



# SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Carolyn N. Belcher, Ph.D., Chair | Trish Murphey, Vice-Chair  
John Carmichael, Executive Director

## AGENDA

### **Full Council Session II**

Town & Country Inn and Suites  
2008 Savannah Highway  
Charleston, SC 29407

**Thursday, September 19, 2024, 1:30 pm to 5:00 pm**

**Friday, September 20, 2024, 8:30 am to 12:00 Noon (Times subject to change)**

- Litigation Brief (if needed) – NOAA General Counsel
  - SAFMC Chair & Vice Chair election
1. Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Activities Update (*Attachment 1*)
  2. Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Fishing Effort Survey research update and listening session to inform initiative to re-envision the recreational data collection partnership (*Attachments 2a-2c*)

#### Committee Reports

- Full Council Closed Session
  - Full Council Session 1
  - SEDAR
  - Habitat and Ecosystem
  - Snapper Grouper
3. Council Workplan (*Attachment 3*) – John Hadley
  4. Upcoming Meetings (*Attachment 4*) – John Carmichael

Other Business

Adjourn

#### **Attachments:**

**Attachment 1:** FKNMS Update (*will be available at the meeting*)

**Attachment 2a:** MRIP Re-envisioning presentation (*will be available on Sept 11, 2024*)

**Attachment 2b:** Fishing Effort Survey Assessment Management Guidance 2024

**Attachment 2c:** Re-envisioning handout 2024

**Attachment 3:** Council Workplan  
**Attachment 4:** SAFMC Upcoming Meetings

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

# OVERVIEW

If needed, the Council will receive a litigation brief from NOAA General Counsel. The Council will conduct elections for Chair and Vice-Chair.

## **1. Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Activities Update (*Attachment 1*)**

**Description:** The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary 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.

Pursuant to NMSA Section 304(a)(5), NOAA sent letters on August 22, 2019, to initiate consultation with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) and the SAFMC on potential regulatory changes that affect Federal fisheries. NOAA also provided multiple updates at the respective Council meetings and various advisory and technical committees over the course of the development of the draft EIS and throughout the public comment period following its release. The SAFMC submitted comment letters on the draft EIS on March 13, 2020. NOAA continued to engage with and provide briefings for the SAFMC and individual advisory panels during the proposed rule public comment period. The SAFMC submitted a comment letter on the proposed rule on February 22, 2023.

Informed by extensive public and agency comment, including from the SAFMC, NOAA has developed a final environmental impact statement and proposed final rule that will be released later this year. FKNMS leadership and staff will provide an update on the status of the Restoration Blueprint and relevant components of interest to the SAFMC.

**Council Action:** None.

## **2. Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Fishing Effort Survey research update and listening session to inform initiative to re-envision the recreational data collection partnership (*Attachments 2a-2c*)**

**Description:** NOAA Fisheries' Office of Science and Technology (OST) continued throughout 2024 to conduct a [large-scale study](#) to determine differences in respondent recall and resulting recreational fishing effort estimates (for shore and private modes) between the current Fishing Effort Survey design and a revised design. The Council will receive an update on this effort. Additionally, the OST is re-evaluating recreational fishing data collection partnership approaches with the intent to transition to a new, collaboratively developed vision for the state-federal partnership in 2026. To that effect, OST has hosted discussions with key partners via webinars as well as listening sessions during fishery management council meetings. NOAA OST plans to designate and/or reformulate working groups in early 2025, and host a series of regional workshops during summer 2025 to develop a shared vision and action plan for public release by the end of 2025.

**Council Action:** Provide feedback on a series of questions to help inform the re-envisioning process, including discussion points for the workshops in 2025. Discussion questions include:

- What are the top 3 to 5 priorities/absolute needs in your region/state related to recreational data collection?
- Is MRIP currently collecting data not being used?
- What data gaps are making assessments and management challenging?
- What elements of the recreational fishing data partnership are working? What needs to be improved?
- In the absence of additional resources or reductions in survey scope, what are alternative, viable options for management?
- Understanding there are data-use limitations for self-reported data via apps, how can the partnership still leverage these data?
- How can we improve surveys/data with minimal disruption to assessments and management?
- What changes are you seeing in angling/fisheries behavior that could impact survey performance?
- Where do NGOs and the recreational fishing community best fit into the re-envisioned partnership?
- What would make you feel engaged in this process and in the partnership more generally?

**3. Council Workplan (*Attachment 3*)**

**Description:** Council staff will present a revised workplan based on committee recommendations from the meeting week.

**Council Action:** Consider workload and priorities and provide feedback to staff if modifications are needed.

**4. SAFMC Upcoming Meetings (*Attachment 4*)**

**Description:** Council staff will go over planned meetings for the remainder of 2024.

**Council Action:** None.