

**FINAL
SUMMARY REPORT
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
NOVEMBER 17, 2025**

(MEETING HELD VIA WEBINAR)

The South Atlantic Council's Executive Committee met via webinar on November 17, 2025. The Committee approved the meeting agenda and minutes of the prior meeting.

Closed Session

The Committee initially convened in a closed session to discuss personnel considerations.

Budget Review

Kelly Klasnick provided an overview of the 2025 budget with expenditures through September 2025 and a proposed draft budget for 2026. Expenditures during 2025 are on track with the budget expectations at this point in the calendar year, and are higher than recent prior years due to an increase in contracting costs. The final 2025 funding allotment was 1% less than 2024 funding. Final 2025 expenditures are not expected to exceed the 2025 total budget. Funds carried over from the prior budget cycle that ended in 2024 have been used in 2025 to support activities that were planned for, but not completed during, the prior budget cycle.

No funding allocation information is available for 2026 at this time. As in prior years, the 2026 budget is based on assuming status quo funding levels from 2025. The draft 2026 Council budget is substantially below the 2025 budget, due to a reduction in contract expenses and the lack of carry-over funds availability. The overall budget exceeds anticipated core funding due to the continued availability for 2026 of additional grant sources such as those provided for red snapper activities and the Inflation Reduction Act. However, costs of supporting core Council activities and staff obligations do not exceed expected funding for 2026. The Committee approved the draft 2026 budget. The budget will be revised and brought back before the Committee if 2026 funding is significantly different than assumed.

The Council entered a new grant period in 2025. The current grant period is 4 years, with 2026 being the second year in the cycle that will end in 2028.

Workplan and Activity Schedule Review

Kelly Klasnick reviewed the 2026 activity schedule and workplan. The activity schedule, detailing planned meetings and related expenses, provides the foundation for developing the most variable aspects of the budget. As with recent prior years, the activity schedule includes the full range of Council meeting activities. Support for SAFMC representation at the UN Committee on Fisheries meeting in 2026 was added. Representation at this meeting rotates among the 8 Councils and it is SAFMC's obligation for 2026. The Council workplan was also reviewed, highlighting management activities planned through 2027. The Council has a full workload planned through 2026 and into 2027. There is some opportunity beginning in mid-2027 to address new topics or unforeseen situations, if progress proceeds as expected on current items.

The recent federal shut-down will likely impact the workplan, although the full extent is not yet known. The Council will be briefed on developments through the regular work plan review that occurs at each meeting.

Administrative Handbook and Statement of Organization Practices and Procedures (SOPP)

John Carmichael reviewed proposed modifications to the Administrative Handbook and SOPP.

Suggested changes address: (1) additional details and clarifying language identified in the report of the 2024 Enhanced Site Visit by NOAA; (2) ensuring consistent policy language between the handbook and SOPP for overlapping topics; (3) modifying public comment statements to reflect current practices; and (4) increased use of references to the handbook for personnel and meeting policies to reduce redundancy and the need for modifying separate documents in the future. No changes in current practices or policies were proposed. The Committee approved the suggested changes and provided additional guidance that will be included in the final documents for Council approval.

MOTIONS

Motion # 1: Approve the updates to the Administrative Handbook as presented and modified.

Approved by Committee

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Motion # 2: Approve the updates to the Statement of Organization Practices and Procedures (SOPP) as presented and modified.

Approved by Committee

APPROVED BY COUNCIL

Motion # 3: Approve the draft 2026 operational budget as presented and modified.

Approved by Committee

APPROVED BY COUNCIL