

## **SAFMC Staff Report December 2023**

### **Website and Digital Communications Updates**

- Archived all SSC Briefing Books dating back to 2010 and working on AP BBs.
- Website development; SAFMC acronyms, dedicated advisory panel pages, FISHstory page updates, SMILE project page, seminar series archive page.
- Improved Advisory Panel application process using Google Forms.
- “What It Means To Me” project development, filming, and editing.
- Developed the public comment advertisement flyer.
- Continued general website maintenance.
- Continued public comment upkeep.
- Continued social media management.
- Continued FishRules updates and management.

### **Marine Resources Education (MREP) Program Update**

The MREP workshop was held November 14-17 in St. Petersburg Beach, Florida. This year's workshop combined the “science” and “management” portions of the program into a week-long session. In years past, separate, shorter workshops were dedicated to each component. Three Council staff members attended this week's workshop and assisted with facilitation.

### **Climate Change Scenario Planning Update**

The East Coast Climate Change Scenario Planning process is moving into the implementation phase. At the previous meeting in September 2023 the Council reviewed the final report from the February 2023 Summit Meeting and the initial list of priority actions. Two standing groups have been created to manage implementation: a climate core team, built around the existing core team that has managed the scenario planning process; and a Coordination Group that will provide oversight and direction. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council agreed to continue hosting the process webpage.

The Coordination Group's primary role will be to prioritize and coordinate regional activities related to climate scenario planning. Membership includes the Executive Directors of the 3 Atlantic Councils and the ASMFC, the Regional Administrators and Science Center Directors of the Northeast and Southeast Regions, and a representative from NMFS S&T. The Group held its first meeting on November 7 and provided guidance on a charter for the “East Coast Climate Coordination Group”, reviewed tasks for the Core Team, considered 2024 priorities and the opportunity to support activities with IRA funds, discussed future group chair and meeting host duties, and agreed to a general meeting plan. The group will meet twice per year, once in person and once via webinar. In-person meetings will rotate around the region as the chair and host

organization rotates. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 14 – 15 in Charleston, SC.

### **Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute Conference**

Staff participated and presented a poster on the FISHstory project at the Gulf and Caribbean Fisheries Institute conference in November 2023. Symposium sessions at the conference focused on research and stakeholder collaboration, communication and education, climate change, MPA technical sessions, and fish spawning aggregations. Additionally, staff participated in the annual in-person SMILE project core team meeting.

### **IRA Funding Update**

The 8 Regional Fishery Management Councils will receive \$20 million under the Inflation Reduction Act to take action related to increasing climate resilience. Each Council will initially receive \$375,000, leaving \$18 million that will be available through competitive grants.

Initial proposals, due to NMFS by December 28, are to provide detailed plans for how the initial \$375,000 will be used and include a general overview of additional projects that will be requested up to a total per Council of \$3.5 million. Details on these additional projects must be provided by January 31, 2024. NMFS will review the proposals and determine which projects to fund. Any remaining funds will be made available through further competitive grants in the latter half of 2024.

The initial submission for the \$375,000 will include hiring a temporary staff person to assist in managing IRA related projects and participate in follow-up activities to the Atlantic Coast Climate Scenario Planning project.

Council staff is working on developing a list of possible projects for the remaining funds available that comply with the climate related priorities. Additional information will be provided during the meeting.

### **NMFS Recreational Fisheries Economic Constituent Workshop Report**

Council member Spud Woodward and Council staff attended the NMFS Recreational Fisheries Economic Constituent Workshop that was held in Tampa, Florida from April 25-26, 2023. A summary report of the workshop's findings was made available in September 2023 and can be found at this [LINK](#).