SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE FINANCE COMMITTEE

King and Prince Hotel St. Simons Island, GA

March 5, 2015

SUMMARY MINUTES

Executive Finance Committee:

Ben Hartig, Chair Dr. Michelle Duval, Vice-Chair

Charlie Phillips Jessica McCawley

Mel Bell

Council Members:

Jack CoxZack BowenMark BrownDr. Wilson LaneyDoug HaymansChester BrewerAnna BeckwithChris ConklinDr. Roy CrabtreeLt. Morgan Fowler

Council Staff:

Bob Mahood Gregg Waugh
Mike Collins John Carmichael
Dr. Kari MacLauchlin Amber Von Harten
Kim Iverson Dr. Mike Errigo
Julie O'Dell Chip Collier

Myra Brouwer Dr. Brian Cheuvront

Roger Pugliese

Observers/Participants:

Monica Smit-BrunelloRoy WilliamsDr. Bonnie PonwithErika BurgessPres PateDr. Jack McGovern

Iris Lowery SP. Agt. Tracey Woodruff

Additional Observers Attached

The Executive Finance Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened in the Sidney Lanier Ballroom of the King and Prince Hotel, St. Simons Island, Georgia, March 5, 2015, and was called to order at 1:30 o'clock p.m. by Chairman Ben Hartig.

MR. HARTIG: I would like to convene the Executive Finance Committee meeting. The first order of business is approval of the agenda. Are there any changes to the agenda? I know under other business we have Wilson; and I have an item under other business as well to bring before the committee. We'll do that under other business.

Is there any objection to approving the agenda with the changes that I've already said? Seeing none; the agenda is approved. That brings us to approval of the December 2014 minutes. Are there any changes, deletions, corrections to the minutes? Is there any objection to approving the minutes? Seeing none; the minutes are approved. That brings us to Attachment 1, 2015 budget status, Bob.

MR. MAHOOD: We actually did get a budget number at the CCC meeting I guess two weeks ago. As long as NMFS spending plan is approved, it will be the amount we get. It is on the positive side although not considerably more money, about 71K over what we had in our Calendar Year 2014. Even though this is positive, all the councils are still funded below the level they received in 2012, so we've got a little bit of ground to make up.

If you have any questions about how expenditures are going this year, look behind Attachment 1. That shows you our budget amount that has been expended to date. The percentage represents what we have obligated and what our costs will be with the obligated and what has been expended. I will be glad to answer any questions relative to this if anybody has any questions, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HARTIG: Are there any questions of Bob on our council budget expenditures? Seeing none; we were talking about a motion to approve the budget but since it is still based on what happens in NOAA, I don't know that we can. If there are no other questions, we will move right along, Bob, to council follow-up and priorities.

MR. WAUGH: As Attachment 2 you have our follow-up document. On the very last page of it is a table that shows what you approved as our priorities for 2015 and then also some items for 2016. There have been some changes suggested by various committees that have met. The process is for that to come to the Executive Finance, and then you all to give us guidance on how we modify our schedule.

If you look up on the screen, I've got the modifications highlighted and this will be included as a part of the committee report that goes around to everybody. Snapper Grouper Amendment 37, originally that was going to include short-term visioning items. That has been moved down to 2016. There were a number of items talked about for Amendment 37. I'll highlight these changes first and then we can come back to Amendment 37, because I think we may have a little bit of discussion on that one. That is your Number 1 priority.

Number 2 is Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 36, Three was the System Management Plan; four was blueline tile. Well, Amendment 38 originally was going to address allocations

from visioning. That got moved down below due to the change in the schedule. That is moved down to 2016, so that freed up Amendment 38.

We had tentatively earmarked that for dealing with blueline tilefish. Given that we are asking the SSC to look at aspects of that; the fastest timing that we could see working, if it came back that you wanted to make a change to the management structure; that you could look at options again in June and give us directions, approve it for public hearings in September.

Conduct the public hearings in November and in December look at another public hearing and final review of all public comments and approving it for formal review. That would be the fastest that would be able to work. As we understand the guidance right now, that determination will be made at the June meeting after you get the input from the SSC.

Continuing down, we've got the Joint South Atlantic/Gulf of Mexico Charterboat Reporting Amendment. We will be talking about that later this afternoon. The Gulf Council is administrative lead on that. Regulatory Amendment 16, Black Sea Bass Pots; the FEP; the Joint Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 26; the Joint South Atlantic/Gulf Amendment Issues from South Florida. The Gulf is Administrative lead on that amendment as well and we'll be talking about that in a few minutes.

Then you had in your priorities the Joint Amendment 28, but earlier this morning you put that on hold. That is shown in strike-through. Amendment 35, you've reviewed that. You will see the final document at the June meeting and that will go in for formal review. Snapper Grouper Amendment 22, you've put on the back burner as well.

That frees up two amendments here; and so the items that you mentioned to consider for Amendment 37 had to do with adjustments to the hogfish fishing levels and management measures. The second item was adjustment to spawning season closure for shallow-water grouper, and we may want to have some discussion about some more specifics there.

Three, modify the fishing year for commercial golden tilefish hook and line sector; four, modifying the recreational bag limit for black sea bass; five, adjusting the size limit for red grouper; six, restructuring the Jacks Complex trip limit for almaco jack; and eight, removal of size limits for deep-water species.

When this was discussed at the committee level, we said you are adding more items and we may need to shift some of those into 2016. Given that you have removed a couple of amendments, we feel we can accomplish all of that in Amendment 37. That would give you an overview of the changes that we have identified for 2014.

MR. BELL: Not a question; let me just clear something up. I sent some information out last night related to red grouper. That in itself is useful I think to look at related to red grouper, because we had some discussion during the discussion of what we might add in Amendment 37 related to concerns that we were made aware of at the December meeting. Jack had brought up some of that as well, and we discussed that for a little while.

I wanted you to get a sense of what we're looking at in terms of the landings data as well as apparently the fishery-independent data, which suggests that particularly north of Florida some

interesting trends, extremely. It looks like a nosedive in terms of landings over the past years, particularly since the 2007/2008 timeframe.

That is what kind of warranted concern about trying to address perhaps; and as the fishermen had talked to us in North Carolina about was maybe adjust a season to delay openings so we're not hitting them right at their peak spawn. Then that got wrapped up into a discussion of just dealing with seasons in general.

Technically I guess we're moving forward with that; but I guess I just want to make sure you understood my reasoning behind why I felt that was something we needed to look at. I find the data a little scary looking maybe in terms of the landing. When we last left off, we were only at 20 percent of the entire ACL.

As I mentioned, MARMAP isn't necessarily ready to hand it out; but I've looked at MARMAP data in a preliminary sense, and they have been on the same downward trend in terms of their even finding the animals. I just would want to make sure that if we do something and we kind of prioritize things within that list of what we can do in Amendment 37; that maybe we give red grouper – put them at the head of the list or something.

I realize in discussing the entire complex, you are looking at all of them, but I just felt like, one, you needed to see what I was looking at in terms of the landing and all, what I felt was kind of an interesting trend. It suggests to me that what we were hearing from the fishermen in North Carolina in December we might want to pay attention to that and make sure we address that.

If we get caught up with a heavy workload in 37, maybe that could somehow become a priority to the things we can continue to work with. I think the data in terms of the landing and all is instructive to just get a sense of what is going on with red grouper at least in terms of what we're seeing with the landings and all.

That is why I sent that out, and I was a little confused about how we ended up. I thought we were just going to simply deal with the size limit and we weren't going to talk about seasonal adjustments. If it is still in there, great, but in my personal opinion I would put red grouper seasonal adjustment up higher in the list if we were going to prioritize. That is just my opinion.

DR. DUVAL: Mel, we left that discussion as we were moving forward with examining that spawning season closure in total because there are similar actions being considered by the South Florida Committee that both actions with impact each other. If we are going to do it, kind of let's do it in a clean sweep.

I don't disagree at all with the information that you sent around. North Carolina used to be the red grouper fishery, and it's definitely tanked. I think when we get to full council and we're presenting those motions, if you feel like you want to remove an action dealing with the red grouper minimum size limit, you are free to do that and we can take that out.

In terms of simply changing the start date of the fishery, that is a fairly simple thing as well. I wasn't quite sure if you were getting at changing the spawning season for red grouper and had assumed that we were not doing that or if you were simply making a suggestion to add another action that would address the start date of the fishery so that it misses that May period when

thefish are all roed up; that is all. I think we can definitely do that at full council. I don't see that being a problem.

MR. COX: I just wanted to say thank you for putting that together, because it is certainly easy to look at a chart like that when you can see the numbers or the years. Thank you for doing that and putting it together and bringing that concern.

MR. HARTIG: I appreciate it as well. It just gets at something we talked about in mackerel about the rumble strip approach, and how in the future we may be looking at some of these species on a timely basis, to be more proactive in our management. We can do things outside certainly the assessment where we could address certain particular parameters of how we manage each species.

I know I am interested in doing that and I'm sure the rest of you are as well. Any other discussion about Gregg's presentation on the priorities of all the amendments and how they have been fitted into the schedule now? Gregg, did you have anything else on that?

MR. WAUGH: No, just that we should probably have a motion to approve the revised 2015 schedule.

MR. HARTIG: All right, I would entertain a motion to revise the 2015 schedule, Michelle Duval.

DR. DUVAL: So moved.

MR. HARTIG: Motion by Michelle, second by Jessica. Discussion. Is there any objection to that motion? Seeing none; that motion is approved. That takes us to update on South Florida Committee Issues. Attachments 3A and 3B; is that what you said, Bob? Okay.

MR. WAUGH: Before lunch we talked with our marriage counselor at the end of the table; and we determined that we're going to stay married. One of the joys of being in a marriage is you have to work with the rules and regulations of each side. One of the issues we always have with Gulf documents when they are the lead; they have a working arrangement with their council that they have flexibility to change the wording of actions and alternatives; whereas, when we need do that, we propose them as changes and show them to you highlighted as changes.

It makes it a challenge, and there are certainly challenges in all marriages. It makes it a challenge to keep up with a document as we work along. What you have in the briefing book as Attachment 3A is a document that came out of the Joint Committee meeting and we have on there – I will help you get to the spot that shows the approved wording for each of the actions and alternatives. Now the IPT has met and they have suggestions for changes.

As I indicated, the Gulf staff has made some changes that in some cases improved the wording. There are a few places where those changes we need to discuss them, because it causes issues with wording that we have in our amendments. I sent around a document just earlier; Mike I think sent it around. We didn't include that before, because it is going to be confusing to jump back and forth between the two.

What we thought I would do is walk you through Attachment 3A, and I will point out the changes and perhaps we could get direction to staff on what you are approving, where you might have some concerns, and then we could work that up. When the Executive Finance Committee report comes to the full council, we'll have those changes written out so that we have some clear direction to go forward with.

Again, the idea in terms of timing here is to have the two councils look at this joint document at the June council meeting and approve it for public hearings. This is our opportunity to get input in. Your committee is bringing these recommendations to the Executive Finance Committee. This is your chance for input into the document. The Gulf is looking at it at the end of the month, and then we'll look at it jointly in June to approve it for public hearings.

I am not going to go into a lot of detail. We'll go through this fairly quickly. I will point out where there are changes and certainly highlight where they are significant. If there is any objection to any of these items, then I think we need to have some discussion. Certainly, committee members who are there feel free to jump in and help with this discussion as we move through.

The first item dealt with modifications to the fishery management plans, and this was dealing with the issue of delegation of all management. The two committees agreed to move that to the considered but rejected appendix. Action 2 deals with delegating certain management measures. If you look at Page 8 of that decision document that you have; that restates the wording of this partial delegation.

The way this document is organized is by species, so we'll go through talking about yellowtail snapper first. This action would have a provision where we determine specific recreational management items for delegation to the state of Florida. Alternative 2 deals with recreational measures, Alternative 3 deals with commercial, and we talk about delegating minor modifications to existing allowable gear.

The IPT is asking and we will have to provide them some guidance on upper and lower bounds for these types of modifications and what really does minor modification mean? We are not looking for a lot of that clarification here. Certainly, if you have some, that would be very helpful. We had inserted this circle hook requirement as an example of what we consider a minor modification. That is Action 1.

MS. McCAWLEY: I noticed that in looking at the IPT's document, the one that was just emailed around, they removed the language that was in italics. It was that note that said the state of Florida is to submit an implementation plan for those species for which management has been delegated from the councils prior to the councils recommending such action to the Secretary of Commerce. I noticed that throughout the document, the actions for partial delegation, this wording was removed. Do you know why it was removed?

MR. WAUGH: No, I don't.

MS. McCAWLEY: It would be my recommendation that that be added back so this would be new Action 1; and it needs to be in the subsequent actions that are talking about the different species, the partial delegation.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: For the record, I would like to be clear about which document we're talking about. The one I'm looking at is the one that is in the briefing book and labeled as the attachment Gregg said. The one Jessica is talking about obviously is something else that has been e-mailed around that I don't think all of us have. I am not asking for it. I just want to be clear for the record what we're talking about because in the version I have in the briefing book that language is still in there.

MR. WAUGH: Monica, that is the document we're walking through here, but the IPT has met and the Gulf staff has made some changes, so that is what we're talking about in the other document. What we're doing is surfacing those here so that you can see the changes versus what is in the document that we have before us. What Jessica is saying is that needs to be retained in the document.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Okay. Now that is clear to me and hopefully everybody else. We'll just make sure that when you are talking about those, you are talking about the document that was e-mailed and not this one.

MR. HARTIG: The ground rules were you were going to give us – Jessica beat you to the punch in this one.

MR. WAUGH: Yes; and that is fine. What I'm doing is I'm keeping a running list, and we will add these as a bulleted list. You are giving us direction to staff. We'll add this and it will go with the Executive Committee Report so people will have a chance to see this a little bit more before we get into full council.

MR. WAUGH: Okay, anything else on Action 1 in terms of delegating certain management measures to the state of Florida for yellowtail snapper? We've got recreational and commercial separated. If not, we'll go on to Action 2 on Page 12. This would establish acceptable biological catch and annual catch limits for yellowtail snapper.

They are proposing some slight modification to the wording of the action. It appears to be just editorial to me. The committees had asked us to look at the wording for Alternative 2 to either use manage yellowtail snapper as a single unit with an overall combined multi-jurisdictional ACL; or alternative wording, the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils will agree to use an overall ABC and an overall ACL.

What the IPT and the Gulf staff and me on the IPT; they are recommending using the first part of that is "manage yellowtail snapper as a single unit with an overall combined multi-jurisdictional annual catch limit." In terms of years, we wanted the most recent five years.

During the IPT meeting\, it was discussed; and we are going to use for the most recent five years, that is going to be 2009 through 2013. For the ten years, it is going to be 2004 through 2013. Those are the changes for Action 2. Are there any comments, questions?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I had a couple people kind of briefly say which one are we on? When I first looked at this – and I needed a little bit of help; and if you did this already I apologize, but if you could restate it. There are several Action 1's, there are several Action 2's, and there are restated things. Maybe if you could just –

MR. WAUGH: Yes, if you look at Page 12.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Right, the restated?

MR. WAUGH: That is correct.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: At the top of the page maybe you could explain why it is that we're looking at the actions with a header at the top that says "Restated action". It would clarify the record a little bit.

MR. WAUGH: Let's back up. You will see for this action what was presented to the Joint Committee meeting; this was originally Action 3. This was presented. The committee made several motions and so what we did was shortly after the meeting, similar to what we do with our motions, is restate those.

You should be looking at the restated action addressing the motions and guidance to staff. That applies to every action as we go through here. That is why I am telling you which page to look at for the restated version. Again for Action 2; that is on Page 12 of the document.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Just so I'm clear then, Gregg, when we're looking at Restated Action 2, which is on Page 12; if I flip back to Page 9; before the South Florida Committee when you met in South Florida, that was Action 3. Now Action 3 has been restated to be Action 2 that is on Page 12.

For example, if that is true then, on Page 13 Action 4 was the one before the committee in the Keys. That has been restated to be Action 3 that is on Page 14. The Restated Action follows the action that the committee had before when it met in Key West or wherever it met in South Florida?

MR. WAUGH: That is correct. Are there any more questions or comments on Action 2? The next item is Restated Action 3 on Page 14. This has to do with partial delegation of commercial and/or recreational management of mutton snapper to the state of Florida in federal waters adjacent to the state of Florida.

This is patterned after what we just did for yellowtail snapper, and now we're dealing with mutton snapper. The same sort of guidance has been requested in an upper and a lower bound; what exactly does minor modifications mean? Here pointing out that we just need to clarify within the document this action would delegate to the state of Florida to make some of these modifications, and yet we've got actions in 5 and 6 where we're talking about bag and trip limits for mutton snapper.

The way I've explained it to them on the IPT call, what we're doing is right now the joint committees and council know that they want to make some changes to the mutton snapper trip and bag limit; but then in the future it will be up to the state of Florida to look at that and develop that plan for making those changes.

MR. BOWEN: Maybe this is in regards to all the actions that we have. When we get into these joint amendment and we're talking about splitting up the ABCs and ACLs – because I was at the

Gulf meeting back in January and really tried to listen as much as I could and learn; they have three sectors over there that they divide their ABCs into. We only have two. How is that going to be divvied up? Can somebody explain that?

MR. WAUGH: Well, it varies. In some cases they only have one sector. In some cases for their ACLs, they don't separate commercial and recreational. I think by three sectors you are talking about where they have private recreational, for-hire and then commercial.

MR. BOWEN: That is correct.

MR. WAUGH: I don't know if that affects any of these species that we're dealing with here.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes; right now the only one that they've proposed to do that with is red snapper. That is in Amendment 40, which is in the secretarial review now; so that hasn't even been approved yet.

MR. BOWEN: That is what they were going over, so that is the reason I thought that.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes; we haven't done it anywhere except in red snapper. I don't think it affects anything in here at this point.

MS. McCAWLEY: Just to reiterate that same change that we made with yellowtail about how the state of Florida needs to submit a plan; I saw that was not in the e-mailed-around IPT version. Also in that e-mailed-around version there is, just like you described, Gregg, the IPT note that if you delegate, then there are additional actions later on that then I guess the state of Florida would consider. I don't know if you need to keep that second IPT note that is in that document or maybe that just clears it up. I just didn't want to delete the later actions just assuming that delegation would occur. I think that both sets of actions need to be in there.

MR. WAUGH: Right; and my intent would be we would give further clarification to the IPT as to why both actions are in there. Is there anything else on 3? Then we go to Restated Action 4, which is on Page 17. Again, there has been some editorial work done on the wording, nothing significant.

Just like they did for yellowtail snapper; we've talked about using the first part of Alternative 2; so that is what we would go forward with. Then the same thing for the time series, the five years would be 2009 through 2013. The ten years would be 2004 through 2013. Not hearing or seeing any questions, we'll move on to Restated 5, which is on Page 20.

Again, just minor editorial change to the wording of Action 5, inserting "modify", which is not an issue. This is where they point out there is some duplication, because you are talking about delegating bag limits earlier and yet you are proposing bag limits here. We'll clarify that for the IPT.

MS. McCAWLEY: I wanted to note that in Alternative 3, Option 3C, the words "within the aggregate" is missing from the first part of that. It is fixed in the e-mailed around, newer IPT version.

MR. WAUGH: Okay, we will make sure that stays in there. Moving on to Restated Action 6, this is on Page 22; again just inserting "modify" in front of "mutton", "modify mutton snapper"; some other minor editorial changes. Then the committees gave direction to staff and the IPT to add some new alternatives to look at different trip limits for hook and line and longline.

Those have been added. There will be a new Alternative 5 that looks at the handline sector and would set a commercial trip limit. Alternative 5A would be 10 fish per person per day and 5B would be some other trip limit. We will get guidance from the Gulf Council. If you have any suggestions for other than a 10 fish per person per day limit on the handline sector, it would be helpful to have that for the IPT to look at.

Alternative 6 that is added for the longline for a commercial trip limit; 5A would be 500 pounds whole weight; 5B some other trip limit. That bag limit and that trip limit have been chosen to approximate the percent reduction that is being achieved in the recreational sector on some of these other alternatives that we have up here. The IPT is still working on this document, so there may be some more subalternatives added there to make sure we have the range of percent reductions from these bag limits.

MS. BURGESS: The Action 6 that is in the document that everyone is looking at; Alternative 3 has specifications for a commercial trip limit of 2, 5, 10, and no bag or trip limit. In the new version that the Gulf Council has put out where they have Alternative 5 and 6 with commercial trip limits for handline sector and longline sector; at least for the handline sector I think they should have the same numbers as Alternative 3, so the 2, 5, 10 or no trip limit.

MR. WAUGH: I'll add that. Like I said, too, the IPT may add some more to make sure we've got that full range covered. Next is Restated Action 7 on Page 24. This deals with partial delegation of recreational management of black grouper. We've dealt with mutton and yellowtail and now we're dealing with black. Black grouper in the Gulf is a part of their ITQ program, so we're not talking about any partial delegation of commercial measures for that reason.

That is why you only see an Alternative 2 dealing with delegating recreational management measures. The IPT wants the same sorts of guidance on upper and lower bounds and what is minor, and they raise that same issue about potential duplication, which we will clarify for them. Next is Restated Action 8 on Page 28.

Again, some editorial changes to the wording of the action and some moving around and renumbering of actions just to make sure we're kept on our toes. What is shown here as Alternative 3. Again they've gone with the first part of that wording and deleted the second, which is what the IPT was asked to look at.

In Alternative 2C, again we're using 2009 through 2013 as five years and 2004 through 2013 as the ten years. There was some slight modification in the wording for Alternative 3, but I don't think that raises any issues. Moving on to Restated Action 9 on Page 32; this is to specify accountabilities. Here is where we have some significant issues. An old note to staff was kept in for Action 8, which needs to be removed.

There were some revisions made to Alternatives 3, 4 and 5, which changed Regional Administrator, put in NMFS, and removed some of the wording. I am going to have to get back with them on this, because these alternatives track what we have in our Generic AM Amendment. We can't change those words. If the IPT wants to insert some new options, they can certainly suggest that, but that is a significant change that we need to rectify.

MS. McCAWLEY: The other change I saw was on Alternative 5, the way it is listed in the PDF document that has Option 5A, if the species is overfished, and then it has the yellowtail, mutton and black listed underneath there as sub-options. Then Option 5B is regardless of stock status, and then it has the yellowtail, mutton and black listed as sub-options.

That is not how it is listed in the Gulf's document. It basically just created 5A through 5E, and just said if the species is overfished, regardless of stock status, and then it has the species listed out. I think that the species need to be sub-options under regardless of stock status and if the species is overfished, like it was before.

MR. WAUGH: On that one, we'll have two changes to send back to them to track the old wording for the AMs in 3, 4, and 5; and then within 5 to go back to the existing way the options and sub-options are organized. Next is Restated Action 10 on Page 36. Here there has been some editorial changes to how these lines and boundaries are described.

My quick read of it is that it doesn't change anything, but the way we had talked about it, for instance, at the committee meeting was it is the Miami/Dade is the name of the county, and that was changed back to Dade/Monroe. I believe the correct name for the county is Miami-Dade now, but we can check that.

MR. BREWER: The political unit is Miami-Dade, because the city of Miami essentially grew out until it would encompass almost all of Dade County; but it is still Dade County.

MR. WAUGH: Then the changes that they have proposed would show it as Dade/Monroe County line; so that is correct. I don't see any significant issues with the wording of the changes here. The one question was about Alternative 3, Option 3A. This is something that unfortunately just sort of slipped through the cracks down at the committee meeting that there was some question about whether there is still a Gulf shallow-water species composition group in the Gulf.

Florida had recommended deleting that based on a quote from Shepherd Grimes, who is their attorney, saying that they don't really have a shallow-water grouper complex. In the revised document, this is kept in there, Option 3A is an alternative. I think it would probably be better to let the Gulf sort that one out.

We are almost there. On Page 40 we've got Restated Action 11. Under Alternative 3, rather than showing January through March, the revised document deletes that option and you've got January, February, and March. If you wanted to have a closure for January through March, then you would pick all three as your preferred.

I don't know if you have any concerns about the clarity of that. It certainly doesn't change the substance of it. Then on Alternative 4, all of the options had been removed. I think we need to

keep – if we are going to go with just A, B, and C as January, February, and March, then we need to track it under Alternative 4 as well.

MR. HARTIG: For clarity to the public; if they look at this, basically they are going to look at January, February and March as one month. This is what you are considering. You are either January/March or one of those months. To me I think we would rather have it clearer that we're looking at an option that takes in more than just one month.

MR. WAUGH: You would want it to stay the way we have it shown here.

MR. HARTIG: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Okay; and then the same for Alternative 4. Although now looking at that, it appears that we don't need the options under that because that is just talking about black grouper, so that is okay. Then they renumbered the order of some of these others, which isn't significant. Next item is Restated Action 12 on Page 44.

The IPT recommends removing Alternative 5, stating that it is outside the scope of this amendment since it goes beyond Florida. We've got some other options in here that go beyond Florida as well. They have rewritten the wording for Alternative 6, and their suggestion is to make this action, Action 13.

MS. McCAWLEY: First, on whatever number they're calling it; in our PDF document it is Action 12, the changes to the circle hook requirement in Gulf and South Atlantic jurisdictional waters, where they are recommending removing Alternative 5, because they say it is out of the scope of this document, I guess I would argue leaving it in.

It is something that we've discussed here at our council. I know it was something that I think Zack brought up and we actually added it in. To me; yes, it is a little bit beyond the scope, but you are taking something that the South Florida Committee might create and then kind of fixing it all the way up the Atlantic. I would prefer leaving it in the document.

DR. DUVAL: Yes, I think I would as well. We have consistently said that the South Florida Group is looking at this. That was the place where our council at least wanted to address this. I agree with Jessica; it is a little beyond the scope, but I think if we're sort of all in agreement that we would like to be able – for the South Atlantic, if that is something we want to consider for the rest of our jurisdiction, we would like to be able to just do it in one fell swoop, I think.

MS. McCAWLEY: Also, it looks like they are recommending removing the action that in our document is Action 13, to harmonize size and bag limits off of Monroe County, Florida. I also think that needs to stay in the amendment. I think that they were saying this was also beyond the scope of this document, but I think it needs to stay in there.

DR. DUVAL: Yes; I would agree as well. This was actually an item that I specifically brought up pretty much right at the end where we had dealt with the species that were of most concern to the guys in the Keys, yellowtail snapper, black grouper; but the overarching concern was really having consistency on both sides of the bridge for the folks in this area. I think if we don't address the other species that are in that area, you are going to be left with the same kind of mess

all over again. I guess for now I would prefer to see it stay in. That was kind of the whole point was that they should have one clear set of regulations that span both council and state boundaries.

MR. BOWEN: I have agreement.

MR. BREWER: I will direct this to black grouper, and I guess it is action restated now Action 11. I know I am going back a little bit. If memory serves, we had a discussion about, number 1, the statement was made that you couldn't delegate the commercial sector and the management of the commercial sector to the state of Florida with regard to potential closures, because there is an IFQ or a federal IFQ plan in place.

We had a discussion as to whether or not, well, is that absolutely accurate, because can you have closures to protect spawners even if you have an IFQ, which supposedly you can fish anytime during the year that you want to? I thought we came to the conclusion that, no, wasn't really, truly absolutely necessary, and that was something that could be considered. I'm not saying that it would be done, but that it could be considered.

MR. WAUGH: Just to clarify for me; you are talking about that we had the ability to change the spawning season closure for black grouper on the commercial side; is that correct?

MS. McCAWLEY: Okay, I think I know what Chester is saying; so let me see if I can try here. What Chester is saying is he is kind of saying aside from Action 11, does the council have the ability to delegate to the state of Florida – it would basically be on the Gulf side – the ability for the state to actually have control over spawning season closures even though black grouper is in an IFQ program? I think that is what you are asking.

MR. BREWER: Exactly.

MR. WAUGH: My recollection was it wasn't so much that we couldn't do it; but there was a complexity of doing anything affecting the commercial sector because of the ITQ and the desire to – since you had that ITQ, to not delegate those types of actions to the state. That is my recollection.

DR. CRABTREE: I can't think of anything that would preclude you from doing that. I am pretty sure the Gulf Council wouldn't go there; but I can't think of anything that would prevent you from having a seasonal closure where they can't retain black grouper during some period of time.

MS. McCAWLEY: I think the way to ultimately accomplish what Chester is saying is if you go to Action 11 and look at Alternative 3 that says establish a recreational season closure for black grouper; you could add language that says that you would establish a recreational and commercial season closure for black grouper. You could, I think, add language to that and accomplish the same thing without having to go the delegation route.

DR. CRABTREE: You probably could. It just gets tricky because you've got longline fisheries that are targeting gag and red grouper. They are going to catch what are generally going to be

big black grouper. I suspect there is going to be a really high mortality rate of them if you tell them to throw them over the side; so a lot of concerns with it. but you could look at it.

MS. McCAWLEY: I would hope that when staff flushes out the document that it would have that information in it that Roy is talking about; that, yes, you could do it but it might be a bad idea.

MR. WAUGH: Is the desire there to modify Alternative 3 to also apply to commercial?

MS. McCAWLEY: I think so.

MR. WAUGH: Okay. One other question about that; given that there is this concern on the Gulf side, would it be better to do it as a separate alternative?

MS. McCAWLEY: That's fine.

MR. BREWER: Yes, because they are going to shoot it down, anyway, but let's leave it in to placate sort of some of the recreational folks.

MR. WAUGH: Okay, Mr. Chairman, that is all the changes we had. Again, what I'll do is I will do up a list of what direction to staff you gave us here and include that with the Executive Finance Committee Report. Then you will have a chance to look it over for full council and then approve it at full council. Will that work?

MR. HARTIG: Thanks, Gregg; I appreciate that.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: As many of you are aware, Shepherd Grimes from my office advises this committee. He and I were discussing the document and the number of actions in it. The way it was set out is by each species; instead of we were thinking a better way to set it out would be have the actions according to the basic management approach that you were considering.

Then you could consider the tradeoffs. It might be easier for the reader, so it would focus more on the concept for single ACLs or the creation of a Florida subzone or partial delegation to Florida. Then it would discuss – Jessica's hand is already up; and I haven't even finished yet. It is more of a concept approach as opposed to for mutton snapper we're going to consider these things and then for yellowtail these kinds of things.

It is more a focus on just what do you want to do with this for the species overall; and so maybe we could have some discussion about that. You would, for example, instead of discussing delegation in several different places in the document; you would have one action that would discuss delegation and whether it was appropriate for certain species, and then you could choose those species.

MS. McCAWLEY: At the first meeting that we had, where Shep wasn't present – I believe Monica was there at our first meeting – the document was organized in the way that Monica is describing, and it was way too cumbersome for the committee to try to go through the document to try to talk about the different actions. After spending many hours wrestling with the document in that format, both the committees decided that it needed to be organized by species.

That was easier for us to work through the actions and that ultimately it was likely going to be easier for the public to look through the document and understand what we were trying to do. It was organized like that previously, and the committees made a decision that it was easier for them to move through the document with it organized by species.

MR. HARTIG: Thanks, both of you. CCC meeting; Michelle, I couldn't be there for the first day. Do you have anything that stuck out in your mind during listening to that you would like to bring before the council? I know I am putting you on the spot here. I'll let Bob do it.

MR. MAHOOD: It was kind of a tough one. It was kind of an ironic meeting. Actually, the meeting was starting the day after the closure of Washington due to the snowstorms. Myself and Ben, who had flights, they were canceled; and we weren't going to be able to get there until the last day of the meeting. We opted not to do that. Roy Williams, I believe; I'm not sure where you were flying from, but he couldn't make it.

MR. WILLIAMS: I could get to Charlotte, but no further.

MR. MAHOOD: He was coming from Florida. There were two fellows from New England that couldn't make it. All of the West Coast and Pacific folks were there a day ahead of time, so they were all there. The government was open that day at the start of the meeting, and so they did go ahead with the meeting. They webinared us in, but the connection was just not very good.

We could hear some of what was going on. Michelle made a presentation on our behalf and did a good job. But other than finding out about our budget, there wasn't a whole lot of meat to the proceedings. That is my take on it. Michelle might have something else.

DR. DUVAL: I guess maybe the one thing was we did have some congressional staffers who came in and talked about Magnuson Reauthorization, which was I think alternately maybe entertaining only because I was listening to it on the phone. I think the major concerns that the councils had was are we going to have to start from ground zero with all the testimony and everything that we submitted previously?

It sounded like no; that information was all available to everybody, so they would continue to have that; but if there are additional thoughts, that we could certainly submit those. It didn't sound like anything was necessarily going to be getting off the ground right away from what I recall.

That is too many meetings in one damned month. I might have to wait for the final report to come out. I think probably the only other thing I would update folks on is that I was asked to sort of finish off the really good work that was started by John Henderschedt from the North Pacific Council.

He is actually leaving to take a position with the Fisheries Service, and so he chaired our Allocation Workgroup. There were really kind of three of us, three or four of us that worked on different components of our Allocation Workgroup Paper in conjunction with the Fisheries Service staff. I think we have a really good start on that. The plan is for that to be finished for our June CCC meeting. I guess I need to get started on that when we finish up here.

It is good timing, because that document will be available for us to refer to as we move down the road towards discussing allocations. There were two pieces. What the CCC was working on was really what are criteria that you would use to trigger an allocation review. There are different sets of criteria you could use; time-based criteria, public interest-based criteria.

Then the piece that I worked on were indicator-based criteria, those indicators being like biological, social, and economic. Then the piece that the headquarter staff was working on was really what is the suite of factors that you would want to consider in that review. Stay tuned, it is moving along. That's it.

MR. HAYMANS: With regard to the Magnuson discussion; was there anybody there from NMFS that was looking at the proposed revisions to the Guidelines for National Standards?

DR. DUVAL: Oh, yes; that was another thing was we got a presentation on the proposed revisions to the National Standard Guidelines. Unfortunately, those are due I think; is it June?

MS. McCAWLEY: I think they are due by June 30th.

DR. DUVAL: Is it that late? Monica, do you know? I thought it was March 23rd that they wanted –

MR. MAHOOD: I think it is June, because we are going to try to have a presentation at our June meeting.

MR. HAYMANS: For federal consistency, our federal consistency comments were due March 20th. We submitted ours on the 20th of February, a month ahead; but for consistency.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: The revision to which guideline?

MS. DUVAL: The ones that are out.

MR. HAYMANS: One, three and seven. This was a January 20 letter from Wesley Patrick.

DR. DUVAL: I think some of the things in there that our council will probably be interested in with regard to the National Standard 1 Guidelines was some of the flexibility aspect. I am thinking of – maybe John Carmichael can help me here, because I know I sent him the presentation that we received at the CCC; but looking at things like sort of a phase in ABC Control Rule where once you get an assessment; instead of just dramatically changing your ABCs, you could sort of average those ABCs and phase them in.

Instead of going down, down, down, you would have more of a gradual increase or decrease from one year to the next. I can send that presentation to Mike and he can send it around to everybody. That might help folks. Of course, if Doug is already a superstar and has sent in his comments on the guidelines, it might not help.

MR. HAYMANS: The question I had for our marriage attorney over there earlier – I think it was Monday or Tuesday – we were really curious as to why NMFS is looking at revising their guidelines now right in the face of reauthorization and changes to perhaps Magnuson and the

overall guidelines. I know that you three not being there, you weren't privy to the afterhours conversations; but I wonder if anybody else sort of felt that way or not.

MS. McCAWLEY: I was actually at a meeting with Eileen Sobeck where this discussion came up. This was at the Guy Harvey Symposium that was in November of last year. Somebody from the audience asked that exact same question. I believe her response was that they were hoping that less changes were going to be needed in Magnuson if they could make these changes that they felt were needed to the National Standard. That was the response that she gave at that meeting.

MR. HAYMANS: It would have been very nice five years ago to know that we have a little more flexibility in the guidelines than we were being presented five years ago.

MR. MAHOOD: Some of the discussion at the last couple CCC meetings have been, well, there are a number of things that we don't really need to comment and change in the National Standard 1 Guidelines because NMFS could take care of it by policy. I think Eileen might have heard some of that and she might be moving ahead with that. Hopefully, anyway, there is no need to change the Magnuson Act if NMFS has the ability to go in and make some changes to National Standard 1s.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Doug, do you know divorce attorneys don't always get all the information up front from their clients, so that is why I couldn't answer our question before.

DR. McGOVERN: I was just going to point out the comments are due on June 30th. I talked to Wes Patrick, and he said he would be happy to give a presentation to the council and/or the SSC, whatever you want.

MR. MAHOOD: We had talked about doing it at this meeting, but we just didn't have the time to work it in.

MR. HARTIG: Well, if that completes discussion of the CCC meeting; that brings us to staff health and insurance update.

MR. MAHOOD: As you all recall at the last Personnel Committee meeting, I briefed you a little bit about some of the things that we have been looking into relative to two items; one, reducing the health insurance cost for the staff; and number two, looking at a scenario where when somebody leaves the staff; that there may be a benefit that helps them in their retirement with health insurance.

Mike, I think it was last Friday, sent around just a rough table I put together that shows you some of the possible savings. The savings we are looking at is not creating – we don't have the ability with the type of policies we have and the small number of people of the staff member maintaining their insurance after they leave. The only thing that we have been able to come up with is we've looked at Medicare.

Once you become 66, you're eligible for Medicare. In the case of one of the employees, he is ex-military, it is Tri-Care. If you look at that table Mike sent around, you will see that we are in

the process of doing some of this right now. As a matter of fact, the Tricare person has already gone on Tricare.

The council is picking up the supplement and the annual savings is \$25,000 for the council, almost \$26,000.00. We have one staff that is in the process of switching over to Medicare with the council picking up the Medicare supplement, and the savings to the council is almost \$9,000 a year.

Then we have another old guy that is looking at switching over to Medicare. When you look at your table, it says family. By the time you get to be 66, your family is your spouse if you have one; or else you're single, one of the two. The savings under the family Medicare, going on Medicare with the council picking up the supplement is about \$20,000 a year.

Probably by the end of this year, three folks will have switched over at a savings to the council of over \$54,000. We're looking at that now. There are a lot of nuances to a situation like this and when you would want to leave the council healthcare system, which right now is United Health Care.

Now, what benefit could the staff that is going on Medicare get out of this? If you look at the second half of the table on the right, you will see what the costs are if the council was to pick up part of the costs of the retired persons' Medicare or Tri-Care. It is laid out there, and this is a substantial savings to the council over time.

In the case of the Tricare person on our staff, over the next five years it will save the council almost \$127,000 by being on Tricare; our Medicare family, \$100,000 over the next five years. Then it shows the annual cost for the Tricare situation is about \$2,200. For single it is about \$3,500 and for family or the employee and their spouse it will be about \$7,000.

That would help a lot for a person retiring even though that is a large amount of money and the liability; but the council half would be fairly minimal. Now Charlie pointed out to me, being the astute businessman he is, what if the guy lives to be 100? That is why part of this is a benefit. It could be where it is not a cost savings in the long run to the council; but part of that is a benefit to the employee.

Mike and I are working on this. We are going to come back – if the council agrees that I should continue with this, come back with a significant proposal at the June council meeting, and we can sit down and look at it. I wanted you to have this information to look at now that we have some hard numbers. We've been working with some of the Medicare people, and we understand more what the costs are and the benefits are. Mr. Chairman, unless somebody has a specific question at this point, we'll come back in June.

MR. HARTIG: Any questions about Bob's presentation? Seeing none; we'll move on. The last item I have is address other issues as appropriate. Wilson.

DR. LANEY: Roger and Doug and I had a little meeting of the minds at lunch today and thought we would bring to you a suggestion for your consideration; and that would be to consider combining the Ecosystem-Based Management Committee and the Habitat and Environmental Protection Committee. If you will note, the membership rosters for those two

committees, there is almost total and complete overlap in that most of the same people are on both of them.

The differences being that Dr. Duval and Jessica McCawley are on the Ecosystem-Based Management and not on Habitat; and Lieutenant Fowler is on Habitat but not on Ecosystem-Based Management. If we combine those two, the only difference would be that basically Morgan would be moving to Ecosystem-Based Management to join everybody else.

Just as a matter of homework, I took a look at our other neighboring councils to see how they were set up and just throw that out for your information. The Mid-Atlantic just has one committee, an Ecosystems and Ocean Planning Committee, which is under their functional committees.

New England has two; they have Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management Committee and a Habitat Committee. The Gulf of Mexico has four. They have an Ecosystem SSC Committee – I'm sorry that is an SSC Committee, but then they have four regular council committees, Habitat Protection, which is under their admin committee list; and then they have three that are under their management committees' list, which are Sustainable Fisheries/Ecosystem, Marine Reserves and Coral, all of which obviously have something to do with habitat.

We thought we would toss that out there for some discussion. One suggestion Doug had was if we do merge the two committees; that we could have co-chairs and since Doug is a voting member, he could be basically the administrative chair of the committee and I could continue to serve as a technical chair of the committee.

If that is something that the council wishes to consider, we just throw that out there for consideration. One other fact is that we have been meeting jointly most of the time, anyway, lately to talk about different things. I'll throw that out there and Doug may want to add something or Roger, either one.

DR. DUVAL: I move to combine the Ecosystem-Based Management and Habitat Committees into the Ecosystem and Habitat Protection Committee.

MR. HARTIG: Seconded by Charlie. We're still working on the new name. Can you read it? .

DR. DUVAL: The motion is to combine the Ecosystem-Based and Habitat Committees into one Ecosystem and Habitat Protection Committee.

MR. BREWER: Could you add the word "and enhancement", "Protection and Enhancement Committee"; artificial reefs.

MR. HAYMANS: Well, the enhancement, right now it is only one policy statement within Habitat, and it is not something that the committees other than the policy statement has tackled. I just think Habitat and Ecosystem Committee is fine.

MR. BREWER: Mel, I'm trying.

MR. BELL: I know you are; I appreciate it.

DR. LANEY: Just as a point of clarification; the membership would remain the same with the exception of Lieutenant Fowler moving on to the – well, we'd just combined it all so that means everybody that is on those two committees would be on the new committee.

MR. HARTIG: Which is only the difference of one member, so it is not a big change. We've got a motion and a second. Discussion?

DR. DUVAL: The motion reads to combine the Ecosystem-Based and Habitat Committees into one Ecosystem and Habitat Protection Committee.

MR. HARTIG: Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none; that motion is approved. There was also a group who talked about citizen science cooperative research in tandem. One of things that came out of that is the council interested in putting together a workgroup to investigate a possible formation of a Citizen Science AP in the future, which would bring the council into the process and bring science into the process. Everybody would be involved to possibly set some guidelines as we go forward in how that works.

We'll bring a bunch of people together, not a bunch, but we'll bring the people who need to be brought together into this workgroup to discuss this and science – a clearinghouse on how fishermen in the process can get involved and almost a better practices for moving ahead with how we're going to do citizen science cooperative research.

Now they are going to be kind of separate in a way. They are going to be connected but separate, the citizen science and cooperative research, because we see value in each solving different problems in data collection that we have. I probably should have done this at full council, thinking about it now.

Think about it and we'll come back to you in full council with this recommendation. We're not going to vote on it now, because I want you to think about it. We'll bring it back to you in full council; but this is what we're thinking. We'll probably have it flushed out a little bit more about what exactly this workgroup would do at full council, so I can give you a little bit better idea. That is just our general thinking right now.

MR. MAHOOD: An ad hoc committee or a workgroup?

MR. HARTIG: I think a workgroup. I don't know; we need to talk to Bob about what is the best venue for moving forward. We will do that and come back to you at full council. All right, is there any other business to come before the Executive Finance Committee? Seeing none; this committee is adjourned.

(Whereupon. the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 o'clock p.m., March 5, 2015.)

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₩.	Wheatley, Thomas	tomwheatley24@gmail	Mar 05, 2015	3:57 PM EST
Ø	kloster, joseph	grkjfk@omcast.net	Mar 05, 2015	3:44 PM EST
3	Hanson, Chad	chanson@pewtrusts.org	Mar 05, 2015	3:38 PM EST
Z	Hildreth, Delaine	delaine_hildreth@gad	Mar 05, 2015	3:33 PM EST
Z	Knowiton, Kathy	kathy.knowlton@gadnr	Mar 05, 2015	2:36 PM EST
☑	gregory, doug	doug.gregory@gulfcou	Mar 05, 2015	2:28 PM EST
Ø	Brennan, Ken	kenneth.brennan@noaa	Mar 05, 2015	1:42 PM EST
₹	Clarke, Lora	lclarke@pewtrusts.org	Mar 05, 2015	1:38 PM EST
✓	Malinowski, Rich	rich.malinowski@noaa	Mar 05, 2015	1:30 PM EST
[2]	Larkin, Michael	Michael.Larkin@noaa	Mar 05, 2015	1:20 PM EST
	Brogan, Gib	gbrogan@oceana.org	Mar 05, 2015	12:41 PM EST
Z	Williams, John	john@shrimpalliance	Mar 05, 2015	11:18 AM EST
Z	cardin, bobby	finchaser357@aol.com	Mar 05, 2015	10:57 AM EST
Z	hull, jimmy	hullsseafoos@aol.com	Mar 05, 2015	10:20 AM EST
Z	Lee, Jennifer	Jennifer.Lee@noaa.gov	Mar 05, 2015	10:10 AM EST
☑	Gore, Karla	karla.gore@noaa.gov	Mar 05, 2015	10:05 AM EST
☑	rindone, ryan	ryan.rindone@gulfcou	Mar 05, 2015	9:27 AM EST
Ø	Alvarado, Nicolas	Nicolas. Aivarado@noa	Mar 05, 2015	9:22 AM EST
✓	Takade, Helen	htakade@edf.org	Mar 05, 2015	9:17 AM EST
Ø	Bubley, Walter	bubleyw@dnr.sc.gov	Mar 05, 2015	9:00 AM EST

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	Registrants	Email Address	Registration Date	Time
Ø	DeVictor, Rick	rick.devictor@noaa.g	Mar 05, 2015	9:00 AM EST
I	Bailey, Adam	adam.bailey@noaa.gov	Mar 05, 2015	8:59 AM EST
₽	Package, Christina	christina.package-wa	Mar 05, 2015	8:58 AM EST
Ø	Lamberte, Tony	tony.lamberte@noaa.g	Mar 05, 2015	8:38 AM EST
Ø	Neer, Julie	julie.neer@safmc.net	Mar 05, 2015	8:33 AM EST
Ø	Ballenger, Joseph	ballengerj@dnr.sc.gov	Mar 05, 2015	8:25 AM EST
Ø	Bresnen, Anthony	anthony.bresnen@myfw,	Mar 05, 2015	8:22 AM EST
☑	c, m	mec181@yahoo.com	Mar 05, 2015	8:19 AM EST
Ø	Gerhart, Susan	susan.gerhart@noaa.g.,,	Mar 05, 2015	8:18 AM EST
Ø	Bademan, Martha	martha.bademan@myfwc	Mar 05, 2015	8:18 AM EST
₩	holiman, stephen	stephen.holiman@noaa	Mar 05, 2015	8:17 AM EST
Ø	Erwin, Gwen	gwen.erwin@myfwc.com	Mar 05, 2015	8:04 AM EST
Ø	Raine, Karen	karen.raine@noaa.gov	Mar 05, 2015	7:58 AM EST
Ø	Laks , Ira	captainira@att.net	Mar 05, 2015	7:35 AM EST
✓	MacLauc, Bill	billmac@charter.net	Mar 04, 2015	10:04 PM EST
Ø	DuBeck, Guy	guy.dubeck@noaa.gov	Mar 04, 2015	2:43 PM EST
Ø	vara, mary	mary.vara@noaa.gov	Mar 04, 2015	10:10 AM EST
∡	Karp, Fran	francine.karp@gmail	Mar 03, 2015	1:27 PM EST
Z	Foreman, Allan	acforeman1@hotmail.c	Feb 26, 2015	12:49 PM EST
Ø	Binns, Joe	joebinns@gmail.com	Feb 23, 2015	2:46 PM EST

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	Registrants	Email Address	Registration Date	Time
☑	Herndon, Andrew	andrew.herndon@noaa	Feb 13, 2015	8:16 AM EST
₩.	Byrd, J	julia.byrd@safmc.net	Feb 12, 2015	10:05 AM EST
✓	FARMER, NICK	nick.farmer@noaa.gov	Feb 11, 2015	12:39 PM EST
Z	Mehta, Nikhil	nikhil.mehta@noaa.gov	Feb 11, 2015	11:54 AM EST
Ø	sandorf, scott	scott.sandorf@noaa.g	Feb 11, 2015	11:48 AM EST
₹	Clemens, Anik	anik.clemens@noaa.gov	Feb 11, 2015	11:47 AM EST
				_

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