



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, North Charleston SC 29405

Call: (843) 571-4366 | Toll-Free: (866) SAFMC-10 | Fax: (843) 769-4520 | Connect: www.safmc.net

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

AGENDA

Full Council Session I

Drury Plaza Hotel North Charleston
2934 West Montague
North Charleston, SC 29418

Monday, September 14, 2026, 1:30 pm – 5:00 pm

1:30 pm to 3:00 pm

- Call to order and introductions
- Oath for new Council members
- Law Enforcement of the Year 2025 Award presentation
- Adoption of agenda
- Approval of minutes (June 2026)
- Litigation brief (if needed)

Reports

- State agencies
 1. Council liaisons
 - a. Mid-Atlantic Council (*Attachment 1a*) – Anna Beckwith
 - b. Gulf Council (*Attachment 1b*) – Kevin Anson
 2. Staff (*Attachment 2*)
 3. Executive Order 14276 Update (*Attachment 3*)
 4. Shrimp Workgroup (*Attachment 4*)

– Break –

3:15 pm to 5:00 pm

5. NMFS Southeast Regional Office (SERO) and Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC)
 - a. Use of Discards in Management Presentation (*Attachment 5a*)
 - b. Protected Resources (*Attachment 5b*)
6. Unmanaged species landings presentation (*Attachment 6*)
7. Resilient Fisheries projects (*Attachments 7a-7d*) – Lara Klibansky, SAFMC Contractor
8. Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP) Scoping Presentation (*Attachment 8*)
9. Species Outside SAFMC Jurisdiction
 - International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas
 - Highly Migratory Species (*Attachment 9*)

- Take Reduction Teams

Attachments:

Attachment 1a: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council Report

Attachment 1b: Gulf Council Report

Attachment 2: Staff Report

Attachment 3: Letter to SAFMC regarding EO14276

Attachment 4: Shrimp Workgroup Report

Attachment 5a: Use of Discards in Management Presentation

Attachment 5b: Protected Resources Report

Attachment 6: Presentation on unmanaged species landings (*available on 9/9*)

Attachment 7a: Resilient Fisheries Initiative Update Presentation

Attachment 7b: SAFMC Ecosystem Data Workshop Report

Attachment 7c: East Coast Fisheries Governance Workshops Overview

Attachment 7d: East Coast Staff-to-Staff Governance Workshop Report

Attachment 8: ALWTRP Scoping Presentation (*available on 9/9*)

Attachment 9: HMS Proposed Revisions to Fishing Gear Regulations

Staff Lead: John Carmichael (john.carmichael@safmc.net)

OVERVIEW

Full Council Session I

The Council will approve the minutes from the June 2026 meeting and the agenda for the September 2026 meeting.

[June 2026 Full Council I Report](#)

Reports

Representatives and staff will provide various updates to the Council. Below is additional information on selected reports.

Update on Executive Order 14276 (Attachment 3)

Attachment 3 is a letter from Eugenio Pineiro Soler, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries, regarding the SAFMC's proposed approach to addressing Executive Order 14276: Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness. The letter commends the Council for submitting a detailed action plan for addressing the EO and for extensive stakeholder engagement on the topic. The letter specifically encourages the Council to continue work on Snapper Grouper Amendment 61 to evaluate the species that continue to require federal conservation and management, and efforts through Snapper Grouper Amendment 60 to optimize the use of SG1 permits. The letter also urges the Council to continue to support state-led Exempted Fishing Permit applications and to explore ways to address shark depredation, perhaps through advancing policies, including the deployment of non-lethal acoustic and visual deterrents.

Use of Discards in Management Presentation (Attachment 5a)

At their March 2026 meeting, the Council requested the SEFSC provide information on how observer, logbook, and reporting programs are used to generate discard estimates for commercial and for-hire fisheries; how discard estimates are used in stock assessments and applied in projections; how approaches to quantify discards differ between South Atlantic and Gulf regions; and how other regions collect, analyze, and use discard data, in catch specification. SEFSC staff will present on their findings associated with the request.

Unmanaged Species Landings Presentation (Attachment 6)

At their March 2026 meeting, the Council requested staff develop a report on commercial landings of unmanaged and ecosystem component species similar to the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Unmanaged Landings Report. The South Atlantic report includes non-confidential landings of unmanaged and ecosystem species in the South Atlantic region, as well as landings of Council managed species in the Mid-Atlantic and New England regions. Landings from south Florida (Monroe County) are not included in the current version of the report.

Staff will present the new report and ask for input on the overall format and organization of the document, as well as input on additional information that would be useful to include in future versions.

Resilient Fisheries Initiative Updates (*Attachments 7a-7d*)

In 2024, the Council received funding for its Resilient Fisheries Initiative, which supports projects and collaborative workshops addressing management challenges driven by ecosystem change. This presentation (*Attachment 7a*) will provide a progress update on the Initiative's four projects, summarize guidance from the Council's Ecosystem Data Workshop (*Attachment 7b*), and review East Coast Governance collaboration efforts (*Attachment 7c*), including outcomes from the recent Staff-to-Staff Workshop (*Attachment 7d*) and planning for the early 2027 Governance Workshop. The presentation will primarily focus on the Governance Workshop items and includes a request for high-level Council feedback to guide the Council's Steering Committee member and leadership as they work with partner organizations to shape the Workshop focus and agenda.

Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Scoping Presentation (*Attachment 8*)

On August 14, NOAA Fisheries announced a scoping period for the next phase in developing and analyzing recommendations that may result in proposed modifications to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP). This is the next phase in the process to comply with Congress's direction that the agency issue new regulations for the American lobster and Jonah crab fisheries that are consistent with the Marine Mammal Protection Act and Endangered Species Act. The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 mandates that new regulations must be in place by December 31, 2028.

The agency is asking for ideas and suggestions regarding any amendments to the ALWTRP, and information on the impact of all existing and innovative U.S. commercial gear used in the American lobster and Jonah crab fisheries on North Atlantic right whales along the U.S. East Coast. Comments from the scoping period will inform discussions during the upcoming 2026 and 2027 Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team meetings, and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis of a 2028 ALWTRP amendment.

The Notice of Intent to prepare an environmental analysis in the Federal Register can be accessed [here](#). A 60-day public scoping comment period began on August 17, 2026. This is not a notice of proposed rulemaking. Rather, it requests public input on the scope of the regulations. It also provides notice that the upcoming NEPA analysis of ALWTRP modifications will consider all U.S. commercial fixed-gear fisheries regulated under the ALWTRP.

Highly Migratory Species Division's Proposed Revisions to Fishing Gear Regulations (*Attachment 9*)

NOAA Fisheries recently released a proposed rule on potential revisions to Atlantic highly migratory species (HMS) fishing gear regulations, described below, which may be of interest to the Council and its stakeholders. The proposed rule (*Attachment 9*), related documents, and information about public webinars are available [here](#). The comment period will end on October 13, 2026.

NOAA Fisheries is proposing regulatory revisions to fishing gear requirements in fisheries targeting HMS to increase flexibility and remove inefficiencies, thus increasing fishing opportunities and the ability of HMS fisheries to achieve optimum yield. NOAA Fisheries is proposing to make the changes below:

Buoy gear

- Authorize power assistance for gear deployment and retrieval
- Authorize buoy gear under additional permits (Swordfish General Commercial permit; some tunas and shark permits)
- Authorize the retention of additional species with buoy gear (some tunas and sharks)

Speargun fishing gear

- Authorize this gear to retain and sell bigeye, albacore, yellowfin, and skipjack tunas under some commercial permits

Bait collection gear

- Allow the possession and use of small nets and other gear commonly used for bait collection (e.g., cast nets and small dipnets) on board HMS fishing vessels, provided the gear is too small and/or too weak to capture HMS

To inform constituents about the proposed rule measures, two public webinars will be held on August 31, and October 1, 2026, each from 1 to 3 pm ET.