



# SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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

## AGENDA Full Council Session I

Villas by the Sea  
1175 Beachview Drive N.  
Jekyll Island, GA

### Monday, March 3, 2025, 2:30 pm to 5:00 pm

- Call to order and introductions
  - Adoption of agenda
  - Approval of minutes (December 2024)
  - Litigation Brief
1. Reports (2:30 pm – 4:00 pm)
    - a. Law Enforcement Advisory Panel (AP) report on items not on the agenda – Capt. Scott Pearce, AP Chair (*Law Enforcement AP Report*)
    - b. Council liaisons
      - i. Gen. Joe Spraggins, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (*Attachment 1a*)
      - ii. Sonny Gwinn, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC)
    - c. State agency reports
    - d. Staff report (*Attachment 1b*)

--- Break ---

- e. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), Southeast Regional Office (SERO)
    - i. Protected Resources Update (*Attachment 1c*)
  - f. NMFS Southeast Fisheries Science Center
2. MAFMC Recreational Reform Initiative (4:00 pm – 5:00 pm)
    - a. Presentation (*Attachment 2*) – Julia Beaty, MAFMC Staff

### Tuesday, March 4, 2025, 8:30 am – 12:00 noon

3. For-Hire Electronic Reporting Improvement Amendment (8:30 am – 11:00 am)
  - a. For-Hire Reporting AP feedback (*Attachment 3a*) – Bob Zales II, AP Chair

- b. Law Enforcement AP feedback – (Law Enforcement AP Report) – Capt. Scott Pearce, AP Chair
- c. SERO presentation (*Attachment 3b*) – TBD, NMFS SERO

--- Break ---

- d. Overview of potential actions and alternatives (*Attachment 3c*)
- 4. Dolphin Wahoo AP’s Spring 2025 Meeting (11:00 am – 11:15 am)
  - a. Topics for AP agenda (*Attachment 4*)
- 5. Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (11:15 am – 12:00 noon)
  - a. Presentation (*Attachment 5*) – Beth Dieveney, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

--- Lunch ---

**Tuesday, March 4, 2025, 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm**

- 6. Climate Readiness Projects Discussion (1:30 pm – 3:00 pm)
  - a. Projects Overview (*Attachment 6a*) – Lara Klibansky, Climate Readiness Projects Coordinator

--- Break ---

- b. Climate and Ecosystem Fisheries Initiative (CEFI) Presentation (*Attachment 6b*) – Holden Harris, NMFS

**Attachments:**

• **Law Enforcement AP report**

**Attachment 1a:** Gulf Council Liaison Report

**Attachment 1b:** Staff Report

**Attachment 1c:** Protected Resources Update

**Attachment 2:** Recreational Reform Initiative Presentation

**Attachment 3a:** For-Hire Reporting AP Report

**Attachment 3b:** Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting Presentation

**Attachment 3c:** For-Hire Reporting Amendment Decision Document

**Attachment 3d:** For-Hire Atlantic 2-pager (NOAA OST)

**Attachment 4:** Agenda topics for Spring 2025 Dolphin Wahoo AP meeting

**Attachment 5:** Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Fisheries Protocol Presentation

**Attachment 6a:** Climate Readiness Projects Overview

**Attachment 6b:** CEFI Presentation

**Staff Lead:** John Carmichael ([john.carmichael@safmc.net](mailto:john.carmichael@safmc.net))

# OVERVIEW

## Full Council Session I

1. **Reports (*Attachments 1a-1c*)**

**Description:** Representatives and staff will provide reports to the Council.

**Council Action:** None

2. **Recreational Reform Initiative (*Attachment 2*)**

**Description:** The Recreational Reform Initiative is an effort of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Mid-Atlantic Council) and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) to improve management of the recreational fisheries for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish.

The goals of the initiative are to (1) provide stability in the recreational bag, size, and season limits, (2) develop strategies to increase management flexibility, and (3) achieve accessibility aligned with availability/stock status for all four species.

This initiative aims to address a range of recreational management challenges, including widespread angler dissatisfaction with some recreational management measures, stakeholder perceptions that measures are not reflective of stock status, and concerns about how Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) data are used to manage these fisheries.

**Council Action:** None

3. **For-Hire Electronic Reporting Improvement Amendment (*Law Enforcement AP Report, Attachments 3a-3d*)**

**Description:** The newly assembled Ad Hoc For-Hire Reporting Advisory Panel (FHR AP) met via webinar on January 29, 2025, to discuss and provide feedback on preliminary modifications to the current reporting requirements. Vessels with federal permits issued through the Southeast Regional Office for species managed under the Snapper Grouper, Dolphin Wahoo, and Coastal Migratory Pelagics Fishery Management Plans are currently required to report through the Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting (SEFHIER) Program or the Southeast Headboat Survey. Bob Zales II, Chair of the FHR AP, will deliver the AP's feedback (**Attachment 3a**). The Council also requested feedback from the Law Enforcement AP (LE AP), which met via webinar on February 5, 2025. Capt. Scott Pearce, chair of the LE AP, will provide the AP's feedback (**Law Enforcement AP Report**).

In December 2024, the Council approved a detailed information request from the SEFHIER Program to better understand the utility of the data collected through that program since its inception in 2021. SEFHIER Program staff will present the results of this request to the Council (**Attachment 3b**).

Additionally, the Interdisciplinary Plan Team (IPT) for the comprehensive amendment under development met for the first time in January 2025. The IPT discussed the draft purpose and need and preliminary actions and alternatives. Staff will provide an

overview of the IPTs feedback (**Attachment 3c**). A two-pager issued by NOAA's Office of Science and Technology summarizing the various U.S. Atlantic for-hire data collection programs is also included for reference (**Attachment 3d**).

**Council Action:** Modify the purpose and need and the actions and alternatives. Consider approving for public scoping.

4. **Agenda topics for Spring 2025 Dolphin Wahoo AP meeting (*Attachment 4*)**

**Description:** The Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel (AP) is scheduled to meet in Charleston, SC from April 22-23, 2025. The Council will be asked to review a draft list of agenda topics and modify the list as needed.

**Council Action:** Review the proposed list of Dolphin Wahoo AP agenda topics and modify as needed.

5. **Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Fisheries Protocol (*Attachment 5*)**

**Description:** The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary (FKNMS) has been working with its Sanctuary Advisory Council, state and federal agency partners, including the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils, and the community for over a decade to comprehensively review and update the sanctuary management plan and regulations including the sanctuary boundary and marine zones. This review and associated documents is referred to as the Restoration Blueprint.

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) has been involved in this process since the beginning, however formal engagement began with the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement in 2019. At this time, the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries initiated the 304(a)(5) process, outlined in the National Marine Sanctuaries Act.

Informed by extensive public and agency comment, including from the SAFMC, NOAA has developed a final environmental impact statement (published December 13, 2024) and final rule released January 17, 2025. The final rule will take effect following a review by the Governor of Florida, beginning on the date of publication, for 45 days of continuous session of Congress.

The Restoration Blueprint process also includes review and update of several cooperative management agreements with the State of Florida. One of these agreements, the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for coordination of fishing regulations within FKNMS, also includes the National Marine Fisheries Service and the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Councils as signatories.

FKNMS staff will provide an update on the status of the Restoration Blueprint and relevant components of interest to the SAFMC.

For more details and to learn more, please visit <https://floridakeys.noaa.gov/blueprint/>. The final environmental impact statement, link to the final rule, and other relevant documents can be accessed under the Phase V button on that page.

**Council Action:** None

6. **Climate Readiness Projects Discussion (*Attachments 6a and 6b*)**

**Description:** The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has provided funding to support Council efforts to develop and advance climate ready fisheries management. These presentations will provide background information and updates on the Council's Climate Readiness Projects and an overview of NOAA's Climate, Ecosystem, Fisheries Initiative. The Council Climate Readiness Project presentation will review various Resilient Fisheries Initiatives, ongoing collaborations with East Coast and Southeast Regional management partners and provide an update on the four Council Climate Readiness Projects. The Climate, Ecosystem, Fisheries Initiative (CEFI) presentation will provide an overview of the initiative and provide information on the demonstration projects currently underway.

**Council Action:** None.