

REVISED OVERVIEW

Joint Meeting of the Ecosystem-Based Management & Habitat Committees

September 17, 2009
Charleston Marriott
170 Lockwood Boulevard
Charleston, SC

The Ecosystem-Based Management and Habitat Committees will: (A) Review public comments received on the DEIS for Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 1(CE-BA 1); (B) receive a summary of recommendations from the Coral, Habitat, and Law Enforcement Advisory Panels on CE-BA 1; (C) recommend modifications to the CE-BA 1 document as appropriate and approve for submission to the Secretary of Commerce; (D) deem the proposed rule for CE-BA 1 as appropriate; (E) receive a summary of recommendations from the Coral, Habitat, and Law Enforcement Advisory Panels on Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 2 (CE-BA 2); (F) discuss management options for CE-BA 2 and provide guidance to staff; (G) receive a presentation on current research on deepwater coral ecosystems within the proposed CHAPCs; (H) receive an update on deepwater coral outreach activities; (I) receive an update on ecosystem coordination activities; and (J) receive a presentation on the Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA).

Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 1(CE-BA 1)

Public hearings on CE-BA 1 were held from January 26 to February 5, 2009. The public comment period ended on February 6th, 2009 and the Council reviewed public comment at their March 3-8, 2009 meeting in Jekyll Island (see “Background” in briefing book). The CE-BA 1 document was filed for DEIS review on June 27. The DEIS comment period ends on September 8. Staff will present an overview of the public comments that were received (*Attachment 1*). In addition, staff will present recommendations from the Law Enforcement AP (*Attachment 2*), Coral AP (*Attachment 3*) and Habitat AP. Based on an overview of changes to the document since the June 2009 version, the committee will instruct staff on necessary modifications to the CE-BA 1 document (*Attachment 4*). Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) maps and any other suggested changes will be included in the 2nd briefing book to be mailed on 9/8/09 (*Attachment 5*). The committee will also review the proposed rule, instruct staff on necessary modifications, and deem the proposed rule as appropriate (*Attachment 6*).

REQUIRED COMMITTEES ACTION: The committee needs to provide guidance to staff on:

- Modifications to the CE-BA 1 document based on public DEIS comments, AP recommendations, and staff/team/review comments

- Approve CE-BA 1 for submission to the Secretary of Commerce
- Modifications to the proposed rule
- Deem the proposed rule as appropriate

Comprehensive Ecosystem-Based Amendment 2 (CE-BA 2)

Staff will present the revised Options Paper for CE-BA 2 (*Attachment 7*) and recommendations from the Law Enforcement AP (*Attachment 2*), Coral AP (*Attachment 3*) and Habitat AP. Actions in CE-BA 2 include establishment of MSY, ABC, OFL, ACL and AMs for octocorals, 2 species of encrusting gorgonians and the invasive orange cup coral; establishment of new EFH for *Sargassum* and snapper grouper in the Mid-Atlantic and New England (Amendment 18); and new EFH-HAPCs for various FMPs.

REQUIRED COMMITTEES ACTION: The committees need to provide guidance to staff on:

- Actions and alternatives for analysis in CE-BA 2.

Deepwater Coral Research

John Reed, member of the Coral AP and researcher with Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute at Florida Atlantic University, will update the committee on the recent research cruise off Cape Canaveral (*Attachment 8*). Science objectives of the cruise were: 1) Continue to define benthic fish and invertebrate community structures; 2) Classify reef and off-reef habitat zones and document faunal affinities; 3) Obtain proxy productivity records from black and bamboo corals; 4) Collect *Lophelia*, other corals, and associated fauna for phylogenetic, phylogeographic, and community genetics; 5) Intense data collection within a coral framework via microlander; 6) Collect and hold live corals for growth studies; 7) Determine benthos/infauna around and near corals; 8) Describe coral microbial community; 9) Sample water column and benthic habitats around deep coral sites; 10) collect samples for biomedical screening; and 11) Collect samples for trophodynamics studies.

Kim Iverson, Council staff, will provide an update on deepwater coral outreach activities including the work associated with the recent cruise.

REQUIRED COMMITTEES ACTION: None

Ecosystem Coordination Activities

Roger Pugliese will provide a summary of recent habitat and ecosystem coordination activities highlighting the August Habitat Advisory Panel meeting and the recommendations developed to further this coordination and technical support provided to the Council.

REQUIRED COMMITTEES ACTION: None

Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association

Debra Hernandez, Executive Director of SECOORA, will make a presentation to the Committees highlighting the Associations charge to design, implement, operate, and

improve the provision of ocean observing data, information, and products for marine and estuarine systems deemed necessary for common uses according to sound scientific practice. SECOORA serves the needs of ocean observing data users with measurements, telemetry, data management and communications, data analysis and modeling, and data visualization and publishing. SECOORA is one of eleven Regional Associations associated with the Integrated Ocean Observing System (IOOS).

REQUIRED COMMITTEES ACTION: None