

**SUMMARY REPORT  
SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
Full Council II**

The Council convened the afternoon of Thursday, September 15, and morning of Friday, September 16, 2022.

**2021 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award**

Master Officer Clay McDonough and Officer Specialist Chris Demeter, crew of FWC's Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) *Osprey*, were awarded the 2021 award.

**Council Chair and Vice Chair Elections**

The Council elected Dr. Carolyn Belcher (GA) as Chair and Trish Murphey (NC) as Vice Chair.

**NMFS Southeast Regional Office Report**

Jennifer Lee, SERO Protected Resources, updated the Council on issues pertaining to protected resources (see *Attachment 3a*). Additionally, staff from NOAA Fisheries Office of Protected Resources delivered a presentation on proposed amendments to the North Atlantic Right Whale (NARW) vessel speed rule and answered questions from the Council. Council staff then led a discussion on how the proposed changes could potentially affect stakeholders in the South Atlantic region. Staff presented some issues to consider in submitting comments on this proposed rule and information to illustrate the number of vessels in the region that might be affected across the Council's managed fisheries.

Direction to staff:

Write a letter to NMFS providing comment on the proposed vessel speed regulations.

- Suggestion to look at for-hire logbook data to see activity during the proposed timeframe and offer to provide information to PRD.
- Pass along comments the Council received to PRD.
- Recommend NMFS spend more time and effort conducting outreach to the boating and fishing communities.
- The proposed regulations could add over four hours to fishing and for-hire trips.
- Council has concerns about enforcement of the speed rule.
  - What assets are available to enforce these new regulations?
  - Concerns about taking enforcement efforts away from fishing regulations if there is limited LE available.
- Suggestions for alternative regulations:
  - Spend additional money on monitoring NARWs to allow for dynamic zones only.
  - Partner with other groups to provide boats with real time information on whale locations.
  - Limit scope of current regulations to only those vessels with inboard motors and exclude outboard motors.
- Additional suggestions sent to staff by October 1st.

Andy Strelcheck, SERO administrator, updated the Council on the disapproval of Coral Amendment 10. The amendment proposed allowing fishing for rock shrimp in a narrow area along the eastern boundary of the *Oculina* Bank Habitat Area of Particular Concern. The amendment was rejected based mostly on public opposition and lack of a Bycatch Practicability Analysis. The Council intends to resubmit the amendment (see below).

### **NMFS Southeast Fisheries Science Center Report**

Dr. Andrew David, SEFSC, gave a presentation on work that was conducted in May-June 2022 in the area that the Council proposed designating as a Shrimp Fishery Access Area (SFAA) (see above). The SEFSC was tasked with generating a quick turnaround survey to provide visual data on the presence or absence of *Oculina* coral in the area. The survey resulted in no observations of *Oculina* coral (live, standing dead, or rubble) in or immediately adjacent to the proposed SFAA. The SEFSC acknowledged that the survey provided no definitive evidence that *Oculina* colonies do not exist within the proposed SFAA; however, based upon the results of the visual survey and the existing multibeam bathymetry of the entire SFAA (which shows only low or no relief), the SEFSC predicted the likelihood of live *Oculina* within the SFAA to be very low.

The Council discussed the procedure for re-submitting Coral Amendment 10 and approved the following motion:

**MOTION 1: RESUBMIT CORAL AMENDMENT 10 AFTER MODIFICATIONS.  
APPROVED BY COUNCIL**

### **Committee and Full Council Session Reports**

The Council provided additional guidance and approved motions made during committees (see final committee reports).

### **FMP Workplan and upcoming meetings**

The Council reviewed the revised workplan based on actions taken during the meeting week and directed staff to add the following items to the list to develop in the future:

- Resubmittal of Coral Amendment 10
- Address sunset provisions of the Council's Spawning Special Management Zones
- Retention of spiny lobster for commercial Snapper Grouper permit holders

Additionally, the Council requested the following:

- An update on dolphin related actions taken by the Caribbean Fishery Management Council