're looking for volunteers. The overall deadline to apply to be a part of this small group was December 27, because applicants needed to go through a background check. Since you're on the AP, you've already undergone that fishery background check, and so we can extend the deadline for you. If you're interested in volunteering to continue to advise on the MSE throughout this process, please let me know, and here is a link to where you can apply,

and you can also email me, or John Hadley, if this something that you're interested in. I don't know if November 17 is a good date, but just as soon as possible.

We're looking for the participants to commit to spending several meetings with us, via webinar, to inform us on what those conceptual and operational management objectives look like, to identify sort of the uncertainties in the structure of the operating models, and also to sort of help us build the management procedure in such a way that's going to be advantageous to the stakeholders in all of the different regions. If this is something that you're interested in, and you have the time to commit to, please let us know.

This is sort of a general tentative timeline, and, again, this might change, depending on what sort of feedback we get, or what sort of options we have to pull in some additional analytical assistance, but, overall, the idea is that we're building the operating models right now. We anticipate this to last through this winter, 2023-2024, and hopefully, in the spring, we can start building in multiple different operating models to reflect those uncertainties, and so those parallel universe operating models, and we can start to sort of complete the coding of the MSE framework around those operating models, and we can develop some simple management procedures, starting in sort of -- Starting sort of this coming spring, and then, throughout that year, even into 2025, we'll work iteratively with the stakeholder working group, continue to present to the South Atlantic Council, and the SSC, and hopefully, somewhere around the summer of 2025, we'll be able to report-out on results. Again, this is tentative, and this might change, depending on whether we get some additional funding for additional analytical assistance.

Then the question is kind of posed of then what? Now that we've done all this work, what do we do then? Here is sort of a plot of all of the major components of the MSE, the operating model's management objectives and management procedures, and each of the major players within the MSE process, including stakeholders, the analytical modeling team, the SSC, and the council, and this is how they all interact with each of the different components of the MSE.

Essentially, the modeling team's job is to sort of hear input from everybody else, construct the operating models, quantify the management objectives, test and refine the management procedures, and stakeholders are going to advise on every aspect of the process. The SSC is going to adopt the operating models as best available science and particularly advise on Magnuson-Stevens requirements for the management objectives and the risk tolerances for the management procedures.

The council will advise in the development of the operating models, adopt management objectives, and adopt and implement a management procedure, based on performance, and so the overall idea is that, once we have these MSE results, the best performing candidate management procedures can be put forward in front of the council to be voted on as fishery management plan amendments, where sort of a no-change alternative is always on the table, and then these different candidate management procedures, that have been fully tested and scoped through the MSE, can then be voted on for full implementation. That's all I have here, and please feel free to reach out to me with any questions, and thank you so much for your attention.

MR. BURROWS: Thank you, Cassidy. John Hadley, did you have -- Okay. Thank you. So we need to discuss this, and I'm sure there are a lot of people that were present at that meeting, whether

it was south Florida or -- I went to the southern North Carolina one, which was very underattended, but I understand that the other one had a lot of people, and so the floor is open. John.

MR. HADLEY: While we do have Cassidy on the line, are there any questions for Cassidy, as far as, you know, what's going into the MSE, or anything that was presented on any of the previous slides?

MR. BURROWS: Jon Reynolds.

MR. REYNOLDS: I don't know if this is an appropriate question for Cassidy, but I just -- I'm wondering what the Department of Commerce is doing to regulate foreign fisheries, and, I mean, that's a mandate as well, and so that's Section 201 to 204, and so it sounds like we're alleviating responsibility of the United States, under Magnuson, to regulate foreign fisheries that may be impacting, or negatively impacting, our dolphin stock, but that's a mandate as well, and so I don't know if that's necessarily a question for her, but it's a question that needs to go somewhere, and that's tied in with all of this. If we're going to be establishing measures, you know, within our boundaries, then -- And we're saying that we have no control over those, and that is another mandate, and so I'm just wondering if there's some sort of strategy in mind for that.

DR. PETERSON: Thanks, Jon. I think it's really great question, and I think it's something that, from my understanding, sort of the Southeast Science Center has struggled with. They have approached ICCAT, to see if they're interested in dolphin, and they are not, but there is some forward momentum with WECAFC to move forward with some sort of dolphin-related management in the future, and so it sounds like -- Again, this is all preliminary and tentative, but it seems like this U.S.-based MSE for dolphin could be a jumping-off point that could lead to some additional collaboration with partnering international bodies in the future, but it is a well-taken point.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. DELIZZA: Cassidy, I think this is in your wheelhouse, and I would like to understand the timeline a little bit better. You're hoping to have your report complete by 2025, and is that accurate?

DR. PETERSON: Yes, and that's our ambitious goal right now.

MR. DELIZZA: Okay. Is it safe to say that, right now, the council is not taking any action until that report is complete?

DR. PETERSON: That is a question that maybe John Hadley would have more insight on, as a member of the council, but I can't speak to that.

MR. DELIZZA: Did you hear the question?

MR. HADLEY: I'm sorry, Richard. Would you mind repeating that, please?

MR. DELIZZA: It's okay. Is it safe to say that the council is not doing to take any regulatory action until that report is complete?

MR. HADLEY: Well, I will preface this by saying the council is free to take action at any time, at any one of their meetings, or at least initiate action at any one of their meetings. The timeline, and I think this is a slightly revised timeline from when this MSE process first started, but the consensus, and this is based on the -- I think it was the June 2022 meeting, but it was to wait until this report on the MSE is available and then decide how to take action, further -- Whether or not to take further action, that kind of split in the road that I discussed a little bit yesterday, which would be to kind of go with the MSE approach, versus going with the more standard approach that was discussed in Regulatory Amendment 3.

With that said, and so that would be -- Based on these results, it would be spring or summer of 2025 when that decision would be made. The council has said they want to have updates on the MSE every other meeting, and so every six months. Presumably, as part of that discussion, it could be whether or not they want to wait on the results or keep moving forward, but the standing guidance, based on the council's last discussion of this, was to wait until the MSE report is available before taking action.

MR. DELIZZA: Okay, and so let's work off of what we know, and what they've said, and that's that they will wait, right, and so the MSE report comes in right on time, in the summer of 2025, and let's assume the council is blown away with the work that was presented and immediately, immediately, decides, unanimously, to take some sort of new regulatory actions. Based on your experience, when would those regulations go into effect? My impression is a couple of years later.

MR. HADLEY: Yes, that's correct, and it would be -- The quickest timeline would probably be in the eighteen to twenty-four-month range.

MR. DELIZZA: Okay, and so the council's current plan is status quo until 2027, four years from now.

MR. HADLEY: That would be the existing guidance, yes.

MR. DELIZZA: Okay. Thank you.

MR. BURROWS: Bob.

MR. FREVERT: I just wanted to back-up what he said. Yesterday, we were talking about Regulatory Amendment 3, and we were looking at it, and then we said, well, let's wait for the MSE, which is going to be done in December of 2024, and now we hear, optimistically, the summer of 2025, and so I had the exact same thoughts that Rich, that nothing is going to happen for a long time.

MR. BURROWS: Anyone else, while we've got Cassidy on the line here? Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I mean, just to sort of expand on John's point, which was exactly right, just because that's what we said when we talked about dolphin wahoo in December, that doesn't mean that we can change our minds at any time. We're meeting every other meeting, and we're hearing about what's happening, and we will look at this revised timeline.

Also, as our advisory body, you know, there's nothing to stop you all from saying, you know, as an advisory body, you know, we think the council should do it a different way, and so understand that. You know, it's fluid, and it can change. Just because we said, right now, we were going to wait for this to be done, it doesn't mean that that's necessarily how it's going to go, and so just, you know, think about that, as you think about what you want to come out of this meeting.

AP MEMBER: That makes me optimistic.

MR. BURROWS: Jon Reynolds.

MR. REYNOLDS: I mean, there were fifty-five guys at our meeting, and that's rare. That's important. I mean, that means that there's a lot of guys that are extremely concerned about dolphin, and I don't know if there's ever been that many guys at a meeting before, but I will tell you that these guys were there, and they were pounding the table and screaming that they want some action, and I think the overall consensus, from what I'm hearing up and down, and now it's not anecdotal anymore, and the data is showing a pretty extreme decline, is that -- You know, I think we need to take some action here.

We've talked about some different avenues, you know, and what we think some concerns should be, and, in our last AP meeting, we covered a lot of stuff, and I -- You know, I think we need to take some action, and that's just -- I just want to throw that out there. You know, there was a lot of participation in these, from a lot of very concerned guys, industry guys and anglers, and so I just need to say that.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, John. I wish that our meeting, in southern North Carolina, had more people, and we had twenty-five people, and is that accurate, Chip, and you were -- In Wilmington, and I wish we had that same kind of involvement, to get a cohesive voice, and so I commend you all on getting it together down there. Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: By the same -- I think there were over a hundred people at our meeting in Wanchese, and it was standing room only, and there were people all down the hall, and so I'm not sure they got them all, but I'm here speaking for my industry, the charter boat industry in North Carolina, which I've been a part of for thirty-seven years, and I've brought these points up before, but I want to take the time to bring them up now.

Hey, I feel you all guys' pain in Florida. We had yellowfins, and we had white marlins, and that used to be our bread-and-butter, and we -- I think I caught five white marlins this year, and two last year, and so that fishery -- They don't seem to be gone, but they're just not coming by the coast of North Carolina anymore, up in the Hatteras area, and the same thing with yellowfin. We used to go out and catch a limit, or, you know, ten or twelve nice, big yellowfins, by eight or nine o'clock in the morning, and go blue marlin fish the rest of the day, and so I do think that fish somehow figure out how to avoid pressure, and I think that may be some of the problem in Florida.

I'm out there 150 days a year, and sometimes I look at this data, and this data -- I'm not exactly sure how to get it in Florida, but North Carolina, I'm told, does one of the best jobs of dockside surveys and collecting data of any state out there, and I will have a guy behind my boat, maybe twenty or twenty-five days a year, counting and measuring my fish, species and length, and they do that recreationally, I think, at the boat ramps or wherever, but, as you guys know, the

recreational fleet is -- I don't know if it isn't a million boats between Key West and Oregon Inlet, or northern North Carolina, and the charter industry -- In North Carolina, the offshore charter industry is going down, due to many reasons. COVID, of course, hurt us, and now we're fighting \$4.40 diesel fuel, up to \$6.00 there at one time, and we also have an economy that is tanking.

I look around here, the last couple of months, and maybe two or three boats are running out of my marina, where we've got fourteen offshore charter boats, and so we're struggling in our charter industry. You know, I've heard, well, let's cut the limit back. Well, I went back and looked at my logbook standings, which I will get into that in a minute, but I had -- I think I only had fifteen trips, out of a hundred-and-twenty-some, where I caught over thirty dolphin, and just a very few of those were over fifty, but the perception is -- Maybe you all from Ohio, or most of my customers are out-of-state, and they're from Pennsylvania and Ohio and New York and Ohio and Colorado and Texas, all over the U.S., and it's usually a group of four or five men and women that come down and charter me for one day a year, and they get that only opportunity to go out there, and they -- Well, we were the ones that started the limit of sixty fish, back in the late 1980s.

We got the states to do it, and we got the federal government to do it, and it's worked pretty damned good for forty years, but, anyway, they book my boat, or another boat, for \$2,000 or \$3,000, minimum, that they're going to spend. They want -- I mean, they think they're coming down there to catch sixty dolphin. As I just told you, that doesn't always happen, but that's what -- If I call them up and say, hey, you can't catch but thirty now, then there's going to be some lost charters, and I don't know how many, but there's going to be some.

I've got two boys, and they both are in the charter business. One of them is -- I'm seventy-one, and so one of them, I hope, is going to take over my business in a few years, but, if I felt like dolphin were in dire straits, then I wouldn't be here wanting a minimum, and I wouldn't be wanting a limit. I would be telling you to shut it down, commercial and charter and recreational and Puerto Rico, but the only caveat to that is what John brought up, and what if we save them all, and the Japs, or whoever, the Chinese, figure out how to catch them out here 200 miles, and then we're just filling their coffers.

There are a lot of things to consider, but I'm just trying to tell you my feelings and where I'm coming from, and, you know, the charter fleet, in North Carolina -- I figured it up last night, and a full-time offshore -- The guys that are doing it for a living, I'm thinking it's between a hundred and 200, and I'm not counting, you know, weekend outboards or private boats that maybe go out there and run a charter or two. I'm talking about full-time guys that are dependent on it. Maybe there's a way, I mean, we can survive, but, you know, as far as the twenty-two inches goes, as a minimum, I have looked at North Carolina's catch records, and, actually, our average size has gone up to -- I think, in 2022, it's twenty-six inches, and so -- If we get into really small dolphin, we go elsewhere.

You know, I think, from a mortality standpoint, if I'm got to run around to three or four schools of dolphin, and try to measure them, and make sure I've got twenty-two inches, and it's going to cause more mortality than just letting me catch thirty and go on and move somewhere else, thirty or forty.

This year, I caught two of the largest dolphin I've ever caught, a seventy-one and a sixty-five, and so I guess I can say my argument would be they're not doing as bad as you think, but, where we

are, we can only make one trip a day. In North Carolina, I would be the closest place, and I'm thirty miles. I have ten miles back through the sound and twenty miles to get to the fishing grounds. Morehead and Wilmington, the other places, are forty to sixty miles, and so we can't make one or two or three trips a day, and we're limited to one.

I think the charter fleet, in North Carolina, only caught like 17 percent of the total catch for North Carolina, and, of that 17 percent, only 15 percent of that would have been fish over thirty, and so, anyway, I'm just trying to tell you where we're coming from, and I think the council has a lot on their plate, but one thing that I'm a little bit -- I don't know exactly, and maybe somebody with the council can help me, but I know, if I don't turn in one non-fishing day in my eTRIPS logbook, I cannot get my permits to fish for the next year, but I talked to Andy Piland, who is on the Snapper Grouper AP, and he was telling me that, well, less than 50 percent of charter boats are reporting on the eTRIPS, or are doing their electronic logbooks, and this is some valuable information.

It gives you a date, and it gives you hours fished, and it gives you location, and it gives you targeted species, and it gives you the species that are caught, and how many, and so this is accurate, timely information that I would like to come to these meetings and have a printout on every state, you know, how many we caught, and then it would give you guys a real -- I mean, I was glad that they did it, because I felt like the recreational side -- Man, I've dealt with it with bluefin, with king mackerel, with a couple other fisheries, and flounder has been a big deal lately, but a lot of it is smoke and mirrors. I mean, they're doing the best they can, and I know it's the best science, but this guy sitting in this room gets these numbers from this guy, and however he extrapolates them out depends on how I make my living, and it's tough sometimes.

Here, with the electronic logbooks, is some real accurate and timely data that I would feel a lot more comfortable making my decisions, if I could look up there and say this is what you all did every year, and I just think that's some really good information that we need to -- If it's not being retrieved, or people aren't doing it, then we need to find a way to make them accountable, and I don't understand how they get their permits, if they're not participating, but anyway. Thank you all for your time, and we will get through this.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Rom. I commend your crowd too on getting so many people to that meeting. I think it is helpful, across-the-board, and I wish my region could get its act together, and so, Chip, I guess that's up to me and you. It sounds like we're already kind of into the AP discussion, if we want to continue with that.

MR. HADLEY: Yes, absolutely, and I'm going to run through a few of the AP discussion questions that we had on the MSE, and I did want to come back to the point that was brought up before on the timing of when the council is scheduled to discuss which direction to go with dolphin, and I was reminded that the guidance was a little bit more solid, and it wasn't necessarily a floating deadline, and it was that December 2024 is the hard date, or the hard deadline, for when this discussion of whether or not to move forward with Amendment 3, versus the MSE, is scheduled to be held, and so the guidance was December of 2024, or when the report is available, whichever comes first, and so, if the report becomes available first, that will be the sort of -- Then it will be moved up in the agenda. If it's not available by December of 2024, that's a still hard date, at least, again, the existing council guidance, and it's not really a sliding date, and so I just wanted to put a little bit of a point of clarification there, and I did misspeak a little bit earlier. With that said, yes.

MR. DELIZZA: Cassidy, are you still there?

MR. HADLEY: I think Cassidy had to run at 9:30. She had another obligation. I'm sorry.

MR. DELIZZA: Because my impression was that timeline that she gave was optimistically based on getting more help that she doesn't currently have.

DR. PETERSON: I'm still here.

MR. DELIZZA: Fantastic.

DR. PETERSON: So I think John had mentioned, earlier, that this timeline that I just presented was a little bit revised based on -- Based on the last time that I sort of presented that timeline, it was. We were originally a little bit more optimistic that our lead analyst would be able to devote all of his time to this, and, because he has had to split his attention, that's why we're looking into potential options for additional analytical assistance. This timeline is optimistic, but it is still what we are thinking we can make happen if we don't get some additional analytical assistance. Again, it is a little ambitious, and, again, things certainly do come up. The timeline might be revised if we do get funding for additional support, based on when that money would come in, and when that funding cycle would end, and so this is our anticipated timeline, assuming that we move forward with the current team that we do have.

MR. DELIZZA: Thank you.

MR. HADLEY: All right. So we can come back to any of the topics that were presented, but I did want to run through a few of the discussion questions, particularly that first one. When the council received the update presentation on the MSE, they were really interested in how -- Because one of the -- The MSE process, and the MSE modeling, can model different aspects, and so, if there is, you know, some sort of expected range shift, or dolphin are going to be available to a new fleet, and I'm thinking, you know, north of here, and particularly some of the fleets -- When I say "fleet", large groups of boats, particularly recreational boats, off of some of the large population centers in the Northeast.

You know, is that something that should be modeled, or is that something that the AP is -- I don't want to say concerned about, but thoughtful of, or expecting, in the future, and I think that was one topic that the council was sort of interested in, and wanted the AP's feedback on. You know, do you think there's going to be a major change in the availability of dolphin that should be included in this MSE process, and so availability to new fishery participants, or changes in availability to the historic fishery, changes in biological productivity?

I will give an example, and it came up during the Virginia Beach meeting, and it was brought up of the windfarms that are planned for the Mid-Atlantic and New England, and you're putting large structures out in the water, and they're probably going to aggregate fish, and some of those are going to likely be dolphin, and so is that something that the AP has thoughts on, is concerned about, not concerned about, and, you know, that sort of feedback, I think, is the point of this question at this point, and so, with that, I will turn it over to the AP for that.

MR. BURROWS: Paul.

MR. PANCAKE: Piggybacking on what you said about the Northeast fishery, we're starting to see more and more of our boats go up to the Northeast, and the culture changing from your diesel boat fishermen, who were going out and doing the overnights, to a more run-and-gun style fishery, where they might do an overnight, or not an overnight, trip, but a day trip.

With the accessibility of high-horsepower center consoles that are able to go quicker, we're hearing more and more, from folks that we talk to, that either have our boats, or may be interested in getting one that fishes in a similar manner, and doing that style of fishery, and being successful with it, and so the fact that that's continued to be an avenue that dolphin make their way to the dock, it probably needs to be on our radar, is my thoughts.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Paul. Anyone else? Jon Reynolds.

MR. REYNOLDS: I agree. I mean, there's a lot of change in the way that guys are fishing, I'm sure, and that's all the way up the coast now, and they cover more ground. It kind of -- I mean, it ties into -- Part of this benefitting ourselves -- There's a lot of things that I'm going to want to talk about, but one of the things, with the size limit, is that we're recapturing a lot of our fish within our own EEZ, you know, and so it matters, you know, if I'm -- That we have a size limit in south Florida is heavily beneficial to everyone above us. I mean, it's a big deal.

If we didn't have that down there, a lot of the guys above us would kind of be screwed, really. I mean, if we were killing a lot of those small fish, and then, again, kind of like the wahoo thing, and like most of the guys in this room, like Rom was just saying -- I mean, he's right. Him and I were talking about this at the last AP meeting, and we fish very similarly, and so we're pulling away. A lot of this isn't about what we are doing in here, you know, and it's like the wahoo.

You know, we're probably not all killing a bunch of little wahoo under twenty-four inches, and so it doesn't matter, but there's a lot more guys, doing a lot more things, than there used to be, is what part of this is about, and so a lot of that additional pressure, from a lot of newer fishermen even, and guys running and gunning, with more tech, and just less knowledge, and, you know, more excitability, really. You know, they're way more excited, and a dolphin to them now is like -- You know, if I catch a little dolphin like that, I'm like throw that thing back, and we used to rig those things, until you get a ticket for having it in your bait cooler, but anyway, and, you know, we used to rig them, and now it's like, you know, that's what is getting posted.

They're being targeted more, you know, on a larger scale, is what I'm saying, and so, to that note, you know, yes, there's a lot -- There's a lot more pressure, and now those guys -- Keep in mind all those guys above us, and that's going to be a greater fishery, and then all of us are kind of contributing to each other, in the same EEZ, and I don't know if we're going to see -- Without the international -- You know, without some more action from National Marine Fisheries, Congress, and the U.S. Department of Commerce to act, I don't know if we're going to see as many benefits from some of this, annually, or the next year, but we may see it within the same year, at least, for some of us to benefit from each other, you know, from some conservation like that.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Jon. You jogged my brain there, and something that Rom just said, and something that you just said, but, in North Carolina -- Now, we have two states that are statistically significant for the take of dolphinfish. We have Florida, and we have North Carolina,

and it always hovers around Florida in the low-sixties percent, and we're in the twenties, and everybody else gets some dolphin, but not like North Carolina and Florida.

If the dolphin take in North Carolina is 17 percent charter, of that 20 percent, it's still a lot of fish, okay, and my question is -- Because I don't know this, but, in Florida, what percentage of your 60 percent of the recreational take goes home in charter boat fish boxes? I have no clue what the answer is here, but I'm just trying to think of the dynamics of your fishery, and where are they going? Richard, you might be able to answer that too, and I have no clue. I don't know what the recreational side takes, and I don't know how big the charter boat industry in Florida is -- I assume it's massive, and I know what I've seen, but other than that --

MR. DELIZZA: So your faith in me to be able to answer that is appreciated, but misplaced. I can tell you that charter guys are way better at catching dolphin than recreational guys, and I can tell you that recreational boats, any day on the water, probably outnumber the charter guys, maybe three-to-one, and so does that seem right?

MR. BURROWS: Do you think the number is similar to what we see in North Carolina?

MR. DELIZZA: I don't know.

MR. OWSLEY: I would say about the -- I think the charter industry in Florida, from what I know, I mean, is going to be pockets. You know, you've got some in Jacksonville, and maybe St. Augustine, Daytona, some going further south, but I would say the -- Just from my observation, and not backed up with statistical data, but maybe it can be gathered from some of the trip reporting and stuff that charter guys -- But there is -- It's probably ten to twenty-times more recreational boat anglers than there are charter people. I mean, there is boats everywhere in Florida recreationally, and just like Jacksonville -- I mean, there might be half-a-dozen, or maybe a dozen, charter boat operators that will make that run to the Gulf Stream, sixty-something miles, but, on a bluebird calm day, a hot dolphin bite, on social media, there could be probably a hundred-plus recreational boats out there, just kind of like in northeast Florida.

I would say the 17 to 3, like the percentage, and I would say the recreational take far exceeds like the commercial, or, I'm sorry, the charter take in Florida, and albeit that maybe recreational aren't as accurate, and efficient, at catching as a charter boat operator is, but, you know, when you've got twenty-times more boat, if they're just catching, you know, ten fish, compared to a charter guy's maybe twenty, right, it's still way, way more. I mean, that's just my observation, and I think Richard -- I mean, I know he's south Florida, and you, Jon, and, I mean, you know how many recreational boats, and social media, or a fishing report magazine, and it spreads it like wildfire, and, I mean, there's no parking at boat ramps.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks. Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: One quick addition to that, and another thing that I really think of when I think of that now, what's really going on, is that a lot of industry guys saw more opportunity -- You know, there used to be a lot of bigger boats, and now there's a lot of industry guys that are freelancing, and so a lot of those rec boats -- There is pros on them too, and they have more power, and they have an industry guy on the boat with them, and so, you know, they're doing well, you know, and a lot of the guys aren't catching that much, just a few trolling maybe or something, but

then there's a lot of them that are just as effective, or more, than us, because they're faster, and they have an industry guy onboard.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Jon. Bob.

MR. FREVERT: Jon, how many days do you fish a year?

MR. REYNOLDS: What do I hope to?

MR. FREVERT: Well, just a rough --

MR. REYNOLDS: Looking at the book, I mean, a light -- The lightest year we've fished, in the last bunch of years, was in the 190, you know, like a hurricane year, but over 200.

MR. FREVERT: So, I mean, I don't know the answer either, but I know that Thomas Flyer -- They're out there all the time, and Bouncer was out there all the time, and they catch a lot of fish. I am retired, and there's not a lot of people out there Monday through Thursday, and, if it's rough, they're not there on Saturday either, and so I think there are good charter captains that fish a lot of days, and out-fish most of my recs, and a lot of my buddies -- You know, they fish five, or maybe ten, days a year, and they catch -- Any given day, it's going to be much less than you catch, and so, yes, there's a lot of us out there, but we're idiots, you know, and, honestly, at least in my area, we're not targeting dolphin that much, because they're not worth it, and so we're after kingfish, or bottom fish, and, right now, the big thing is vermilion snapper on electric reels, if you can believe it, and so I don't think anybody knows that answer, but I'm saying that -- Especially in the Keys, you know, there's a lot of good guides down there, right, catching a lot of dolphin. When we go down there, we don't do nearly as well as you do, even though we're fishing maybe three or four days of the week, and so that's just a thought.

MR. BURROWS: Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: Well, the only thing that I could add to that is I'm more of the opinion to Jon, and I'm telling you that there are a lot of guys, and I think I've contributed to the mix, and there's a lot of guys that fish with me and really enjoy going offshore and catching whatever, dolphin, tuna, wahoo, blue marlins, and they liked it so well that they went and they bought them a nice twenty to forty-foot outboard, nice outboard, double engines, or triples, or quadruple engines sometimes, but these guys are good fishermen.

They're there, and they get there before I do, and those guys -- They know, and they've read, and they've researched, and they are top-shop fishermen, and, in fact -- I mean, well, you look at any king mackerel tournament, and a charter boat usually isn't winning it, and it's one of those guys, but there's some good fishermen out there, but I'm a little bit -- I guess maybe Jon or Richard could answer, but you all's charter boat -- I mean, I'm assuming you all are doing electronic logbooks, and it looks like that information will be useful to you all, as to what's going on from - - I mean, timely, accurate reports, and so I don't know.

In my state, I can kind of -- If I had it in front of me, I could kind of fact-check the guys that are saying, well, we didn't catch nothing that day, because, if people don't report accurately, then it's worth nothing, but you can go -- If you don't believe my report is right, then go look at Hatteras

Harbor website, and they have a picture of my catch every day, and so you can fact-check me almost any day you want to. I just -- I don't know, and I know, what few times I used to travel, bringing boats back from Mexico to North Carolina, and there are a lot of boats coming up the east coast of Florida. Thank you.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Rom. Jay, and, shortly, we need to take a little break, for everybody to check out, but let's hear from Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: So, as Rom said earlier, our charter boat business in North Carolina is based on large catches of small dolphin. That's the plain truth. Is there any evidence, scientific or otherwise, that further limiting us in North Carolina will benefit the fishery overall? Specifically, will that increase the number of dolphin in Florida? I don't think so. I think, once they go by us, they don't make it back around, because of the currents, because of their short lifespan, and we're the last stop on the train, and I just don't think that further limiting our historically large small dolphin catch will benefit the fishery. We do not have evidence to support that.

MR. OWSLEY: I would like to see, and I know Wes Merton, with the dolphinfish research -- I was tagging fish this year, and I haven't seen them recovered anywhere, but I don't know, and is there any -- I know there's a couple of charter boat operators down in south Florida that really tag, and it's like super beneficial to that dolphinfish program, and, I mean, kind of to your point, and I kind of challenge you, and some of your people up there, to maybe do some of that tagging, because, you know, you might have the answer to that question, because, I mean, if it was even around a twenty-inch fish, I was tagging it and throwing it back.

I don't know where they go, and they go somewhere, but it would be pretty cool if some of your guys, up where you all are at, could do some tagging, and I don't know if anyone has maybe reached out to Wes, to see if there's any operator that is tagging a bunch, and seeing where they are recovered, and that would be pretty cool, and that's real easy to do, and I know sometimes, when I have clients out there, especially the kids, they love tagging those fish, you know, and so maybe you could get onboard and do that some, and then you can, you know, provide some data for everyone.

MR. DELIZZA: Let me sort of riff on this a little bit. I've been involved in that dolphin tagging program since Don Hammond started it, way back in the day, and I'm currently on the board of the Beyond our Shores group that oversees the dolphin tagging, and so, when Don was running it, he and I used to have a running debate about the mythical Carolina dolphin, right, and we would catch the big dolphin down in the Keys, and we would often call them Carolina dolphin, because they must have come south.

Don says, no, and that's a dumb name, and they don't ever go south, and, because some people up north have been tagging them, I can still remember the first recovery that he had of a Carolina dolphin that was caught back down south, and he had to eat crow a little bit, and, since then -- To answer your question, on the micro level, and I don't know the macro, there is scientific evidence that dolphin off of North Carolina waters end up back down in south Florida. There has been -- I am going to make this number up, but it's close, and probably a dozen tag recoveries that go in that direction.

MR. BURROWS: Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: Don has tagged out of Hatteras Harbor, and he used to frequently tag aboard our recreational boat, and we've not seen Wesley since he took over, but I'm sure that someone would host him, if he was interested in tagging. I've only been doing this for twenty-five years, and not as long as Richard or Rom, and I've had one tag return. I have caught one tagged dolphin, and it was tagged in South Carolina, at seventeen days prior.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: I wanted to reiterate what you said about Wesley and you all's -- I think it's great work, but I noticed that the tags -- Most of the tag returns, that are tagged in the Keys, done in that area, they don't make it out of Florida, and I know you get some, but I saw seven tags that were returned from Georgia to North Carolina, and I caught two tagged fish in the last two years, and they were both tagged in the Abacos, and so is there a different migration coming to North Carolina, or maybe even somewhere off of South Carolina, that we're catching our fish, because we hear about some good -- We have friends down there that are fishing, and they'll send us pictures, and I will get pictures from them, but a nice -- I don't call them slammers, but we call them buffers, halfway between a gaffer and being that, and, you know, they don't catch as many as we do.

You know, a good day for them is ten of those fish, and two king mackerel and a wahoo, and that's a great day, and that would be disappointing to our people, if we told them they couldn't catch anymore dolphin, and like that, but, to get back to that, and we had this fall, and it's been the last five falls, and we have had -- They don't get them. Hatteras doesn't get them.

We've had fantastic fishing in late September, all the way up to two weeks ago, of the dolphin, and finding schools under grass beds, and, up off of Virginia Beach, and you've seen it, and there are 500 dolphin under boards, and they don't go to Hatteras, and they don't get another fish after they go by us. Where do they go? When I say "down there", we're up in the northeast of North Carolina, and where do they go? We're catching them, and I talked about green water the other day, and we're catching them in green, sixty-eight-degree water. You can't even hardly see the fish, yet they're there, and then, when they leave, they don't come down to our area, to the point, and where do these fish go?

Are they going out to the Gulf Stream? Okay. If they're going to the Gulf Stream, they're not going to swim against that current. They're going to swing back around that way, and so are they getting back to the Abacos? That's my question.

MR. DELIZZA: Those are great questions, and I would encourage you to donate to the Beyond our Shores Foundation 501(c) program. It's tax-deductible, and so that research can continue, because there's a lot more questions than answers, but, to Jay's specific question, at least some dolphin have been tagged that move south. Whether they went around the loop, or whether they went inshore of the current, and who the hell knows, but satellite tags are expensive, and that's what would tell you, and so there are still more questions than answers.

MR. FREVERT: There was one satellite tag that Don did, many years ago, that was off of I think South Carolina, and it went past the Outer Banks, and it went way out and spent time out there,

and then it ended up down in the Caribbean, and so we kind of -- At least one data point says they're making that loop.

The other thing is like, if you think the last time you see them is in North Carolina, then there wouldn't be a fish over twenty pounds, right? They're making that loop, and if they grow twenty pounds a year, and we've seen it. We tag a twenty-incher, and then, next year, we catch one that's thirty pounds, and so there is some sort of a loop out there, and we just don't know exactly where it is. We're starting to think part of it goes down to Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic.

AP MEMBER: I think, with the smaller fish, and no one has really touched on it, and I just don't think we should harvest any fish before they've had a chance to spawn. You know, I think that fish may not be recaptured, and big deal, but, if it spawns a couple of times, and produces a couple thousand more fish, then I think there's a benefit to that. To go back to migration, I've been fishing pretty much the Abacos and here for at least the last twenty-something years, and, I mean, there's not a shred of doubt in my mind that the fish off of there are the ones we're catching here, because, I mean, it's usually four to six weeks earlier. If they have a good year, we have a good year. If they have a bad year, we have a bad year, and I'm usually there in March and April, and then we come here and fish, and so, I mean, I don't really think we get a whole lot from south Florida, and I think most of them are coming from the continental shelf off of the Bahamas.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: I guess just one last -- I had a really good talk with Don about this, and we -- He brought a lot of data to it, and so, I mean -- All of this, to me in my head right now, I'm saying how does this relate to what we're going to talk about in management, really, you know, and what's really going to be effective, you know, and so I'm trying to work towards that, but, through tagging data, hard tagging data, he basically proved that a lot of the extremely small fish go straight up the coast, with the current, unable to make any sort of progress perpendicular to it, and a lot of the other fish, that were coming from south Florida, went off to the Bahamas and did mini-loops there around the Bahamas, growing, for whatever ecological reason, maybe for a greater spawn when they come off, or who knows what Mother Nature wants them to do to be able to spawn at their greatest metabolic spawning rate, wherever they want to do that, but that was basically what they would do, and so we had a great in-depth conversation about this.

The very small fish would go straight up the coast, and then a little bit larger fish would loop off to the Bahamas and do mini-migrations and then come off what, in north Florida, they call the point, and then end up like kind of towards you guys, and they would spend some time there, and then eventually kind of take a due-east route, and then all those recovery tags that we have, that just show straight-line evidence, because we don't have more satellite tags, unfortunately, except for that one that brought the fish all the way around, and a lot of those fish are being recovered in Puerto Rico and the Dominican, actually. A lot of those tags coming from us are being recovered down there, and we only have the straight line, but we have the days that would show the loop, if you add it all up, you know, basically.

MR. FREVERT: Have they tagged any fish in the Caribbean, Puerto Rico or the Dominican, and then see the data from there after the fact?

MR. KAVANAGH: I just think there's so many things that are beyond the control that we have, as a U.S. regulatory entity, and Wesley's most recent newsletter -- He did a piece about two panga fishermen in the D.R. that were catching 500 pounds a day, you know, and, really, how many of them are there? I didn't mean to, earlier, say that, you know, we were the last stop, but I contend that 90 percent of the dolphin that go by us go by us one time. I'm sure there's some that make it all the way around, but the majority of the fish, the heavy majority of the fish, go by us one time.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Jay. I wonder how many orange spaghetti tags are in those pangas that are never -- I wonder how receptive they are to any tagging program in the D.R., but I understand. Anybody else, before we take a recess?

AP MEMBER: A quick question for Richard. Haven't they been doing some satellite tagging off the D.R.?

MR. DELIZZA: Yes, and there's a pretty good program down that the Guy Harvey Foundation is kind of supportive of, and so, yes, the tagging is -- I feel like it's Puerto Rico more than the D.R., but, I mean, it's relatively the same neighborhood, right, and so there's been satellite tagging there, and I've not studied all the results.

AP MEMBER: What I saw is that they were going from one FAD to the next and being caught. They were being ten days, and they were at the next FAD, and this guy in the panga got them, and off to the market.

MR. DELIZZA: FADs work really well.

MR. BURROWS: It sounds like a satellite tag is exponentially more valuable in this than -- I mean, way more valuable than -- I mean, they both have value, but the satellite tags are -- But, like you said, they're expensive, and so I agree that we need a lot more of that. Everyone okay with a recess to checkout from their rooms and refresh and reload? All right. John, what do you think? Twenty minutes? Let's do twenty minutes.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MR. BURROWS: We need to get rolling again, folks, if we can get back to business here. We're going to take a diversion, for a little bit, from where we were, and we're going to get back to that, but Ashley Oliver is going to present best fishing practices.

MS. OLIVER: Good morning, guys. My name is Ashley Oliver, and I am the council's Best Fishing Practices Outreach Specialist. As you guys have probably noticed on the screen, that's definitely not a dolphin or a wahoo, and that is because our best fishing practices campaign really focuses within the snapper grouper fishery, and we know a lot of you guys do partake in that fishery, and so we thought maybe it would be good idea to just give you guys a quick update on a couple of projects that we have going on.

The first project is a new video project that I'll talk about, and it's called What It Means to Me, and then I will get into the Best Fishing Practices Master Volunteer Program, which is a series, or is going to be a series, of regional in-person workshops that are slated to begin next year.

First, we'll jump into the What It Means to Me video project, and, first, I want to introduce you guys to Nick Smillie. Nick is the council's Digital Media and Communications Specialist, but he is also my partner-in-crime for this project, and we've been sharing this. We shared it with the council back in September, and then we took it -- We've been taking it to the APs this fall and sharing this idea, and I wanted to give a quick shoutout to Chip Berry here, and he is going to work with us, this afternoon, to film, and so we're looking forward to that, and we're looking forward to any suggestions that you guys might have, and also if you guys are interested in participating.

Jumping in, and talking a little bit about the background, and kind of where this idea came about, we know that not only building trust, but sustaining that trust with fishermen, has long been a challenge for fisheries managers, and, additionally, fostering those positive relationships takes a long time, and it really requires regular interaction with the stakeholders, and so, because of these two things, the council has expanded its best fishing practices campaign, in which it is, you know, continuing to educate and build that trust, and so this project is really just an additional outreach tool that we plan to use, and, really, what it's aiming to do is help to bridge the trust gap, by capturing, in a participant's own words, you know, what their fishery means to them and why best fishing practices are important to the long-term sustainability of South Atlantic fisheries.

Just to touch on the project goals here, the first I kind of just talked about, you know, to help bridge that trust gap between the council and the fishermen, and, also, we want to just encourage the preservation of South Atlantic fisheries, by using best fishing practices in everyday fishing activities. Additionally, we really want to increase the just overall general involvement in fisheries management and the program, and so that might include, you know, joining an advisory panel, attending a council meeting and making public comment, maybe becoming an SAFMC Release participant, and also going to the Best Fishing Practices Master Volunteer Program workshops.

Then, lastly, we really just want to document the stories of those involved in the South Atlantic fisheries in a really constructive manner, and so we not only want this to be a positive experience for the participant, but we really want those that are watching the videos from outside to take something constructive away from it.

To get into what we're looking to do, we will be recording, and editing, informal, short conversations with fishermen, and so we have some, you know, conversation topics that we might touch on, and that might include, you know, how that participant began fishing, the importance of fishery preservation and, you know, how that fishery can be preserved, maybe their perspectives of changes over time in the fishery, and we would like to touch on, you know, how they got involved in the fishery management process, and so do they sit on an advisory panel, are they an SAFMC Release participant, or have they provided photos for FISHstory, and then, also, we would ask, you know, if they have any advice for their fellow fishermen.

Of course, we want to get these videos out there and share them, and Nick and I have been talking a lot about the platforms to share them on, and so this is, you know, a possible list that we may put them out on, but we've talked about, you know, social media stories and YouTube, and we could create an ArcGIS Story Map, and we would put it on the council website, of course, and also share it through other outreach programs.

Just a brief timeline here, to show you guys where we're at with the project, and so, the last few months, we've just been developing the project. Back in September, we took it to the council, at

which it was approved, and there was a lot of support around it, and we've also been bringing it to all the APs this fall, and doing some filming, and then, this winter, our plan is to do a few more filmings, but really just edit the videos, and the idea is to start sharing these in early 2024, the February time, and so, you know, February is not really the end-all-be-all of the project, and we would like to see this, you know, taken through the entirety of next year as well, but we'll see how it goes, and so, with that, we do have an example video to show you guys.

I wish that David was here, but we worked with David Hugo, and I always like to point him out, and embarrass him a little bit, but David is the Sea Grant Reef Fish Fellow, and he does a lot of outreach in the tackle shops in the region, with Meg, over there in the back corner, and also a lot of seminars as well, and I say it's an example video, but David is a very avid fisherman, and so these are his, you know, very real perspectives on his fishery, how it's doing, and how he thinks that it should be preserved.

(Whereupon, a video was presented and not transcribed.)

MS. OLIVER: I hope you guys enjoyed that as much as we enjoyed putting it together. Nick and I put it together pretty quickly, and we've already learned so much about how we're going to improve on the next videos, and so, with that, I will leave these few discussion questions, before I move on to the Best Fishing Practices Master Volunteer Program, and I just wanted to ask if you guys potentially might have any additional conversation topics that might fit into the scope of this project.

I had given you guys just that list of platforms that we're thinking about sharing them on. You know, from that list, is there any that might be better to use, or are there any additional suggestions that you think would be good to share these videos on, and then, lastly, would anybody potentially be interested in participating in the project in the future? I will turn it back over to you guys.

MR. BURROWS: Paul.

MR. PANCAKE: One thing that I think would be beneficial to show -- For best practices, how to handle fish when you do intend to keep them, to identify proper icing, bleeding, dispatching the fish, just to make sure that there's a better product, at the end of the day, than just throwing it in a cooler with no ice in it.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: You've got to consider -- One of the remarks in the video was catching your limit and then releasing the fish after that, and I encourage that you catch your limit, and you move on, because you're only hurting the fish more by catch-and-release. I say, once you get your limit, move on. Of course, that doesn't go for blue marlin.

MR. BURROWS: Fair enough. Anyone else? Rich.

MR. DELIZZA: So I'm curious, and I think the top goal was to create trust amongst fishermen, and what is the message in that video that you think lends itself to that?

MS. OLIVER: I think the idea, really, is just the overall messaging, and just the video itself, and we're hoping, you know, that people will hear from fishermen, and fishermen like to talk to fishermen, and that's really the idea, and so David didn't touch much on it in that video, necessarily, about how he got involved, and he's new to the program, but we're hoping to talk with fishermen, like you guys, who sit on the AP, and how did you get here, and why is it important that you're here, and that's kind of where that goal touches.

MR. SMILLIE: David is also council staff, and so, ideally, it's an example video, and we're not looking to get any more from council staff, and we're really looking for people who, like you all, have been experienced in the fishery for decades, and are still involved in the process, and so hearing from people that are involved in the process and, I guess, using that reputation in a positive and constructive manner.

MR. DELIZZA: Okay, and so this is going to be a hard lesson in self-awareness, and you might be aware that the council is not really liked by fishermen, and like they hear the council, and you're just somebody that takes things away from them, and so I would make a concerted effort to avoid a preachy type of video, even although it is, and even -- I wouldn't stress the importance of conservation, and I wouldn't stress the future of fishing, and I would get guys that look like they really fish a lot, and not dressed like this, and focus on -- It doesn't need to be a tutorial on fishing, but certainly I would avoid it being a preachy type of message, or it will just be tuned-out as more of the same.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Rich. They're going to have their hands full with Chip this afternoon. We'll see how that goes. Anyone else?

MR. REYNOLDS: I think it's true, and I think it strikes the heart of anyone who really fell in love with fishing young, and I think he talks about it, and I hear what Richard is saying, and, you know, you could probably get some more hard-core fishermen involved, and, I mean, that's the way that I feel, but I think it -- You know, it definitely -- It opens you up, you know, and it makes you like really think about it, and I think that's really good. There was something else that I was going to go with there, that was probably more beneficial than that, but, anyway, I will think about it, and I will email you later.

AP MEMBER: I guess it's sort of sales. In sales, it's features and benefits, and so you're selling the feature, and what's the benefit to them, and I think most people don't realize that, really, with the red snapper, and probably now with the grouper, it's the mortality rates. You know, if you take the value of they are what they are, that's dictating a lot of regulations, and so I don't know how that can be brought into it, to let them know that, you know, we're trying to decrease the mortality rate, so that it will open the access more, you know, to that fishery.

MR. BURROWS: Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: Well, just to add on to what Rich was saying, the council -- I mean, we can beat our heads against each other's in here, but they are the ones that make the final decision on what's going to happen to us as fishermen, and so, yes, anything I can do to improve my standing with them, and then I would certainly be encouraged to do it, and want everybody else to do it, and so, anyway, I would be glad to help any way I could.

MR. BURROWS: Anyone else?

MR. SMILLIE: Another -- Especially the thing that I like to bring up to advisory panels too is that a big reason that Ashley and I wanted to do this project is to preserve the stories of fishermen that have been, you know, fishing in the South Atlantic for decades, and, you know, a lot of those stories. Like the FISHstory project is, you know, starting to preserve a lot of those, you know, obviously, the old photos, but, with that, you know, some of the stories about our fishery that might get lost over time, and so, you know, that's just another motivation for doing this, in addition to just trying to propagate the message as well, and so it's just another communication tool, but also a way to preserve those stories, and so I just like to add that to the advisory panels.

MR. BURROWS: Thank you. I think you should take a long, hard look at using Paul Pancake, our youngest AP member. He's in Charleston, and so he's accessible, and he's not new to fishing, but he's new to the process, and I'm only stressing the involvement of someone younger, and we need new blood throughout this entire process, because, looking around this room, he's the youngest, and let's get some use out of him while we've got him, and hopefully he's got a friend or two.

MR. PANCAKE: I suppose I just got voluntold, and so you might as well mark me down for doing one of these.

MR. WHITAKER: I remember Loran-A, before the C. The young people only know the GPS.

MR. OWSLEY: I've got a question. I mean, what is the current council's perception, in terms of the general public and in terms of trust? I mean, has there been a survey? Does everyone strongly mistrust the council, or, you know, like we're needing to try to -- I mean, I'm kind of like with Rich, and that video -- Yes, that's cool, and that doesn't give me a warm-and-fuzzy that I'm going to trust anyone any more than I do, and the general public mistrusts everyone right now, and, I mean, kind of like the self-awareness that Rich says.

You know, it's like me being a DEA agent, but I'm trying to tell the drug dealer to be my best friend, you know, and so I think -- I think a recreational person, or maybe charter, it's like I have the outlook on a lot of stuff that's like, you know, when do you say too much, and when do you say too little, and how is this going to be used against me, and, I mean, I speak from a lot of -- Let's call them constituents, the people in the recreational industry that I know, and, you know, so I'm in northeast Florida, and I was in Georgia, you know, and, in all of these slides and stuff, there's a gap, and it's like we don't matter, right, but it's kind of like a Jacksonville person -- If he wanted to go to one of these meetings, he's going to have to drive, you know, four hours to Charleston, or he would have to drive south to -- I think the furthest one was like West Palm. Yes, they can do some webinars, and do that, but just having a video of why a council member likes to fish doesn't necessarily tell me that I'm going to trust them, right?

I think the general public -- I mean, it's kind of like something I was with, and I think it was in St. Pete, and I think his name was Dr. Crabtree or whatever, and he was the Regional Director, or whatever, and, you know, in charge of doing all of these, I don't know, implementing rules, or being that, and I talked to him, and I was like, hey, when is the last time you've been fishing, and, you know, the red snapper thing, and he was like, well, it's been thirteen years since I was out

fishing, and I'm like, oh, okay, you know, and I'm really supposed to trust you trying to look out for our interests?

I think a lot of recreational people have the perception that an open comment period is just a check-the-box that regulatory people need to solicit comments from people, even though it falls on deaf ears, because the decision is almost kind of already made, and it's like, okay, we're going to solicit public comment, but we really don't give two-shits what they have to say. I mean, to be blunt. I mean, it's -- You know, and so I think it's an uphill battle.

Definitely not to sound pessimistic, and I think it's not a futile effort, but there has to be something, in terms of trust, because, nowadays, even more so, what is actual factual, what is not factual, who wants to say what, and how is it going to be used against me, and how are they really going to implement it, that type of whole thing, and so that's just kind of my observation, and not that I'm a skeptic on everything, but I speak from a lot of people who share that kind of same view in my peer group.

I'm young, like Paul, and I don't know -- I guess he's the youngest, which I'm usually the youngest, but I'm from, you know, a younger group of guys and girls, and so we're like trust but verify type of people, I guess.

MR. SMILLIE: I guess that's kind of a tough one to respond to, but from a -- I can't really respond to, you know, direct trust in the council, but, as outreach specialists for, you know, the council, our job, and what we're trying to do, is, you know, help the public understand that the council is being as transparent as possible in the process.

We probably do the most outreach than any other council out there, and this is just one project, where we're just trying to at least show face, and like we go to tackle shops, and how many tackle shops have we visited? Like hundreds of tackle shops, and we're just showing our faces there and say, hey, if you guys have any questions, you know that you can reach out to us, and so this is just kind of like one arm of that, and trust me. I manage our social media, and so I'm well aware of how people feel about the council, but we heard something from -- I think it was the Outreach and Communications AP, and it kind of stuck with me, but any outreach is always pushing a snowball up a hill, you know, and it's always going to get harder and harder, but you've got to just keep trying, and hopefully you get over that crest, to where that snowball will roll downhill, but that's what we're trying to do, is just relentlessly outreach, you know, just trying to make sure that people aren't in the cold, I guess. I guess that's the best response that I can give you.

MR. OWSLEY: I mean, I agree with it and stuff, and I think like one of the big things on the point is this whole like right whale thing too, and it was like, you know, NOAA had this idea that they were going to put a vessel size limit, and it was like a moratorium on this, and, you know, I think a lot of the public's opinion is, hey, if the government, or whatever, wants something bad enough, it doesn't even matter their opinion, and I know -- I will be one to admit that, you know, I see a lot of these documents, and they're a hundred-plus pages, and I'm not reading that.

I know like what you're trying to do, and get the -- Talk to people, and some of that stuff it's like, you know, maybe a Cliff Note version, or like you've got to really capture people's attention really quickly, and convey that information, and I think me, and a lot of people, it's like, well, they want a comment on this, and, well, read this three-ring binder, and it's two-inches thick, and read all of

this, and then you need to make a comment, and you're like, oh whatever, and they're going to do whatever they want to anyway, and so -- But, I mean, I agree, and I appreciate your effort, and I do understand that it's like pushing a snowball uphill, and you've definitely got your work cut out for you, and so thank you for trying that.

MR. SCALISE: As far as outreach too, I don't know if you all just did videos, but I think doing seminars, not only at tackle shops, but people who work and operate tackle shops, because I guess the descending law that came out, what, two years ago, and I was talking to the, I guess, son of the owner of a tackle shop, and it's like, well, you know, why aren't you pushing descending devices, and people don't know that they have to have it, and it's sort of an opportunity to sell something to people that they have to have, and he's like, oh well, you know, I didn't think of that.

To teach the staff, you know, because a lot of them -- They want to seem as knowledgeable as possible, but, you know, maybe not so much the customers, but have -- You know, go to individual tackle shops and, after hours, have pizza and stuff and go through descending devices and venting tools, and teach them how to use it, and then maybe it will get passed -- Then another is, you know, as far as like fishing expos, because that is usually your more inexperienced fishermen, who are just entering different fisheries, and they are more open to learning things, and that's probably a good opportunity.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Tim. Anyone else? Thank you.

MS. OLIVER: That's actually a great segue into this next section. Thank you, guys, first of all, for all those comments. That's great, and it will be super helpful for us, as we move forward with the project, and hopefully we'll be pinging you guys in the future to participate.

Next, I want to talk about the Best Fishing Practices Master Volunteer Program, and so this was brought on, this idea, I guess last year, and then, when I was brought on as staff, it's really been, I guess, my baby, and we've been developing this this year, and we're looking to start implementing them next year, and so I just want to touch on the goals a little bit. Really, the main goal of the entire best fishing practices campaign is to improve the overall survivorship of the snapper grouper fishery.

As for the project-specific goals, the first one is we're really just wanting to expand the reach, by empowering key members of the fishing community to spread the best fishing practices message and method on the council's behalf. The second one is we just want to increase the general awareness and use of all best practices, and that's really specific to snapper grouper species that are showing signs of barotrauma and are needing to be released. Then our third goal is a very similar goal to What It Means to Me, and we just really want to increase the just overall interaction, regular interaction, with the stakeholders, and, you know, that will hopefully grow their involvement in fisheries management.

To get into what this program is, so these are going to be regional, in-person workshops that will train volunteers to become experts in all things best fishing practices, and also encourage them to train those in their fishing community, and so we are envisioning these to be hosted quarterly in each state and last approximately an hour-and-a-half to two hours long. Just for an example, we're still kind of setting it in stone, and so we might take Quarter 1 of next year and spend our time in

South Carolina, Quarter 2 in Georgia, 3 in Florida, and 4 in North Carolina, and that's still, you know, being worked out, but that's kind of the idea behind that.

Talking about our target audience for this workshop, the first would be the key members of the fishing community. We have learned, from many surveys, that some of the most effective information exchanges within the fishing community comes from word-of-mouth in local tackle shops, and so, by targeting this group, we hope that, you know, the messaging, on behalf of the council, will just be more positive overall, and so this group might include advisory panel members, SAFMC Release participants, maybe MREP graduates, or federal for-hire permit holders.

Then our second audience would be the port samplers. Port samplers are the front face to anglers returning back to the docks, and I know they often get questions and complaints about fisheries management, and so the hope here is to, you know, educate the port samplers, so that they can better answer questions to anglers at the docks.

Then our third group would be the state and federal agency personnel. This group is just targeted due to their vast involvement with the public. Then our last group would be the novice fishermen, and, as you can see there, I have, in parentheses "indirectly". This group, if they find out about the program, they are more than welcome to come. It's going to be a pretty small group, I think, but, you know, they're more than welcome to come, but, really, the idea here is to capture this audience through the key members, the port samplers, and then the agency personnel.

To get into really what this workshop is going to contain, the first thing I want to stress is we really envision this to be very conversational in nature. We want this to be a two-way forum, and, you know, we want to talk through ways that we can help each other in getting this message out, and so we don't want to just, you know, throw up a presentation and just tell you how to do it. We want to talk through it, and so you've probably guessed it, but the main portion of this workshop is going to be all about best fishing practices. We'll start with, you know, just kind of the general best practices of planning ahead, knowing the regulations, knowing what you're fishing for and the gear you need, and we'll talk about handling, limiting air exposure and avoiding non-target species.

We'll touch on barotrauma as well, and this will probably be more conversational in nature, you know, and in what species, or what depths, time of year, do you see barotrauma worsen, and we'll dive deep into barotrauma mitigation devices, and so we'll talk about descending devices and venting tools, you know, what they are, how they work, and the regulations involved. We'll really spend some time on descending devices though, and that's, you know, because of the regulation in the South Atlantic. It focuses on descending devices, but it is important to touch on venting tools. You know, as you guys have stated, there are a lot of people out there that don't know how to use them, or may use them incorrectly, and so we do want to talk about that a little bit as well. Then I would also like to create a descending device with this group.

The next section would be all about getting involved, and so, of course, that would include citizen science, and, specifically, the SAFMC Release and FISHstory projects, and then I would also like to talk a little bit about the council, and I know there will be participants in the room that will, you know, know a lot about the council's process, but I think it's important to at least just go over kind of the main things, so that they have little tidbits in their toolbox that they can pull out, just if they

were to get questions in their community, and so we'll do a quick overview of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, a little bit about the council's jurisdiction and a fishery management plan, and just also, you know, how they, or others, can get involved in advisory panels, the council, and public comment. Then, again, I just want to stress that we want to have discussion throughout all of this.

As for next steps, the really only thing that I wanted to mention here was, you know, I'm working on figuring out when we're going to do, and where we're going to do it, next year, and then, down in bold there, we are really just trying to get this thing up and running in the spring of 2024. That was a really quick-and-dirty version of the best fishing practices campaign, but thank you guys for listening, and I will be happy to take any questions now, or just feel free to contact me later, and I can get you my email. Thank you.

MR. BURROWS: Any questions now? Anyone signing up right now? Thank you. All right. I think it's time to get back to where we were before our recess there, and I think we've got probably a good bit of information to still chew up in here, and, at the end, we need to conduct elections, and so if everybody would kind of start thinking about that as well, but I think probably opening the floor up again, is the way to do it. John.

MR. HADLEY: I think the idea here is just keeping in mind there's a new end time for this meeting, and I know people have flights to catch, and need to hit the road, but there's a little flexibility there, depending on how the conversation goes, but I think the goal here is to try to -- You know, before we get into the elections, try to come up with some sort of at least somewhat satisfactory way to tie this together on the dolphin discussion, because I know that everybody has a lot of thoughts on it, and some of the thoughts are conflicting, and so, you know, I think that's the goal of the discussion, is to come to some sort of conclusion where we can leave off.

I will mention that, you know, listening to the discussion earlier, it's duly noted on requesting a presentation on updated tagging data for the next AP meeting, and I think that would be helpful for -- It sounds like everyone is interested in that, and so that's something that I have penciled in already for our next AP meeting, but, with that, you know, we have two items here that are very dolphin-related, and I think there's a lot of overlap, and a lot of the discussion has already gone that way, but there was the MSE discussion and, you know, there were a couple of other -- You know, there was one other main question there on the conceptual management objectives, and then we had more of the fishery performance report questions that we could jump into. I didn't know if you wanted to try to tackle Number 2 there, just to get the AP's feedback, and then we'll jump into the fishery performance report.

MR. BURROWS: Probably finish the MSE and then allocate the rest of the time to the fishery performance report, would be my guess.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. That sounds good, and so, just to tie up the MSE discussion, one of the main conceptual -- It's a conceptual management objective, and so, really, you know, what are the main things to keep in mind as this MSE is developed, what are some of the conceptual management -- The objectives of -- Essentially, it's the objectives of the fishery, kind of very high-level objectives of the fishery.

Based on the round of stakeholder meetings that Cassidy summarized, based on, you know, feedback from fishermen up and down the coast, these were the main sort of overarching topics,

the a through e there, of ensuring opportunity and access to the fishery, preventing closures, larger -- Manage towards larger sizes, and that's the preference, and stability in regulations, so they're not fluctuating greatly from year to year, and recognizing the regional and sector differences in the fishery, as far as the goals and objectives. I didn't know if the AP has any feedback on that. Do you feel like that captures, you know, what you would think of as some of the main management goals for dolphin? You know, is there anything else you would want to add or take away, or does that summarize it fairly well? Again, it's high-level, thinking about the dolphin fishery all along the east coast.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: I think these look good for what we're aiming at.

MR. BURROWS: I think we have consensus there.

MR DELIZZA: Let me just throw something in. Adding in the stability of regulations as a goal seems to be one of those captain-obvious things. The regulations are glacially slow to change, and so -- And I know we certainly wouldn't want regulations changing every year, or anything like that, but I'm a little concerned that it has as much weight as the other five items on there, and like the -- I don't know. Nobody else seems to have a problem, but I just wanted to say that that is a little concerning to me, because it almost feeds into the speed at which changes get made, and, if I could accomplish anything on this AP ever, last term or this term, it would be to move things along a little bit quicker, and so I'm not a fan of seeing stability in regulation as an equal goal of - - Equivalent to those others.

MR. BURROWS: John.

MR. HADLEY: So, maybe as a side note, or a caveat, to that, it's not necessarily stability through time, overall, but stability at least from year-to-year, and so interannual stability I guess would be the clarification for that, because, the way that that was proposed in the management strategy evaluation is you have -- You know, your dolphin stocks are -- Your dolphin availability is very - - It fluctuates highly from year to year, as everyone here knows, in that you sort of have the tradeoff where you can have really lax regulations, and then really tight regulations the following year, if the stocks are looking like they're not doing so well, and so I think that's to say the preference was not to jack regulations really high, and then cut them down really low the next year, and it was to have some stability, at least interannually. However, I think, you know, point taken that, when this is internalized in the MSE, stability means year-to-year, and not necessarily forever or, you know, in large decadal -- You know, large time blocks, and that can change, or should change, I think, overall.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, John. Anyone else?

MR. OWSLEY: I think maybe what -- I think I know what Rich is trying to get across. I mean, stability in regulations, as it relates to a timely reaction to something, and so, if there is a stock that's up and down, which whoever -- I mean, we've got to figure out what that is with dolphin, but if, for some reason, it's super low and whatever, the fish aren't there, I mean, I would think, to his point, there needs to be some kind of availability to reduce take, or something, and I think that's what you're trying to get across. If like something is noticeably, or glaringly, wrong, let's don't

take until 2027 to do something about it, maybe, and like stability is like, hey, let's don't just keep this, because that's how it is, and I don't know, and maybe that's what you're trying to get across, or that's the way I took it.

MR. DELIZZA: That's not far off. I just don't want us to fall into the trap that the status quo is always okay, and that's all. It's not that that's not important, because whipsawing regulations is the surest way to screw things up, but I just don't think that should have equal weight as one of the five primary goals, and that's all I'm saying.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Dan and Rich. Anyone else? Chip.

MR. BERRY: I think e kind of -- I guess that's 2e, but the regional and sector differences in the fishery and objectives, and I hope that's taken very seriously in this process, because I think -- I mean, I just remember, last year, we had so much discussion on -- Maybe even like some of what Rom was talking about, you know, in some of the needs and the differences with the user groups out there, and like, I mean, if I recall, unless I'm just thinking this -- I think we had a long discussion about, you know, maybe the for-hire industry, because we do want to see it thrive and survive, maybe should be treated a little differently.

Percentage-wise, the private recreational, the weekend warriors, I guess, take a good percentage of the fish, and maybe they should still bear some brunt in that, if we do, you know, initiate any kind of, you know, regulations that would take away, so to speak, but I think e kind of -- I hope that e is just taken very seriously, because that seems to be where we always start, and where we always kind of come back to, and I want to see people like Rom, and I want to -- Because I was a for-hire captain at one time too, and, to get those people from Ohio, and those are the voters, and these are politicians, and they're people with money, that come down and spend it, and we just can't let that get lost, and so that's all I'm going to say. Thanks.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Chip. Anyone? Seeing no other comments out there, John, maybe it's the time to move to the fishery performance report.

MR. HADLEY: Absolutely. Let me cue that up, really quickly. All right. So this is kind of picking up where we left off. We finished up with wahoo, and there's a similar fishery performance report that's available for dolphin, and I'm scrolling down to the questions here, and so I wanted to bring this back up to the AP, and there was a lot of discussion on this at the last meeting, but, given the ongoing MSE discussions, other potential management discussions, I just want to make sure that everything here is up-to-date, or at least you feel like it's still reflective of your thoughts in the fishery, and I know we have some additional AP members here that could provide some different perspectives, and so I just wanted to go over this, but this is sort of an almost express, if you will, overview of the fishery performance report, because I know that you did spend a good amount of time, at your meeting, putting this together, and it's not quite as outdated as the wahoo one, at least time-wise.

I will go over the discussion questions, and then, again, in a similar fashion, what exists in the report, and see if there's anything else. If, you know, you feel that this is a little bit out-of-date, or is there anything that needs to be added, and so, with that -- You know, this is playing off how we concluded yesterday, with that overview of dolphin landings and how the dolphin fishery has been functioning, at least in recent years.

The first set of questions relates to catches and fishing behavior over the past ten years, and so looking at dolphin availability and how has that changed, looking at -- As well as looking at seasonality, timing, geographic range of changes in dolphin catches, the average size of the fish, how that has changed, perceived abundance of fish over the past ten years, shifts in effort, to or from dolphin, and has there been a considerable change in fishing techniques.

What exists in the current fishery performance report -- I will go over that really quickly, but, as far as size, it was noted that the average size of dolphin landed has decreased in recent years, and the notable exception was up in the New England area, where generally larger fish have been seen nearshore, at least in recent years.

As far as effort, there has been an increase in recreational effort and technology, particularly from the private recreational component of the sector. In New England, dolphin typically were not targeted, but there's been a developing nearshore fishery, which, in recent years, nearshore being approximately fifteen to twenty miles, and it was noted that several private vessels in the region have started particularly targeting dolphin in August and September. In southeastern North Carolina, and in South Carolina, there was more effort towards targeting dolphin inshore of the continental shelf, and these inshore fish tend to be smaller, and, also, in South Carolina, it was noted that there's an increased focus in offshore fishing for dolphin, with faster boats that have access to improved technology, and essentially able to get to the ledge, or further, fairly quickly.

Then, generally speaking, as far as effort, the access to information, technology, and improved vessels have increased access to dolphin fishing and made it easier to find likely fishing spots, such as temperature breaks, leading to increased targeted recreational effort. As far as abundance, in much of the South Atlantic, it was noted that -- There was general agreement that dolphin abundance is lower than it used to be, and the size of schools is smaller, and, while this viewpoint was somewhat shared by AP members in the Outer Banks of North Carolina, it was noted that the same trend has been exhibited in other species, such as yellowfin tuna and white marlin, and, for the Outer Banks, it was noted that May and June are typically the prime months for dolphin, but there have been nice bailers in recent years, with schools of fish in the six-to-eight-pound range, in the late summer and early fall, and so sort of a little bit of a change in the availability there.

Overall, the number of citation-sized fish has decreased in New England, but the fishery typically starts in July into September, and the larger specimens are typically caught offshore, and, in south Florida, dolphin are caught almost year-round, but this isn't consistently the case anymore, and so it was noted that dolphin are being caught in relatively warm water, warmer water than they were previously found, and so, with that, I will turn it over to the AP. Do you feel that adequately captures the viewpoints on abundance, or trends in abundance, trends in effort, trends in size, and is there anything else you would like to add that may get at some of those discussion questions at the very top there?

AP MEMBER: As far as the access, I think, as far as here, and it probably is not so much in south Florida, but, during April, May, and June, our typical dolphin months, is weather is the biggest dictator of access, and I don't know if that is considered into the harvest data, in that say, you know, if we get blown out the whole month of May -- Or not the whole month, but, you know, a considerable amount, more than usual, and, you know, there's trips that -- Are the trips that we did not take taken into consideration, you know, if we would have had more normal weather or -- You

know, it's just some years look poorer, because the wind blew, you know, and it's not because the fish weren't there, but we just couldn't get there, and so I don't know, and is that taken into consideration?

MR. BURROWS: John.

MR. HADLEY: Yes, and that will show -- So that would show up at least in the sampling data, and so, if there were fewer trips being taken, you know, in theory, there should be fewer trips being intercepted, and so that will show up in the MRIP data, in the effort data, and not necessarily the catch. Well, also the catch data, but you would probably want to look at both measures, to see how that's playing out, but it would show up in the effort data, for sure.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: I didn't see -- So we had talked a lot about -- Our last AP discussion was great, and we went through a lot of things. We had talked a lot about new fisheries developing, and efforts, and so I think one of the consensuses, amongst new fisheries, right, and we have a new fishery, and a new effort, with a lot more recreational boats. I mean, the way that that effort has began, and, I mean, that's a new fishery.

We also have seen a new fishery, and a smaller level commercial boat, you know, and I can tell you, from the guys from my area, that started taking their Taurus's up north, to just start like longlining, you know, and it's kind of like the wild-wild-west up there, and that's a new fishery that developed, and I think we're referring to those as council boats, and so I didn't see that on the list, but that needs to be addressed, and I think, in our last AP meeting, we really touched on that a lot, and I don't know where that discussion has gone with the council, and so I want to say that, and I will definitely have some more to say, but I just wanted to make sure that was up there as well.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Jon, and I agree with you that that is an issue that is not being accepted as an issue at the council level, based on my trip to Key West last year, and there is a -- I got a serious rebuttal from even mentioning it in Key West, but I do agree that that is something that we need to continue to look at and do something about. Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: Just a few things that I'm going to touch on, from my observations, and I think the dolphin availability has changed a little bit. It used to be we would go fish the grass lines, the pretty grass lines, and we still have them, but they are not necessarily the places where we're catching dolphin now. We're finding large schools of dolphin maybe a hundred fathoms, or maybe twenty-five fathoms, and maybe scattered grass, but the only thing that really tells you there is some white terns are on them, and you may get over there, and there may be a hundred, or there may be 500. We've had some tremendous schools of dolphin this year, that four or five boats come in and do well on.

I have had, like I said, two of the biggest dolphin I've ever caught this year, and so there is -- I don't know exactly how to explain it, but I think my dolphin, personally, is -- My size of dolphin has been bigger this year, and even what we call our bailers have been nice, pretty, three or four or five or six-pounders, but there is, in July and August, when the Gulf Stream, and the warm,

pretty water pushes in, and the proliferation of -- We call them inshore boats in our area, and it has almost doubled.

I'm talking about for-hire boats, and a lot of even the smaller recreational bay boats, I will call them, and they're going out and hitting these grass lines, five or six miles out, and they're catching -- You know, they're catching some small dolphin there, but we have had, in our area, some of the best blue marlin and sail fishing, this year, that we've seen in a very long time, and so a lot of guys have been putting forth a lot more effort towards that, rather than chasing dolphin. If I can catch, you know -- I like to blue marlin fish, and so I like to get the dolphin fishing done quick, if I can.

I think -- Anyway, what you all are talking about with the council pelagic longlines, and I'm not talking about the guys that have been in it with their trifecta permits, and have been in it for a long time, but that -- I mean, that's something that certainly has to be addressed, because, as you all know, it could be devastating, but, anyway, that's about all I've got to say right now.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: One of the things I've seen in the last two or three years, up our way, are FADs, anywhere from the small boats putting them out, inshore kind of, but our boats, the charter boats, are sticking FADs out, and you kind of -- They will go off and do it on a day that nobody is around, and you go hide your FAD, and it's amazing how fast dolphin come to those FADs. Now, you will put them in one place, and you won't get a dolphin, but you put them in another place, and you put four or five out in that area, and it's -- In three or four days, you've got dolphin around them, and it's -- You know, you're congregating the fish.

These fish, normally, you wouldn't see them, unless you had something floating, and so now is that another thing that's going to come, because you look at the Pacific, and there is 60,000 FADs floating around there with buoys on them, and is that going to present a new problem, in the long run, for congregating the fish in one spot?

MR. BURROWS: John Hadley.

MR. HADLEY: I just have a quick follow-up on that, because I'm hearing a lot more about FADs being used in the Caribbean, particularly in the Puerto Rico and Dominican Republic area. The FADs that you're seeing, are they on top floating, or are they anchored underwater?

MR. HARRIS: On top.

MR. HADLEY: Okay. Got you. Thank you.

MR. BURROWS: Jon Reynolds.

MR. REYNOLDS: Just real quick, to that, that might be a new opportunity for us. You know, I want the council to hear that, and the federal government to hear that, that, if we have so many problems with monitoring our fisheries, once they leave our jurisdiction, maybe we need to consider having some FADs here, and much tighter regulations around those FADs, so that we can have a continuously better fishery, like all around. I mean, some of those places, you know, their economics are going wild, because people are going there to FAD fish, and catch all these marlin,

and all these sailfish, you know, and all these pelagics, and, if we restricted ourselves a little more, but have this abundance of species in our zone, that we could actually, you know, regulate much tighter, it might be something that we really need to think about for this country.

MR. BURROWS: Bob.

MR. FREVERT: I will have to say that a lot of you all talk about catching blue marlin, and I've been to Costa Rica a couple of times in the last few years, and they put FADs out on the seamounts, and it is an amazing fishery. We caught twenty-one blue marlin in a day, and it's just they are there, and they hang out there, and I know people are doing it in south Florida, illegally, for the sailfish season, and Puerto Rico is doing it with giant FADs, and that's where all the dolphin are, and so it's an interesting proposal.

AP MEMBER: Here's a thought that I just had, talking about these FADs and Puerto Rico and in the Caribbean, but, going back to the discussion that we had earlier, is there a chance that these fish are getting to these FADs, and maybe not only getting caught, but just interrupting the migration cycle, to where they've got something to -- They've got structure, and they've got food, and they've got no reason to leave.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: I think that's what the tag data is showing more and more of, you know, that those fish are coming back around smaller, and they're staying and going between a lot of those FADs, is what the tag data is showing a lot more of, it seems like.

MR. FREVERT: I saw the same thing in the Tongue of the Ocean. There's an octet buoy, and they tag the fish and come back a month later, and they're still there, and some of the fish are getting on the FADs and staying there.

MR. BURROWS: Anyone else? To double back, real quick, with the meeting coming up in Beaufort, is there a consensus, in this room, that small-scale council boat -- This dolphin longlining, and is there a consensus, in this room, that that is a problem in all these fisheries? Is there any rebuttal to that? Does anyone -- Can we spend two minutes on that, and, I mean, I would like to hear from some other perspectives. I see it as a huge fishery in the fishery that I -- I only get to do it part-time now, but I think it's a huge issue. It just does not go anywhere when it's stated at the next level, but, if there's consensus in this room, I feel like that's something that needs to be brought up again. Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: Well, I believe there's already something in the works to make those boats comply to the PLL boats, to make them have the same gear, the same reporting, because it's really unfair, for the boats that go dolphin longlining, and they do not have to comply to those very expensive regulations, and it makes it unfair to the PLL boats that do comply, and spend all that money, and that's what they primarily do, rather than the council boats, that, you know, are doing it on a limited basis, when the gaffers are here.

MR. BURROWS: Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: Well, and, you know, they don't have anybody at the table. Usually, Glen is here, and, of course, Glen has been doing longlining for a long time, and has the trifecta permits, which are very expensive, but it -- I mean, it seems, to me, that the door is wide open, and so, you know, hopefully the big dolphin do come back, the ten-pounders, which that's their targeted size, and then it's going to be a free-for-all, if there's not something done, and it's not pretty, and so, anyway, I wish that Glen was here, and he could expand on it, and there are some guys that have invested money in buying equipment, but it's just -- It does need to be addressed by the council, and I like to say that I don't know the answers, but it could get ugly out there, without some type of -- Without some type of regulations and way to fix it.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: So what's the quickest way forward now? I mean, we've had -- That regulation is delayed. You know, I mean, who knows how long that will take, and, I mean, we -- I'm a business, and I'm invested, you know, and we're all businesses, and we're invested, you know, and it's like, if there is no trip limit, you know, and we're all out there, and now these guys are sitting on the weed and everything, and, I mean, there's no trip limit. When there's abundance, you know, that's a devastating effect on, you know, a much broader scope of businesses and individuals. You know, I mean, it's going to make or break everyone's day.

You know, whereas Rom might pull up there, and he wants to go blue marlin fishing, and he's going to catch like, you know, thirty-five fish, and, if it's good, you know, and there is no trip limit, no regulation, a couple of those boats could like devastate that whole stock that's going to make everyone else's whole week, month, you know, anything, and so a trip limit is probably essential.

MR. BURROWS: Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: Currently, it's an open-access permit, a twenty-five-dollar permit, and there is no trip limit until half the commercial -- Is that right, that half the commercial quota is caught?

MR. BURROWS: Rich.

MR. DELIZZA: I am no expert on this subject, and so I'm curious, and what was the pushback that you got when you brought this up?

MR. BURROWS: I was told that it was not an issue, and it's a pulse fishery, and it's 7 percent of the take, and that's it, but there's no -- In my eyes, okay, it's 7 percent, but it's 7 percent at some pretty important times, and important places, but that it was just not -- It's almost an invalid issue, and I was crazy for bringing it up, and so I'm baffled by that response as well, because I can only imagine what it does to the fishery in south Florida, when you have so many more boats, in a more concentrated area, and we've got a big ocean in North Carolina. You guys have some tighter spaces down there, and you can't have 200 miles. You run into somebody.

You've got more fish, and they all have to come through there, and, when you're trying to run a business, or get enjoyment out of your day on the water, as recreational fishermen, I could see it being even more devastating, in that part of the world, than what we deal with, and so that was a mystifying experience for me. Richard.

MR. HARRIS: I am not a commercial fisherman, but a lot of them are my friends, and I hate to see it come to this, but it's going to have to, and, if you will look at the landings, when they had their best year, and they actually went -- They hit their quota, and the big drop-off was after that. I mean, we had a huge drop down in the population, after those two or three years that it was game-on, and they were catching 300 boxes a trip.

When I first started fishing, they had a -- Let's see, and was it a forty-box limit, I'm thinking, something like that, and it was a 4,000-pound limit they had when I first started, and then it turned over to where it was like it's going to be a quota, and it's a free-for-all, and you can catch all you want until the quota is half met, and then we'll think about cutting it back, but -- And we just didn't see a longliner setting in there on the dolphin back then, but it's become such a hot product, and, with every other fishery that drops off, if something gets good, then everybody is going to pile into that one, and that's just the way of the beast, but I think there's going to have to be something with a trip limit on it, and I think that needs to be brought before the council, and see what everybody thinks about that. I don't want to cripple the commercial guys. I don't want to cripple them, and they need to make a living, too.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: To that note, I mean, a lot of these guys that I know are just -- They can make a great living down where they're from, and they're going up there, and, I mean, they can make a great living in the Keys, and they're a charter fisherman, and they're a commercial fisherman around there, and they are just flying up there, you know, and aggravating the situation further, kind of, really. I mean, you know, I'm hearing more and more of that. There's more guys that even just live down there, that are just businessmen, who have like purchased another boat just to do that with, you know, and I personally think this has to be a framework amendment. It's the only way that's going to speed this up for the council to hear.

You know, if this tries to go through the regular amendment process, we're never going to get there. We're trying to achieve something that's, you know -- I mean, this is going to take years and years, you know, and there is absolutely no reason, with the consensus that we have going on, and all the observations that we've seen in the stock, where it is, and the number is showing it, and it's not anecdotal anymore, that we can't resolve this with some sort of framework amendment with a trip limit.

MR. BURROWS: Is there a consensus, in the room, for some kind of a trip limit, or any rebuttal to that? Very well. Does anyone want to theorize as to what that trip limit should be?

AP MEMBER: What would be a good starting place, without making it where they can't make a living, that they can't -- That we're not even going to do it, and it's not worth it, and it's just another fishery they would be cut out of, but I think -- One, you need to go back to the boats that are permitted trifectaly and let them, you know, have a better portion, or the guys that just jump out there -- We see them going out there in boats that were net fishing. They were net fishermen, and, all of a sudden, the dolphin are there, and they come out, with their little five-mile spool, and they're sitting right in front of you, and that's the ones that is just -- I call them the fly-by-nighters, and that's in every fishery.

They will jump in it, and get in it, and then go on, but that's the ones that I would like to see have, you know -- You've got proven landings, and take those landings and figure out a way that, you know, it sustains the fish, and it, you know, gives everybody a chance at it.

The landing data really does not reflect accurately what's going on, because they only fish when the big dolphin are here, you know, because that's the only fish that they can make money on, and that's the month of May, for us, you know, and it varies up and down the -- So that's why they say, well, we're only catching 7 percent, but they're catching all of that in a two to four-week period.

MR. BURROWS: John Hadley.

MR. HADLEY: So I just wanted to ask a point of clarification, because I think the comments have been focused towards council boats and not -- I didn't know if this was a greater commercial discussion or if was focused specifically towards council boats, and I guess that's one -- Just to make sure that it's captured correctly when this is relayed to the council. Is it the greater longlining, and so including tripack vessels that are HMS permitted, or is it specifically council boats, meaning vessels that are not HMS permitted, but are just fishing in the dolphin fishery?

AP MEMBER: I think the term "council boats" applies to non-pelagic longline permitted vessels that are dolphin longlining. I mean, that's the way it's been referred to in the past.

MR. BURROWS: That's my understanding.

MR. HADLEY: So these recommendations would apply to the council boat fishery specifically? Okay. I just wanted to make sure that that's accurately captured.

MR. BURROWS: Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: Well, I mean, with the trifacta, the pelagic longlines, we pretty much know what that number is, you know, and, in fact, I wish Glen was here, but I think -- I don't even know if it's a hundred vessels now, but, with the council boats, I have no idea, and I don't think -- Nobody knows. I mean, if you've got a commercial permit in North Carolina, that access is twenty-five dollars, and I go tomorrow with a PLL if I want to, and so that's the scary part, is we don't know what the population is.

MR. BURROWS: Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: There is twenty-seven pelagic longline vessels.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: If we're -- I mean, if we're going there, I still think we need to have some sort of trip limit, you know, and maybe it would totally separate. That could be a separate trip limit, until we, you know, get this under control, you know, a separate trip limit that we could think about, because, regardless, when the big catches happened, some of that was HMS too, you know, and, I mean, so some of the really -- Localized depletion, and how we're all, you know, going to affect each other, and the range that we can affect each other, and I think a trip limit is essential

for both types, if anyone else wants to comment on that. However, I think one of the main new fisheries that has developed, that needs to be handled in a framework amendment, just about immediately, is the council boats, and that would be my take on it.

MR. BURROWS: Bob.

MR. FREVERT: I have a question. These council boats, they're still only allowed fifty-four fish?

AP MEMBER: No.

MR. FREVERT: Why is that? They're allowed fifty-four fish.

AP MEMBER: No, and they're commercial.

MR. FREVERT: Okay.

MR. BURROWS: I think there is consensus in that a trip limit across-the-board is necessary, that council boats -- This is a real thing that is affecting our fishery, and what you said, Jon, is correct, that it has to be dealt with, in some way, shape, form, or fashion, but I guess my question is what needs to be attacked first?

MR. REYNOLDS: It sounds like we're going to have greater discussions with the rest of this, and upcoming in the amendment, with HMS, and possibly more -- Maybe a limited-access permit, you know, but, at this point -- I mean, look, and, if it's smaller boat -- So the HMS guys have much more invested, right, and now we're trying to be fair and equitable to everyone. They have much more invested, and they have larger boats, and, okay, and so, if we're talking about trip limits, these guys on the smaller boats -- You know, it's like a dayboat, you know, and they're shooting out there. They don't need some large trip limit.

You know, if I can -- If someone can catch, what, a hundred ten-pounders in a day -- I mean, that's only a thousand-pound trip limit, you know, and so I think that is -- That's still going to injure, you know, surrounding boats, even at that level really, but, you know, is that -- That sounds reasonable, I guess.

AP MEMBER: Are most of these guys doing day trips, the fly-by-nighters? The part-timers are going out there and shooting a line, and picking it up eight hours later, unhooking everything, packing it, and coming home? I mean, king mackerel was, what, a thousand pounds a trip? Is it 3,500 now? Okay. I mean, that's still a lot of fish, and expand that over however many boats are working an area, and I don't even know if there's a way to do this, but, instead of a trip limit, could you set a day limit? If these guys wanted it bad enough, they've got to sleep out in the rain, where we're not impacting the HMS boats that are out there for a very long time and who have as much invested in it as they can.

MR. BURROWS: Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: Well, he brings up excellent points, and we really need to get Dewey and Glen involved in these conversations, but, yes, there's guys going out for sword and tuna, and the vessels are capable of staying out two, three, four, or five days, at times, if the weather is good, but, no,

the dayboats are -- They're one day, but they're very efficient, and so, yes, I agree with so many per day, but then you get into an enforcement issue, I guess, and so, I mean, I think that it can be worked out, but you're just going to have to come up with something, but I will add to the -- I may be speaking -- I think I'm pretty well -- I keep up with fish prices, because I sold some mackerel the other day for six-dollars a pound, which about shocked me, but I would say the dolphin are four to six-dollars, dockside, and I think I'm close, a pound.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: If you get 500 pounds, I mean, you're doing better than me in a day. You know, I mean, bottom line, I'm a business, and you're a business, and, if we're both exiting that dock in the same day, and you have a 500-pound trip limit, you're doing better than me. You've got two guys on a small commercial boat, and you're able to catch 500 pounds, and you're doing well. You know, you're selling those fish for \$5.50 a pound, really is about where it's at.

MR. BURROWS: Richard.

MR. HARRIS: Rom, did you say that -- You're talking about the council boats, and they're not having to have the safety equipment and all that other, and, if you're permitted as a dolphin commercial, why can't you say that they need to have that kind of equipment? That might discourage some of it, you know, and I don't know if it would or not, but it's a thought, and, if they're commercial fishing that way, they should have to have it, just like a trifecta-permitted boat.

MR. BURROWS: Rom.

MR. WHITAKER: I think they do have to have the safety permit, the life raft and EPIRB and survival suits and that, but they don't have to have the cameras and all that extra equipment that these trifecta boats have to have.

MR. BURROWS: Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: Another difference too is they're not required to -- The pelagic longline boats have to use a certain hook, and they have to use a whole squid, and the council boats that are longlining for dolphin -- You know, you're using smaller hooks, and you have more bycatch, and they can use a small piece of bait, and that, again, puts the pelagic longline boats at a disadvantage in that fishery.

AP MEMBER: I would like to know how much of the fish is really making it to the fish market, and they're just not stocking restaurants and they just don't show up on reports. I think it's probably more than anyone imagines.

MR. BURROWS: One of the terms that was used in the Key West meeting was so you're saying there is a giant black market sale of dolphinfish, and that's just not happening. That was what was directed back at me, after I spoke. I guarantee there is a large amount of -- Large is relative, but there is dolphin being sold on the black market to restaurants, okay, but, again, this is something that I feel that needs to be reiterated. John Hadley.

MR. HADLEY: So I just want to ask a follow-up, because all of this is coming back, and we, on the council side, had this discussion several years ago, and so this is dated information, but, when they were looking into the pelagic-longline-related actions in Amendment 10, one of the reasons that that was pulled out and delayed is because they received an analysis that showed a relatively low number of vessels that were council boats involved in the dolphin fishery, and so, you know, this is based on the information that is available, and it was in the -- It varied from year to year, but I want to say it was in the ten to twelve range, and I just wanted to get you all's feedback, and, you know, does that seem reasonable, or do you think it's much higher? It sounds like it might be much higher, but I just wanted to get that sort of feedback, on what you've seen in recent years, because that's a dated analysis.

You know, it's several years old at this point, but I just -- You know, this is sort of ringing a bell. This discussion is ringing a bell of the discussions that the council had several years ago, and I'm just interested in that piece, because, you know, if you're seeing more vessels, you know, maybe that needs to be updated, at least with the information available. I should say, specifically, that was non-HMS-permitted vessels fishing longline gear, and so it's strictly in reference to what would be termed council boats.

MR. BURROWS: I think there are about eight to ten in Little River alone, and that would be my -- Just based on what I know and who I speak with, and that's not the most -- That's not the busiest port there is, and so there are a lot of people, and these are guys that had grouper and snapper permits that got hit with reductions, and they found another way to make some money. Yes, it is a pulse fishery, in the sense that, yes, it's only a couple of weeks out of the year, but, if you're saying they're not doing it, I have a huge problem with anybody, at any level, saying it's not happening.

AP MEMBER: If there really is only ten to twelve boats out there, it should be pretty easy to get them up-to-snuff on regulations and make sure that they are doing it, but I'm with Chris, and I personally know of several boats that were active in this, and I couldn't speak to if they've done it in the past couple of years, but you walk on the docks in Little River, and you walk on the docks in Murrells Inlet, Georgetown, McClellanville, all that have commercial fleets, and you see small longline spools, little five-mile sets, on the back of these boats, and they're not going and chasing snowy in May.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: To that, even the number of boats, it's almost irrelevant, and this is the same discussion that we were having in south Florida with ballyhoo netting boats. You know, if there's no limit, at all, of the number of boxes, and there's an entire charter fleet trying to catch bait, and one set will wipe that entire thing out, then, you know, you're affecting a much larger, broader spectrum of guys, you know, and so, I mean, even if there is some idea that there might not be the same number of boats that were originally thought, or something, and I think everyone is under the consensus that this is causing a problem, and it's disrupting -- It's a new fishery that's disrupting a lot of other aspects of the fishery, and a lot of other people in the fishery.

MR. DELIZZA: I would just like to, I guess, ask some questions. In a fishery where, you know, everybody involved has some kind of limits, how is that this particular narrow type of fishery gets

away with having no limit? It seems totally inconsistent with the whole fishery management plan, and does anybody know how that happened?

MR. HADLEY: Well, there is -- The idea of a commercial trip limit has been discussed several times, and it was actually a preferred -- It was either the original fishery management plan for dolphin or in the early 2000s, one of the first amendments to that amendment plan, and that was rejected, and I would have to bring up the history, the exact history of it, but that was approved by the council, and it ended up being rejected by NMFS, and so the idea of a trip limit has come up a few times, and has been discussed since then, but, essentially, as it has -- It hasn't been chosen since then, since it was disapproved by NMFS.

Additionally, there is no trip limit until, as mentioned earlier, 75 percent of the ACL is caught, in which case that's when a 4,000-pound trip limit comes in for the whole commercial sector, and so that includes the HMS tripack-permitted vessels that are fishing in the dolphin fishery, as well as the kind of, quote, unquote, council boats. They're all handled under the same umbrella on the commercial side.

MR. BURROWS: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Just to expand on that, so it's clear, it's not that there are no limits. There is an allowable catch for the commercial sector. In general, this council has often, and I can't think of a time we haven't, used trip limits commercially as an economic tool. We do it in the snapper grouper fishery, and trip limits are often meant to spread out the season, sort of as long as possible, and that's one of the reasons why the step-down, once you get to the 75 percent quota, and it's not a biological tool. It's an economic tool to extend that species being available to the fishery and to the market all year, and that's how we use it, and so, you know, there's two piles of fish. There's the 93 percent pile and the 7 percent pile, and sort of that's the biological portion.

Then how you manage that, the rest of that, is sort of the social and economic portion, and, seeing as the commercial sector, in the past three years, has met 10 percent, 17 percent, and 19 percent of the quota, there hasn't necessarily been a push -- You know, usually, you get that request from the commercial fishery, to say, hey, we want our season to last longer, and so can we have trip limits to extend that, and we haven't -- You know, no one has come close to even meeting the quota, and so that's one of the reasons why, but it tends to be more of an economic tool in the commercial sector and not used as a biological tool.

MR. DELIZZA: Okay. That helps. Thank you.

MR. BURROWS: Anyone else, while we're on this? I think we've reached a good bit of consensus here on what to do next. What else do we have before us?

MR. HADLEY: Well, we have -- We can go over the rest of the fishery performance report, and I don't know if we really have time for it, and we've kind of reached our time. If people want to hang around a little bit longer, we can certainly do that, and I do want to make sure that we get to the last action item, where we elect a new Chair and Vice Chair, and so I think there is a consensus recommendation coming out of this discussion, and I don't know if that's a satisfactory point to end it for now, but, you know, I will turn it over to you, as the Chair, as to which direction you want to go.

MR. BURROWS: I think that is a good starting point, with the Beaufort meeting coming up, that we have strong consensus about a few items in this room, but I agree that we do need to take care of elections, and, if there's time afterwards, maybe we can get back into some of this.

MR. HADLEY: All right, and so shall we switch gears?

MR. BURROWS: Let's switch gears.

MR. HADLEY: All right. Well, we have one last item on the agenda, and that's the election of the new Chair and Vice Chair, and so the Chair is elected to -- Well, each AP member has a three-year term, and a maximum of three three-year terms, and our current chair, Chris Burrows, has reached that three three-year-term limit, and so, as such, we appreciate all the hard work over the years, and input, and, you know, it's been excellent working with you, as the chair, but the time has come to sort of pass the gavel, so to speak, and so, with that said, I will turn it over to the AP, and what we'll be looking at is a nomination for Chair and then a -- So this will actually be a motion. We'll have a motion as the nominee for Chair, and we'll vote on that, and then we'll also need a motion for a nominee for what will be the new Vice Chair as well, and so, Chris, I will handle it over to you to follow through on the election of a new Chair and Vice Chair.

MR. BURROWS: Well, it's been real. When I started in this process, there were no term limits, and I just figured Ray would be the Chair until the end of time, and he was a fantastic chair, and somebody that really brought a lot of passion, and I hope that I was able to do 10 percent of that, and so, without anything else being said, it's time to get rid of me, and I will just move on to semi-retirement.

I would never want to break tradition, or procedure, by nominating somebody, and so I won't do that, but I would like to state that Jon Reynolds has done a fantastic amount of work with this. I talk to him occasionally throughout the year, and I missed him when I was on the docks in Florida last year, and I hate that, but he has put -- He has done a tremendous amount of homework, and he has lived this. He does this every day, in some shape, form, or fashion, and just not on the AP, and so you can take what you want from that statement, but we need a new chair, and so the floor is now open for nominations for the chair. Tim.

MR. SCALISE: Without hesitation, I nominate Jon Reynolds.

MR. BURROWS: Do we have a second? We have multiple seconds. Do we have any dissent, any naysayers, to Jon becoming the Chair? Jon Reynolds is the new Chair, and I will pass the gavel here shortly. *(Applause)* Well, the spot of Vice Chair has now been vacated by Mr. Reynolds. Do we have any nominations for Vice Chair? Jay.

MR. KAVANAGH: I would like to nominate Rom Whitaker for Vice Chair.

MR. BURROWS: I hear a second. I hear multiple seconds. Is there any dissent, any naysayers? Very well. Rom Whitaker is the new Vice Chair. I think the advisory panel is in good shape going forward.

MR. WHITAKER: Well, I don't know if thanks is in order, but, anyway, I will take it with honor, and I will work hard, with Jon, to try to get this process to keep rolling along, but I talked with Dewey on the phone a minute ago, and he may be listening, but I'm sure he will have some comments, but he wanted me to pass on that a few of his buddies, fishing out of New York and Jersey, up in the Northeast, have been seeing hundreds, is the way he explained it, seven and eight-inch dolphin around the lobster pots up there, and so I said, well, that sounds like good news, and so I'm passing it on.

MR. BURROWS: Jon.

MR. REYNOLDS: All right. Thanks, you guys. It's been a pleasure, and, Chris, I really appreciate everything, and hopefully I can learn how to do this, and I don't know if there's any small, very quick discussions that we just want to like do, I mean, a once-over on some things that we've already talked about, but, if anyone has, you know, anything we talked about, even like with, you know, wahoo size limits, and I don't know if we got through that, but anything like that, or else we can wrap it up.

MR. BURROWS: I think we had a good consensus with the wahoo minimum size limit, and I'm prepared to talk about that in Beaufort, and I think that's something that needs to be stated. If there's anything else, let's get it out there.

MR. REYNOLDS: I definitely think the council needs to hear that this -- You know, anything we do, we need to wrap it into the Gulf, you know, as well, and that needs to be part of this, if we're going to talk minimum size limits, and, you know, we benefit from that fishery also, those fish, and the whole cycle, and so I think things need to be comprehensive.

MR. BURROWS: Thanks, Jon. Anyone else, while we're still having a formal discussion? Seeing nothing, I think that does it, if you want to bang the gavel.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on November 7, 2023.)

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Amanda Thomas
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Nov. 6, 2023

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Other Attendees

Kerry Marhefka

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~~Salina~~

Attendee Report: SAFMC Nov. 2023 Dolphin Wahoo AP Meeting

Report Generated:

11/09/2023 11:20 AM EST

| Webinar ID | Actual Start Date/Time | Duration | # Registered | # Attended |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| 310-307-483 | 11/06/2023 12:01 PM EST | 5 hours 5 minutes | 33 | 24 |

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Nov. 7, 2023

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Nov. 7, 2023

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Attendee Report: SAFMC Nov. 2023 Dolphin Wahoo AP Meeting

Report Generated:

11/09/2023 11:22 AM EST

| Webinar ID | Actual Start Date/Time | Duration | # Registered | # Attended |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------|--------------|------------|
| 310-307-483 | 11/07/2023 07:06 AM EST | 5 hours 7 minutes | 39 | 26 |

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