

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

RECREATIONAL FISHERY TOPICS MEETING

Webinar

November 9, 2020

TRANSCRIPT

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Mel Bell, Chair
Chris Conklin
Anna Beckwith
Dr. Kyle Christiansen
Tim Griner
Kerry Marhefka
LT. Robert Copeland

Steve Poland, Vice-Chair
Chester Brewer
Doug Haymans
Spud Woodward
Dr. Roy Crabtree
Jessica McCawley

COUNCIL STAFF

John Carmichael
Julia Byrd
Kelly Klasnick
Cameron Rhodes
Dr. Mike Errigo
Kim Iverson
Dr. Michael Schmidtke
Kathleen Howington

Dr. Brian Chevront
Myra Brouwer
Dr. Chip Collier
Christina Wiegand
John Hadley
Roger Pugliese
BeBe Harrison
Allie Iberle

OBSERVERS/PARTICIPANTS

Shep Grimes
Monica Smit-Brunello
Duane Smith
Dewey Hemilright
Tony Dilernia

Dr. Jack McGovern
Dr. Clay Porch
Rick DeVictor
Dr. Erik Williams

Other observers and participants attached.

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened for a Recreational Fishery Topics Meeting via webinar on Monday, November 9, 2020, and was called to order by Chairman Mel Bell.

MR. BELL: Good morning, everyone. I am staring at my computer screen, as you are, but welcome to the meeting of the Full Council, and it's, I guess, one of the benefits of the world that we're living in right now, is that we have the opportunity to actually have a Full Council meeting, and we can do it at a relatively lower expense, and we don't have to fly everybody everywhere, and it also gives us an opportunity to kind of dig into a topic in a little detail, and that's a good thing, and so I know we get frustrated sometimes at the meetings, and we don't really have enough time to dig into some of the issues we need to, and so this is actually a good thing.

The first item on the agenda would be Approval of the Agenda. Are there any necessary changes to the agenda, anything anybody wants to add or bring up at this time? I don't see any hands, and so we will say then that the agenda is approved without any opposition.

We don't have any minutes to worry about, and so that will take us right into our first item, and is Myra going to handle that one, Chip, or John, in terms of the -- What we're going to discuss first would be Amendment 46, which there's a document, Attachment 1A, which describes what we're going to talk about, and then 1B is the actual presentation, which somebody is going to make, but we can get right into that and get rolling.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Myra will present this, and then Brian, and then we'll tag-team a bit on the MyFishCount, and, Mel, did you want to ask if there was any public comment at this point?

MR. BELL: Yes, and I forgot about that, and thanks John. We didn't receive any public comment, I believe, online at this point, but, since it is a full meeting, we would afford an opportunity, if any members of the public would like to make comment related to the topics that we'll be discussing today. If you would raise your hand, we could take that right now, just some brief comment. I see Kellie on there. Kellie, do you want to make a few remarks?

DR. COLLIER: Kellie, if you're speaking, we can't hear you.

MR. BELL: I would also mention, if there's no one else at this point, we will also receive some public comment as we move towards the end as well, maybe before we get into the detailed discussion and potential recommendations and things, and so there's actually two opportunities. Kellie, are you there? We may be having a connectivity problem there, and so, again, Kellie, you can certainly comment -- There is another opportunity as well, and so let's go ahead and get into the presentation, Myra, if we could.

MS. BROUWER: Good morning, everybody. I'm just going to give you a very quick refresher of Amendment 46. This is a very similar presentation to what I gave the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel. They met last week, and they did talk, for quite a while, about private recreational reporting and potential permit and reporting requirements, and so I will have access to the comments that they made, and, of course, the meeting was just last week, and so we haven't synthesized that summary report yet, but they did have good conversation about this topic.

Basically, the council has put this amendment on hold, for various reasons. I believe the last time you guys looked at it was in June of 2018, and so, at the time, or right before that, there had been another amendment that included actions for descending devices, and those were, of course, taken out of that amendment and put in Regulatory Amendment 29, and then what was left in Amendment 46 was a potential action for a permit and reporting requirements for the private recreational sector.

In the rationale in that options paper, which is Attachment 1B in your briefing book, we go into some detail as to the pros and cons of things and what a permit could do, which, of course, the idea is to narrow that sampling unit from all coastal recreational fishermen to only those that target snapper grouper species, and this, of course -- The idea is to help increase sampling effort to improve the number of intercepts per wave, per state, and then, of course, that's going to have, hopefully, a good impact on information about those rare-event species that we all complain that we don't have enough information about.

Then, also, recall that, during the vision blueprint project, when we were going out and getting input from stakeholders up and down the coast, a lot of what we heard was that the council should explore ways to make the recreational sector more accountable, and one of the main things that came out of those discussions was let's talk about reporting requirements and a potential permit for the recreational sector.

Right now, the options paper has a couple of actions. Action 1 is to establish a permit to fish for, harvest, or possess snapper grouper species in the region, and the options paper includes possible alternatives for the permit being individual-based, and so for the angler, or a permit for the vessel, and we also have an alternative that has options for various species that would be covered. At the time, recall there was a lot of talk about red snapper, and so red snapper has its individual option under there, and we also have an option to cover all snapper grouper species for which recreational harvest is allowed and then an option to only have a permit that would extend to deepwater species, because those are the ones that we have, and a lot of rare-event species are in that complex.

There is also alternatives to request that the states develop a program, or an endorsement, or a license, or a stamp or what have you, for private anglers, and that it be done through the states, and I know that the council has had lots of discussions about that sort of thing, and recall that, several years ago, we were talking about potential harvest tags for snapper grouper, and we talked about that maybe just for red snapper, and we talked about all the details that would be possible to be involved in such a program and how states could potentially administer it, and so there's been a lot of discussion about these sorts of things, and the options paper has a list of pros and cons for the various alternatives.

The second action would be to modify the reporting requirements for private recreational fishermen or vessels, and it says modified because, even though there isn't a reporting requirement right now, there is an option that, if a fisherman is selected by the Science and Research Director to submit fishing records, then they need to do that, and so this was put in place through Amendment 15A back in 2008, and it was approved by the council and the Secretary of Commerce, but the requirement did not become effective, because of issues under I think it was the Paperwork Reduction Act, and it had to go through review and approval, through the Office of Management and Budget, and so, even though we do have that in the books, it's not something that happens frequently, and so there are options in there.

Action 2 is to have the Science and Research Director select a percentage of permitted vessels, or individuals, to report, and there is an alternative also to promote voluntary reporting, and then we have options for frequency of reporting. Should it be once a week, every two weeks, once a month, once a year, or what have you, and so all of those are included in there. The options paper also includes tables with a lot of information for reporting requirements through other agencies around the country and different catch card programs and permits and different things that are in existence throughout.

As I said, back in March of 2018, the council gave us direction to pull out those best fishing practices and develop them through Regulatory Amendment 29, which was done and approved. Then, in June, the council reviewed the options paper and said that they wanted to conduct scoping hearings, but those never came to be. There were other priorities that kind of got in the way, and so that's where things were left off with this amendment. Scoping was not conducted, and so what we have is this options paper that was taken as far as we took it, and that's where we left off.

In June, you did -- The council did give us more guidance for what they wanted to see moving forward, and they asked for more information on a permit for highly migratory species and to bring that to the committee in September. Of course, this amendment did not make it on the agenda for the September meeting, and so that was never done. There was also a request to make sure that MRIP staff were involved during the development of this amendment, and we got guidance to include North Carolina's tag requirement and catch card program for HMS in the options paper and additional information on Florida's programs, and, of course, they recently just had expansion of that program.

Then, also, a request that the scoping document should include information on the anticipated timeframe for developing the amendment and implementing a possible permit for the recreational sector with enough information to clarify and kind of manage those stakeholder expectations and make sure that they're realistic, and I think this was put out there mainly because there was talk about is this going to go through the MRIP certification process, and we know that's a lengthy process, and so the council was making sure that we have realistic expectations for this sort of thing.

Another thing that I wanted to remind you of is past input that the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel has provided on this topic, and so they've made a number of motions and recommendations, and I only went as far back as April of 2017, but they have been recommending options for different aspects of a reporting program, or a permit program, and, most recently, they had a webinar in September, and, again, they strongly suggested a stamp or a permit for the snapper grouper fishery, and then, again, last week, they approved another motion to encourage the council to continue development of this amendment and provided additional feedback, and, as I said, that's going to be available as part of the summary report for that Snapper Grouper AP meeting, and I will be happy to verbally address anything that you might want to.

I added this extra slide just to have up on the screen the questions that were included in the overview for this topic, and so these are the kinds of things that we're hoping to get some feedback from you all on during this meeting, and so specific questions, and, obviously, Number 1 being does the council still intend to pursue this amendment, and, if so, what issues need to be addressed, what kind of information, besides what we already have in there, needs to be provided, and when

it needs to be considered next, and so I'm just going to leave those up on the screen, and I would be happy to take any questions.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Myra. Another way to approach this too is we definitely need to have some discussion on this particular item right now, but keep in mind, at the end, we're going to have some time dedicated to kind of consider all of the things we're going to hear and see how perhaps -- They are intertwined, to some degree, and so final recommendations could consider a more detailed discussion of some of that interconnectivity of these things and how we might direct us in an overall approach, but, for right now, based on the presentation we were given -- As you can see, this isn't something new.

This is something we've talked about on an off for quite a while, and, I mean, my first council meeting was June of 2008, in Orlando, and I remember a lot of discussion about red snapper, and this topic, in some form, popped up then, of how to get better data on red snapper alone, and so it's something we hear about consistently from APs, particularly the Snapper Grouper AP, and it's something that I would be willing to say, in terms of improving our recreational data and all, that's something we hear about at every single meeting, and so, anyway, let's have some of your thoughts on this, where we are right now, or questions for Myra, from a historical perspective, since this has gone on for a while. Right now, I just see Chester on there, and so, Chester, if you would like to lead us off.

MR. BREWER: Yes, Mel. Thank you. Thank you, Myra. I had a question essentially as to where are we? I know that sort of a white paper was prepared, and I cannot remember whether we developed, or staff developed, a scoping document, and I know it has not gone to scoping yet, and so, from that standpoint, procedurally, where are we?

MS. BROUWER: I think the scoping document is what's in your briefing book, and so clearly it needs to be updated a little bit, and cleaned up, but I believe that we could potentially -- If you all wanted to hold scoping, we could start there. As we said, it hasn't been done, and the council did approve it for scoping back in June of 2018, and so that's where we are, and it would probably just take us updating the information and have it ready.

MR. BELL: So the original scoping document sort of evolved into this options paper, which is your Attachment 1A at this point, and so, if wanted to re-tool that back into an actual scoping document, that could be done, and that would be necessary if we decide to move forward. Anna, would you like to weigh-in here?

MS. BECKWITH: Sure, and just a couple of quick thoughts. Yes, I definitely think this is worth continuing to develop, and I wish this was one of the amendments that I would be able to see all the way through, because I certainly have some strong opinions on the best way forward for this, but that will be unlikely.

Some just initial thoughts is I was never a fan of just pursuing this for red snapper, and I always thought it would be either better to do it for all the snapper grouper species, or the deepwater, and I think one piece of information that would be helpful to consider is what species are caught via the shore mode, and at what amount, because I have always felt that, if we were going to move forward with this, having it be vessel permit, and the reporting requirement at the vessel level, would be easier to manage, and probably more successful in the long run, and we did have lots of

discussions at the time, where certainly the scientists and the economists would prefer to see it at the individual level, but I see a lot of issues with reporting and having the permits at the individual level for something like this, and I think we would get just as much information from the vessel level and having the reporting be focused with the number of anglers attributing to the CPUE, just like we've had sort of historically with the charter reporting. Those are some initial thoughts, and I'm not sure how detailed we want to get into this discussion today.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Anna. That's good to get us started, and so I guess you would, obviously, be interested in seeing this kind of pursued, or at least kept alive here for a while as an option. Any other questions, I guess, at this point, in terms of the presentation itself or where we are, or are there things -- We had mentioned, if we do move forward, we would work into a scoping document, and is there anything missing from this concept that we might want to consider adding, or anything to kind of enhance it a little bit? Spud and then Steve.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, Mel. Just a question, I guess, so I can get this clear in my mind. If we go forward, and we end up promulgating a requirement through the plan, then is it accurate to assume that, if there was some sort of permitting, whether it be at the individual level or the vessel level or whatever, and it was promulgated through that plan, that the expectation is going to be that they will be implemented by the Service, or -- I mean, I'm trying to understand how would we require something of the states, if we went the route of states being responsible for implementing and managing some sort of system, like is done in the Gulf, but do it through a federal plan? I wasn't around for the beginning of all of this, and so I'm just curious.

MR. BELL: My thoughts would be that, yes, that would -- Since it's about federal fisheries, about the business of the council, and, yes, we're not the commission, and we're the council, and, sure, the states are a partner, and the states have a role, a potential role, to play in this, but, ultimately, you would be, I would think, relying upon the Service to implement whatever it was in some acceptable form, and I don't see how you couldn't do that, but certainly the states have a role to play in this, and so that's just my opinion. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thanks, Mel. I guess, for efficiency, I will just kind of run through the questions and give my input. The first question, absolutely. I feel like the council needs to continue work on this amendment. I would like to see some more discussion, around the table, as far as the pros and cons between asking the Regional Office to promulgate this permit versus the states, kind of like what Spud was getting at, and certainly, if the council decides to go the state route, just recognize that all the states have very different government structures, and it might take some time for all the states to get a permit, license, endorsement, what have you, online, and so that needs to be some time factored into our discussions.

As far as other developments and recreational reporting to be considered, the Mid-Atlantic's blue-line tilefish permit reporting is online now, and I think that's a good example for us to look at around the council table. For one, it's a species that we manage, and a very similar fishery, and, two, it's in our region, and we've got two very capable representatives on our council that can provide us their feedback on that, and so that's certainly something that I would like to look into.

As far as the species, Anna made a good point, as far as really looking at species in the complex that are also accessible by the shore mode, because, really, from my perspective, the need to do something like this is to identify the universe of anglers out in the blue water on those private

vessels, and just make sure there aren't any issues with overlap with things like maybe black sea bass or something like that that could affect catch estimates or something, but certainly I see this fitting really well for deepwater species and our shallow-water groupers and things like that.

As far as mandatory reporting, I'm kind of split on that, and I don't know if that's something that we need to tackle all at once or see if we can get a permit in place just to identify this universe and then kind of build from there, and that's really something that I feel like I would need some more information on before I could really make a good, informed opinion on that, and so that's all the feedback I've got right now, Mel.

MR. BELL: Okay. Thanks, Steve. That's good. Roy, good morning.

DR. CRABTREE: Good morning, everybody. I think the critical thing with a permit is what the purpose of it is and what are you going to do with it. In and of itself, identifying the universe of people and vessels doesn't do anything. You then have to survey it somehow, or require something of them, and, if you do that as just a federal-water permit, you will have a lot of compliance trouble, problems, I suspect, and you will have the issue of state-water catches not being included in it, and so you will have a lot of issues there, but I really think the key thing is what are you going to do with the information from the permit.

The other development that I think I would like to hear a little bit more about is Florida, as I understand it, is extending their Gulf Reef Fish permit program into the South Atlantic, I guess all the way up to the Florida/Georgia line, and I don't know if Luis is on, or someone, but it would be worth knowing what the timing of that is and whether that's going to be just a select number of species or whether it's going to be all snapper grouper or what exactly it's going to be, because, really, for a lot of species, Florida is the bulk of the recreational catch, and so you may already have a state program, a state permit, coming there.

In the Gulf, when we did the state surveys, we provided -- NOAA provided some funding to the states and technical assistance and those kinds of things, but we really don't have any authority to require the states to do something like that, and you could request them to, and there are a lot of reasons that something like this would work better if you had a state sort of permit, but, if you go down the path the Gulf has gone down, take my word for it that there's whole host of problems with everybody having their own data collection program, but I think it would be worth learning a little more about what Florida's plans are, since that's such a big part of our jurisdiction.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Roy. Since I've got Jessica in line, Chester, would you mind if I let Jessica go ahead? She might could answer some of those Florida questions, and then, whatever input she has, I promise I will come right back to you.

MR. BREWER: I was going to suggest that, Mel.

MR. BELL: Thank you. Jessica, would you like to go ahead and weigh-in then? If you can answer some of Roy's questions, that would be great as well.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Sure, and I will try to do that. We now have what's called the State Reef Fish Survey, and so that replaced the Gulf Reef Fish Survey, and it covers thirteen different species, and it is starting July 1, and so there's lots of nuances to this particular program. It's a

supplement to MRIP, and it also -- It's not just that you get this permit, and so it's not just about identifying the universe of people that are intending to go offshore to fish for these thirteen species, but it's also additional intercepts and sampling at offshore sites, and then people are selected, and so a statistical sample taken monthly, and sent a paper survey, and then they also get reminder cards if they don't fill it out.

If we want to go down this route, then we could have somebody like Beverly Sauls give us an in-depth presentation of all the specifics of this particular survey at a future meeting, and we weren't really prepared to do that today, and I can answer some questions about it, but, yes, it is now in effect for all Florida waters, and so from the Alabama line to the Georgia line.

I guess, just to comment on this particular amendment, I am fine moving forward with what I think would be the first action in the amendment, but it's just that I think it is a big deal to try to figure out is this a federal permit, is it a state permit, or, if we're going to do a state permit, and so our State Reef Fish Survey is no cost to the angler. A lot of times, people say it's not going to work if it's no cost. Well, we have some correction factors that we use because of that, and so I do think you could do a successful permit that is no cost.

I would really like to see the states move forward with this, and I know that the council can't make the states do it, but I think there is a way that each state could do this, and I do think that you need to be sampling people that are fishing for some subset of species in state and federal waters and not just federal waters, as Roy was mentioning, and so I do think this is really important, and we know that the AP has been talking about it, and I think we do need to identify some species, and, if the states are going to pursue, maybe this amendment isn't needed, or maybe some other type of council oversight is needed.

It would take some money for the states to increase some type of internet sampling, as well as mail these surveys out, and I don't know if the council has money to do that, or to do some type of pilot program, or if maybe we can ask Congress for some money to get this going. To me, it's not just about the phone book, but it's really about this supplemental survey, and I don't think MRIP is doing it adequately, and that was mentioned in the document, and I think that you don't really want MRIP to then focus on offshore while you decrease the amount of inshore trips that you're looking at and targeting and sampling, and so, to me, that's why you need to add on here, instead of spread out what MRIP is already doing, and so I will stop there, and I can certainly try to answer the questions that people have about the State Reef Fish Survey, but I just gave you a little information about that.

The State Reef Fish Survey also has to be renewed annually, and people over sixty-five are not exempt from the requirements, and so lots of nuances that we can get into if we want to go down this path, or states want to do something similar, like what is in place for Florida.

MR. BELL: Thanks for that, Jessica, and you're right that we can take time later, or in another venue, to get into a lot of detail on that, but thanks for that and the comments. Chester, I promised you that I would come back to you, and so you're up.

MR. BREWER: Thank you, Mel. Jessica covered almost everything that I was going to say, and I am enthused though that she says that you can have these permits, but you don't have to charge for them, in order for them to be accurate, and there is a correction figure. I do believe, obviously,

that we should go forward with this, and I have thought that for a long time, and one of the big concerns that we had, or I had, was that somebody is going into get their saltwater license at Walmart, and the clerk behind the desk says, well, do you want a deepwater species or snapper grouper endorsement, and how much is that, and, well, it's free, and this person may have never gone deepwater snapper grouper fishing in their life, but it's free, and so they just get it.

There is a difference with Florida, because, with Florida, you have to have an existing license, unless you're over sixty-five, and then you won't have a license, but you've still got to go and get, essentially, the permit for snapper grouper, and it's mostly snapper grouper, and so there's an additional step that Florida has put in place that you would -- If you're going to be snapper grouper fishing, you do have to go online, and you do have to check a couple of boxes, and then you get kind of a printout number that says that you have in fact registered, and it seems like that system works pretty well.

In going forward, I'm wondering if it wouldn't be a good idea to have the State of Florida make a presentation with regard to the program that now encompasses the state and sort of where the weaknesses in it are, where the strengths are, and, as Jessica said, maybe some of the nuances involved, but it does seem to me that this is going to be the kind of program that has to be run by the -- Administered at least by the states, and not necessarily the states have to come up with the entire plan, but they do need to be involved, I think from the very beginning, and we're lucky that we've got people who are state representatives on this council that can take back whatever information we get developed, and, with that, I will mute myself.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Chester. Jessica, did you want to say something in response to what Chester was saying, or to add on to it or something, or can I wait on you?

MS. MCCAWLEY: You can wait, and I was just going to let you know that Luis Barbieri is on the line, but I really think that this is going to require a separate meeting with a lengthy presentation.

MR. BELL: Yes, ma'am, and I agree, because talk about nuances, and there's a lot of details. Spud, you're up.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, Mel. This conversation is leading me back to what I was talking about before, and that is, if we pursue this amendment and go forward with it, we're accepting that we're only going to be able to affect federal waters, yet everything we're hearing says that we cannot neglect state waters, and I know, in the past, there has been concerns from the Service about having the means to administer a permit, and maybe, if it was vessel-based, it wouldn't be as burdensome as individual angler, but, to me, I think we need to go forward with something, but, to me, the basic question that needs to be answered, in my mind, is does this need to fall back to the states, and, if so, then is a federal amendment necessary, and that's what Jessica brought up, but, to me, that's the basic question. Thank you.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Spud. Thanks for capturing that and framing that question well. Tony.

MR. DILERNIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for staff to know that I don't have a raise-hand icon on my screen, and perhaps someone could fix that for me after I finish speaking, but Steve Poland mentioned the permits that we just instituted in the Mid-Atlantic region, and now we're

going to be requiring private vessels -- We'll be permitting the vessels, or the agency is permitting the vessels, and not the individual anglers, but the vessels, to have permits for both golden and blueline tiles.

It's going to require mandatory reporting, and, interestingly enough, while the council made the recommendation, and we passed it onto the agency, the agency is actually responsible for implementing the permitting process, and the agency, in that sense, is responsible for publicizing the requirement. When it first -- When the requirement first came into effect, very few fishermen knew about it, and so there was a very low participation. It just went into effect this year, and, as word is spreading, more and more vessels are beginning to apply for their permits, and they're not intentionally not applying, but they just weren't aware of it.

Whatever permit goes into place, I think it's going to take two to three years before we have a large amount of compliance with the requirement, and, again, let me point out that this is just for blueline and goldens, and so that's all federal waters, and we don't have the federal waters/state waters issue that you all are talking about. I will mute myself. Thank you very much, and, if somebody can give me a raise-hand function, I would appreciate it. Thank you.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Tony. We'll figure that out. As you can see, and folks have hit on this, is, if you somehow manage to ignore state waters, then you're going to have an issue with some species, and particularly some states, caught in state waters. Things like golden and blueline, I can't imagine them being in state waters. Well, maybe in Florida, if it's deeper, but that's part of the problem, and I know, for South Carolina, for instance, we do catch black sea bass and many species in this group within state waters, and it's not as many, but we do catch them. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: A couple more points about Florida's survey. Basically, you're signing up that you intend to target these reef fish, target and harvest these reef fish, and so you're basically signing up that you understand that you intend to be surveyed, and so it's not so much a permit as much as a state reef fish angler designation, and so I just wanted to talk about the differences there a little bit. Once again, a more thorough presentation can talk about all these differences.

Just to throw out some species here, the thirteen species that we have are mutton snapper, yellowtail snapper, hogfish, red snapper, vermilion snapper, gag, red grouper, black grouper, greater amberjack, lesser amberjack, banded rudderfish, almaco, and gray triggerfish, and so those are the thirteen species that we're looking at, and so I guess, Mel, to try to help move this forward, I don't know if we want to have another one of these meetings, or at the next council meeting, or what have you, where we give a more thorough description of what we're doing here and how many people we're sampling and all that.

MR. BELL: I think, one way or the other, a more detailed description of the program and how it's all put together would be helpful. I'm thinking we're already locked in on the next Full Council meeting, but, I mean, we're going to live in this world for a while, and we could always try another one of these type of events, where we go virtual, but I definitely think we would benefit from more details, because you guys have got something going there that's kind of unique, and that would be helpful to the discussion. Kerry, would you like to weigh-in?

MS. MARHEFKA: Thanks. Jessica, I'm not bombarding you on details, because I do want to get into those at a later date, but, because you said you're sort of signing up for the intent that you will

be surveyed, does that mean there aren't enforcement implications if you are boarded or at the marina and you have snapper grouper species on-hand, or whatever species are covered, but you don't have this permit?

MR. BELL: Jessica, you can go ahead and answer that, if you would like.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Great question. Our law enforcement officers are looking for proof that you have signed up. As always, they will start with an educational approach, to make sure that people understand that they need to have this, and showing them how to go online, through our licensing system, to get the designation, but, if they don't have it, and they maybe encounter this same angler over and over again, even after they have taken this approach, the penalty is listed in Florida statutes, and it's a non-criminal infraction, and so it does have a penalty, but non-criminal infraction.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Jessica. That's good to know. Kerry, did you have anything else, or was that it?

MS. MARHEFKA: That was it. Thanks, Jessica.

MR. BELL: Okay. Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Thanks, Mel. Like Kerry, I don't want to bombard you, Jessica, with a bunch of detailed questions, but I suppose that it took legislative action, and then commission action, in order to implement the survey across the state, and is that correct?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Mel, if I can jump in here --

MR. BELL: Go right ahead.

MS. MCCAWLEY: We did the Gulf Reef Fish Survey first, and so we put that in place first, and it took action by our commission, and that was also no cost, and we had some additional monies that were coming into the Gulf, and I believe that they came in through NFWF, and so we were using that to help with that program. That grant only lasted for five years, and so we knew, at the end of five years, we were going to have to go back to our commission to reconsider that Gulf Reef Fish Survey, Gulf reef fish angler designation, and so we did that, and then we were asking to expand this state-wide, and so we were asking our commissioners that, and so we talked about some of the successes of the Gulf Reef Fish Survey.

The commission approved expansion, to make it the State Reef Fish Survey, and it does not have a fee, and so the establishment of this designation did not require legislative approval, because there's not a fee associated with it. However, at the same time that our commission was passing this rule that requires that people sign up for this, since the NFWF money had expired in the Gulf, we went to the legislature to ask for a budgetary item that would provide money into our budget in order to administer this program, because there are these additional intercepts, and there's this paper survey that goes out, and so that coincided with making this a state-wide angler designation, but it does not have a fee associated with it, and so they did not have to approve us making that designation and requiring the sign-up. I hope that explains it, Spud.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Jessica. I suspect Doug may be weighing-in on this as well, but what you're seeing now is you have a process, and Georgia has a process, and South Carolina has a process, and North Carolina will be different, and so we're all going to be, at some point, faced with the challenges of how we would get this done within our state, but that's -- Your process, that had a lot of moving parts, just for you, and so go ahead, Doug.

MR. HAYMANS: You are correct, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. I just think that it's very dangerous for us to proceed down a path of implementing a plan that requires each of the four states to implement something identical, when we all have these various processes. If this is a federal-waters issue, it seems to me that's where it fits, and I understand the challenges from the federal side, but I just think that we don't need to go too far down this rabbit hole if all the states can't do exactly the same thing and the same process, which we know we can't.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Doug. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thanks, Mel. I mean, I share a lot of Doug's concerns too, because, I mean, I can't sit here and promise that we can get something implemented in my state, and it doesn't mean that we can't, but I just can't make those decisions and those promises, but I am interested in pursuing it, and it sounds like, in the discussion we've had today, most everybody, at least as far as the state reps, for the most part, are onboard with pursuing permitting and reporting at the state level, but I would still like to hear a little bit more about Florida's program.

We have heard about it extensively at the Section 102 -- There have been some discussions at the Section 102 workgroup, but I am really interested in the free aspect of it, and certainly, if this is something that the states want to pursue, to get better catch estimates for these species, I would think that it would make sense that all the states have not identical, but similar, permits and programs in place, and I'm just trying to think how the council could help facilitate that outside of an amendment, because it's obvious that we probably don't need to pursue this amendment at this time if that's the direction we're going, but maybe create some type of council workgroup, probably made up of the four state reps and a few others, to help facilitate this along and report back to the council.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Steve. Good points. The four states working together would require a lot of details, and I think it's kind of like Spud is saying. Before you kind of commit to something, you really have to know what all the details are, to see if you even have a prayer of getting there. Jessica, do you want to head to that?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Just to add to that, I don't know if I agree with Doug that every state program needs to be completely identical. We do have different programs in the Gulf, and they operate differently, and there are some challenges with the fact that those programs are different, but I think that there are ways that states can move this forward that are not necessarily identical to this State Reef Fish Survey that Florida has.

I just want to say that, but, also, I like Steve's idea about maybe creating a workgroup, because I am not convinced that this amendment is needed if we're going to go down this path of the states trying to pursue something that would be for state and federal waters off of their state, and so I think that states pursuing it is the best route, from my opinion, but I like the idea of, if we're not going to do this amendment, maybe a workgroup or something, so that the state reps continuously

meet, and the council can ask questions, and there's some kind of feedback loop back to the council, because of the fact that this is so important for managing these council species.

MR. BELL: Okay. Thanks, Jessica. John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Thank you, Mel, and I was going to follow-up on what you said earlier about the December meeting, and it is fully booked, and the Federal Register has already gone in. If we were going to schedule something at a regular council meeting, we would be looking at March, and, as you guys know, we have a pretty heavy workload going into 2021 that we will talk about more in December, and so I think the idea of a working group is pretty appealing, particularly because we do have this question of state versus federal permits and the implications for the council action that may come.

Roy raised the point, early on, that I think the group would need to get into, which is what is the purpose of the permit, and some of these basic things need to be settled before we can go too far down this path. Also, recall that we have the joint working group, and they have talked about this, and they have looked some into the other reporting programs, and so I think any South Atlantic workgroup should be coordinated with that and have a lot of overlap in the membership, and, if you recall, the MRIP program was working on -- They had a workgroup, also, for looking at rare-event species and how to improve those estimates, which we know is heavily directed towards snapper grouper species, and one of the things that that group was looking at was some way of better defining the universe of offshore anglers, snapper grouper anglers, and how they could be more effectively surveyed.

I think maybe we should consider doing this workgroup approach and let those guys get started on some of these questions and work and collaboration with our reps on the joint working group and maybe hear about this NMFS working group, and I see that Richard is up on the list too, and so I think all of that is stuff that could play out next year, as we come up with a strategy for how we go forward with this effectively.

MR. BELL: Thanks, John, and I will say that Roy's point was not missed. You have a permit, and the permit allows you to perhaps develop a smaller universe of folks you have identified, for purposes of managing certain species, and what do you do with it? That is a key question as well, and so Doug, and then I definitely want to hear from Richard.

MR. HAYMANS: To Jessica's point about exactly, I'm not saying that each program has to be exactly the same, but, if you're requiring the reporting of -- I would prefer, rather than snapper grouper species, federally-managed species, and I would think that each of our states need to have the same elements of that requirement.

Beyond that, when I look at my state's code sections, I can require management of landings in Georgia, but I don't know -- So, in other words, no matter where they come from, and I do that now, or we do that now, but I don't know that I can legally regulate how fishermen fish in the EEZ. In other words, I can regulate the size of a fish that gets landed in Georgia, even if it comes from the EEZ, but I just don't know that I can require a guy that's leaving Georgia to go fish out there to report, and so that's a point for me.

MR. BELL: Yes, and you're absolutely right, Doug, and I think we would run into the same situation ourselves, but that gets into each state has its own unique system of laws and code and regs, but we would have to work through -- Whatever we came up with, we would have to live within that world of our four different types of state laws. Richard, I would love to hear from you.

DR. CODY: I just wanted to offer MRIP support for participation in the working group. I think there are some lessons to be learned from the Gulf experiment, and we would be happy to help with supporting the working group in any way we can. Then, just to go back to John's point about the rare-event species work, we are presenting some of that information at the December National Academy workshop, at this point, but we would be happy to fill in the council on the developments with that group and where we are with that work.

MR. BELL: Great. Thanks, Richard, and thanks for volunteering that. We definitely can use some help with this. As you can see, just even working through the state nuances is challenging enough. I am getting a sense that there is support in kind of holding on to the concept, and not necessarily with, obviously, moving forward with an amendment right now, but, as we've talked about, there is some things we could do to help us better refine a concept that might work where the states have certain roles and then we figure how this hands-off to the feds, or what we do -- Like Roy was saying, what do you do with the information once you have it, in terms of the permit, and then how does that factor in to actual management that we do?

Are there any other questions or comments right now about this particular topic? Again, I'm not trying to put words in you all's mouth, but I just get the sense that there is interest in this concept and continuing to work through it, and, if we go the workgroup route, that's a great way to start, but, in terms of like moving on an amendment right now, or taking something to scoping, I don't sense that we're ready to do that at all. Am I reading you all right? Okay. Well, if there is no answer, I will take that as a yes.

MR. POLAND: Mel, I know the purpose of this meeting today is to introduce all these topics again and kind of go over the available information and give the council an opportunity to discuss the merits and that kind of stuff, and so do you want to wait until the end of the presentations to make these kind of guidance or time and task motions for maybe developing a workgroup or that kind of stuff, or do you want to do it right now?

MR. BELL: What I was really trying to do is just wrap up this Item 1, but you're right. I think, in terms of kind of codifying how we're going to move forward, we can do that in that final session, because we may find ourselves wanting to wrap other things into an overall strategy, and so I would be fine with waiting until the end for any kind of specific motions or recommendations. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I was going to make a motion, but I am fine waiting until the end, and so, when we get to the end, if you want to come back to me, I'll have a motion about a workgroup.

MR. BELL: Okay. You've got a little more time to even think about it, I guess, if we do it that way. All right. Well, if we're okay with the discussion we've had on the initial item, we can move to Item 2 on the agenda, which would be recreational accountability measures within snapper grouper, and this was what Amendment 33, and so, Myra, are you going to do that one as well, or was that Brian?

MS. BROUWER: I think Brian is going to take care of that now, and so, if you give us a second, he can take over control of the screen and get that presentation up.

MR. BELL: That would be great.

DR. COLLIER: While Brian is doing that, apparently there is some issues with the Mac and the raised-hands function, and so, if council members are having any issues with that, please send me an email, and I will get your hand into the raised-hands document.

MR. BELL: That's a new bug. I've never seen that happen before.

DR. COLLIER: We have not seen it either. Kellie has some instructions on how to change it for the Macs, but I don't know if it's working for all of them.

DR. CHEUVRONT: I'm using a Mac, and I think it does work. I think there's recently been updates in the Mac operating system that may have necessitated this change, and Kellie sent me the instructions, and it worked, but it also asked me to restart the webinar, which I didn't want to do, because knowing that I was coming up next, and so I didn't actually restart, but I actually was able to see the hand-raised icon, once I had followed the instructions.

MR. BELL: Good call on that one.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Yes, and I didn't want to sort of mess up that, but I just want to make sure that everybody can see my screen now, correct?

MR. BELL: Yes.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. Great. If we're ready, I think we're just going to jump right on into this and talk about Regulatory Amendment 31, the recreational accountability measures, and this is something that we started a couple of years ago, and we stopped it just about a year ago, but, just for either people who are listening, or just for those who might need a little refresher, what are we talking about when we talk about accountability measures?

They are generally short-term measures that are regulations that try to keep the total fish count, or total catch, under the annual catch limit, and there's basically two kinds that we're talking about here, and they are in-season measures, and those that we typically talk about are closures, in-season closures, and that's typically how we manage the commercial fishery, and we can do that much more easily in the commercial fisheries, largely because we have trip tickets, and they are much more real-time, and we have usually a longer time lag with being able to tabulate the recreational catches.

The other type of accountability measures we have are called post-season measures that are designed to correct overages, for example those catches that exceed an ACL, and they do that in a subsequent season, and so you do that either through shortened seasons, or you do something like reduce a bag or a vessel limit or something.

Now, the council has worked on this, and has actually gotten through scoping and things, and so there has been some work that has been done, and so there is a purpose and need that exists, and this presentation is Attachment 2A, but, in Attachment 2B, that is the last decision document that the council saw in December, which has all of this information, as well as some additional in-depth information about the purpose and need and the actions that we're getting ready to go through right now.

The purpose for the actions, of course, is to revise the accountability measures for the recreational sector and to address some of the uncertainty in the estimates and increase standardization and accountability measures across species and potentially as well as to improve the practicability and stability of fishing seasons. Of course, the need that we have here is to maintain optimum yield in recreational fisheries, while trying to limit discard losses and promote social and economic benefits.

What about other species, because, if you remember, back to the beginning of this discussion, we were trying to decide other species need to be included. The council decided not to include coastal migratory pelagic species from the beginning, because those accountability measures are really handled differently, and there may be some Gulf Council issues that the amendment -- Whatever things that this council would come up with, they would have to be approved by the Gulf Council, et cetera.

Dolphin and wahoo were going to be originally, and originally were a part of this amendment, but you may remember that those actions were removed and were put into Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10, and now the council is actively working on those AMs for dolphin and wahoo in that amendment, and they are further along in their development than what is happening for snapper grouper species.

We've got three actions at this point, and, early on, we went through this, and there were actually, at one point -- I think, when we had dolphin and wahoo in here, I think we were up to eight or nine actions, and the council had done some work in refining and drilling-down on some of the more important issues that they were concerned about, but where we left it, in December of last year, is it was at these three actions.

The first action was to consider removing in-season closures for all snapper grouper species, or keeping them just for those species that were reported to Congress as being overfished. Now, that's what -- That is all that the council had seen and decided on, and one thing the council hadn't discussed was a recommendation by the IPT, which was to look at -- Instead of just considering whether or not they were overfished, it was also to look at the value of the PSE and using that as a criterion to determine whether you should consider in-season closures or not.

The second action in the amendment is the notion of considering removing all post-season accountability measures. Now, I am going to point out, and it's laid out pretty clearly in the document, that, if your recommendation, or your decision, as the council, is to get rid of in-season closures for any species, then that species has to have a post-season accountability measure. Magnuson-Stevens requires that all species have to have an accountability measure, and so it either has to be an in-season or a post-season, and you just can't get rid of them altogether, and they are required by MSA, and so, like I said, you have to have one or the other, and so one place or the other.

The action also considers removing any existing post-season accountability measure trigger. For example, we have some that are kind of all over the place, and so the idea was let's come up with something that might be able to be the same across all the species, and so one was to look at the three-year average, if average landings exceeds the ACL, or the sum of the past three years landings exceeds the sum of the last three years of ACLs.

There's a slight difference in the variation there, because, in some cases, the ACLs can change from one year to the next, and so that can vary there, and there are some differences, when you look at the sub-alternatives, for exactly how you calculate the average, and that might sound kind of odd to some of you, but there are different ways that you can use, especially when the distribution of the numbers is not normal, and you're only using three numbers, and there are other ways that you can look at calculating the averages.

Then the third way of looking at a trigger was to look at the combined total ACL, and, when you add the commercial and the recreational landings together, is the total ACL exceeded, and so that was to determine whether you just wanted to go with a biological approach to this or whether you wanted to consider staying with keeping each sector within its own separate sector ACL. Then, also, Action 2 also has what would happen if the ACL was triggered, and the language is still in there to monitor for persistence in increased landings and reduce the ACL, and then that could either be by the amount of the overage or do whatever action is necessary to keep the recreational ACL from being exceeded, and we talked about that briefly earlier. That can either be, again, reduce to season, or it can be doing something like modifying bag limits and vessel limits and things like that, or size limits, changing size limits, those sorts of things.

Then the final action considers requiring a specific start and end date for additional species other than just black sea bass and red snapper and do that, and just do it across-the-board, or do it whether it's just based on the ACL was exceeded at least one time in the past three years. Now, black sea bass, I believe in the most recent years, they have announced the beginning of the season, but they haven't needed to announce the end of the season, because it wasn't expected to close during the fishing year, and so they have just left it open all year, but, of course, as we all know, red snapper has very specific dates of when the recreational sector is going to be allowed to fish and not fish.

The idea that was proposed here was that this would help the for-hire sector, when it comes time to sell trips, and they would know when they could book those trips and give them some definite information about that.

Now, the timeline for this amendment, it began in March of 2018, and it went out for scoping in January of 2019. Now, the council said, in December of 2019, that they wanted to pause it until more information could be known about how the MRIP revisions that we were all discussing a year ago would affect the ACLs and the sector allocations, and so we do have some next steps here, and that it to prepare a draft amendment and develop further actions and alternatives, if you decide to continue work on it, but then I had some additional next steps, or questions, that the council might want to discuss in terms of doing this.

That is, does the council have enough information about the MRIP calibration to move forward, and how do sector allocations fit into this now? What does the council want to do about continuing work on this amendment?

I want to move back here, and, now, I'm through with my part of the presentation, and so, if somebody else wants to take over and drive the presentation at this point, that's fine, but I also have the hands-raised document up, and so I can continue showing from my screen, if you want to, in case somebody wants to go back through something on the presentation.

MR. BELL: That might make more sense, if that's okay with you, Brian.

DR. CHEUVRONT: That's fine with me. I will do it however you all want to do it.

MR. BELL: Okay. So then, since he has the presentation up, any questions for Brian right now about the presentation and where we are and how we landed where we are or anything from a technical standpoint of what he just presented? Chester.

MR. BREWER: I apologize for complicating things, but there is another aspect, I guess, you would say, with regard to recreational management, and that is our Section 102 stuff, which would play into discussions that we're having about accountability measures and all of those things, and so I would just throw that out, and not to complicate things, because we do, supposedly, have some new tools in the toolbox, from the standpoint of managing recreational fisheries.

MR. BELL: Yes, and that's what we were saying earlier, and remember that there's going to be some interconnectivity with these things we're talking about, and so that's why we wanted to make sure we had plenty of time at the end where we can have discussions that kind of could range across any of the topics we were presented and places where they tie together, and that might enable us to come up with some better recommendations at the end, to kind of take the big picture into consideration. Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Thanks, Mel. I don't have a question, per se, about the presentation, but I was going to give some feedback in response to these questions. My feeling is the answer to the first question here, under next steps, is no, we don't. We are definitely learning as we go about the effect of the MRIP recalibrations, and I don't think we're mature enough on our understanding of all that, certainly to how the allocations are going to be affected by these recalibrations, and so, as much as I would like to keep moving forward and make progress and get things done, I don't know that we're -- At least, personally, I don't think we're at the point where we can move forward with this amendment in an informed manner.

MR. BELL: That being how the MRIP recalibrations play into allocations, and we've got to work through the allocations before you're in a better position to move on something like this, I guess. Okay. That's good feedback. Any other questions or feedback or observations at this point about the particular topic of accountability measures and whether or not we think we might want to move forward?

MR. POLAND: To the questions on the screen, I agree with Spud that we don't have enough information yet on the effect of the MRIP recalibration, but I don't know at what point we're going to have enough information to where we feel comfortable to move forward. I mean, this amendment is looking at accountability measures for the snapper grouper fishery, and we have ABC recommendations that took into account the new MRIP estimates for most, if not all, and

staff can correct me if I'm wrong, but most, if not all, of the unassessed species in this complex, and we're slowly getting in assessments now that are using the new MRIP estimates.

I don't know at what point we'll feel comfortable enough to address these accountability measures. I mean, part of me wants to continue work on this action, because it's these accountability measures that directly impact the recreational sector. I mean, this is what the recreational sector feels, when there is an in-season closure or reduced season the following year, and, granted, that hasn't happened a whole lot recently, but these are the actions that they see and they feel.

In the Section 102 workgroup, as Chester pointed out, we're working on this issue, relative to the new mandates in the Modernizing Fish Act, and we will hopefully have some recommendations for the two councils within 2021, and so, I mean, we might could put it on pause for a little bit, until we get that report, but this just isn't something that I want to just keep throwing on the back burner and expecting new information that is probably not going to really shine a lot of light on us one way or the other. We're moving forward with it in things like the dolphin wahoo fishery, and we're kind of wrestling with those accountability measures and then those other questions of defining optimum yield for the two sectors and that kind of stuff, and so that's my thoughts on that, and I'm anxious to hear everyone else.

MR. BELL: Okay. Thanks for that, Steve. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Mel. Just to add to what both Steve and Chester said, I really feel like this Modern Fish Act Workgroup has really spent a couple of meetings just diving down into the details and getting a lot of presentations and background information, and I feel like, maybe at the next meeting, they're going to really dive into making some recommendations, or thinking about some of these difficult challenges, and hopefully making recommendations.

One of the things that I was hoping that the workgroup could talk about were these accountability measures, because I feel like this is going to be key moving forward in thinking about how we do things differently. To me, this brings in things like the National Standard 1 and the guidance on that, and it allows us to look at carryover and phase-in and other things, and, just me personally, I would like to start those discussions with that workgroup and see where the Gulf Council folks on that group are thinking about going and then maybe come back to this amendment.

I like how we've pulled the dolphin wahoo pieces out, and they are moving in that amendment, and I also like how, as these stock assessments come in, and we look at allocation, that we're starting to look at accountability measures that are species-specific, and so I don't want this AMs amendment to go away, but I think it needs to kind of get in line behind some other things that are already in progress that I think are going to inform this, and so that's just my two-cents there.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Jessica, and I get it, the connection to the workgroup, and it's fortuitous that we have the workgroup up and running, and we'll hear more about that later as well, but there may be some things that can be done at that level to feed back into our discussions and moving forward. Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: I just wonder if it would be helpful if we were a little more specific about what information is it that we think we need but don't have, and it's not entirely clear to me.

MR. BELL: Okay. Does anyone want to weigh-in on that, Roy's question, at this point? Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thanks, Mel. I mean, I'm not going to speak for Spud, but, at least from my perspective, I think the questions -- The lack of information that's still out there relative to MRIP, at least to me, is just on a stock-by-stock basis, and, basically, those stocks that have been assessed with the new catch series in there, and how that affects not only stock status, but later feeds into our discussions on sector allocations and that kind of stuff. For me, it's not necessarily needing more information about the MRIP survey and that, but it's just seeing how the new MRIP catch series affects those assessments.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Steve. Anna.

MS. BECKWITH: I take a slightly different perspective. I mean, I think, when we started discussing this, one of the biggest reasons we were moving forward with this, at least in my mind, was because there was some uncertainties with MRIP, and we were looking at how to handle those species with high PSEs, and I'm looking at this as an opportunity to sort of manage that and say, if we know that a closure has got the potential to occur because of these sort of outlier numbers, and how do we handle that, and, well, we don't do an in-season closure if the PSEs are above 40 percent or whatnot.

To me, moving forward with this was a way of handling some of those challenges that we were faced with while we got more information, and this was sort of making sure that we knew that we were working with a slightly flawed system at times, and so how do we work within that, but I don't know what more information we would get that would give us alternatives that are outside the ones that are being considered, but, for me, the interest was acknowledging that those high PSEs really maybe weren't appropriate for closures.

MR. BELL: Okay. Thanks, Anna. I am just trying to see -- You are retooling the questions there, Brian, or are you just capturing stuff, or --

DR. CHEUVRONT: I am just trying to capture some of the major parts that lead back to the question that Roy originally raised about what do we mean by "enough information", and I wasn't quite sure, and I was thinking about how to describe what Anna was just talking about, and I think I captured what Steve's comment was, and I'm just trying to put in certain bullet statements. If that's incorrect, Steve, if you could correct me on that, or somebody, and I'm not quite sure -- If people have suggestions on what to put in for some of those bullet statements for that, for Roy's question about what is meant by enough information, that would be really helpful.

MR. BELL: I guess, folks, if you want to think about that, if there's something we could identify right now that would be useful and what would enable us then to move forward, or feel more comfortable about moving forward, and, if we could identify that, that would be great. Steve.

MR. POLAND: I was just going to tell Brian that captures it, and you're on the paper, as far as my comments.

MR. BELL: Okay. We've had a couple of comments from folks that seem to feel like, again, this is something we definitely need to do, but we don't -- We didn't seem to be comfortable in moving with it right now, and let's see what the working group that is put in place, for us and the Gulf,

what comes out of that that might help us make a better decision down the line, and does anybody feel a necessity to move in a more timely manner on this amendment? We've got, so far, just a couple of folks kind of saying that, yes, we should move, but not right this second with it, and is there a necessity to move quicker than -- We seem to be kind of moving in a direction of moving, but a little bit more -- With some input. Does anybody feel a necessity to move quicker? Myra, is your hand up?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, Mel, and thank you. Just for the record, and this is probably obvious to everybody, and so forgive me, but one thing that the council always has the option to do is to address these accountability measure modifications on a species-by-species basis, and we do have several snapper grouper amendments that are under development, or soon to be, and so there's always that option as well. This was -- When we first got started with this amendment, the idea was to bring consistency, and it was a lot easier to just kind of do all the revisions all at once, across-the-board, to make sure that the AMs were going to be consistent, but clearly there is going to be things that are going to be considered for some species more than others, and that sort of thing, and so that's always an option that you still have as well. Thank you.

MR. BELL: Right, and that's a very good point. Instead of trying to have this as sort of a one-size-fits-all, we still could move forward species-by-species as well. Any other input or questions on this or discussion right now? We're going to come back to everything later as well, but, as we're kind of on this topic -- No hands. Okay. All right. Well, seeing no hands, we could -- We've got time to run through the next item before -- We were talking about breaking maybe at 12:30, I think, for lunch, and we've got -- Can we cover the next item in an hour?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think so, Mel. As I said, the next topic has a few breaking points in there, on the MyFishCount, and so I think we could get the general introduction out of that, about the program and its background, and then, depending on how long that takes, maybe we could break before we get into the slides on the data that Chip was going to go through.

MR. BELL: Okay. Forgive me for -- I am sitting here, and I can't read you all's faces or what's going on with you, and does anybody feel the need to take a break for like five actual minutes? You can just speak up, and we can take a break.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

MR. BELL: Okay. I'm not Michelle, but I'm doing pretty good, in terms of pushing along, and so why don't we -- John, should we take ten?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think we'll take about five, while we get transferred over.

MR. BELL: Okay. Why don't we be back here at 11:35. Do you want to do the raise-your-hand thing when you get back, or will we just start at 11:35? I'm good either way.

MR. CARMICHAEL: If folks want to raise their hands, then we'll know. We'll know when we're ready to start, and that would be appreciated.

MR. BELL: All right. See you in five.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MR. BELL: I think we've got everybody, and so BeBe is going to run us through a presentation on MyFishCount, and then we can have some discussion about that and how it might be able to help us out, or at least give us some thinking and direction that might be beneficial to this whole thing, towards the end, and so go ahead, BeBe, if you're on there.

MS. HARRISON: Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the council for allowing me to present today, and so I think how we're going to roll is that I'll do a little bit of the background, and you've heard the background numerous times, and so that will be very brief, and I'll talk about the outreach efforts to-date, and then we'll probably break for lunch, and then, after lunch, we'll do data slides from Chip Collier, and then Brian Chevront will do the survey, some of the survey information, and then, at the very end, I will have a, dare I say, fireside-chat-type talk, and I'm going to kind of just wrap it all up, and so thank you, again, for letting us present.

As you have heard before, in 2017, the MyFishCount pilot project began with the Angler Action Foundation and funding from National Marine Fisheries Service. Web design was done by Elemental Methods, and the project began with gathering information from the red snapper mini-season, but, from there, it expanded in lots of ways, and so the project was a true pilot project, gathering data from users and adapting the app and web portal, as we learn from people using the app. MyFishCount is now fully usable year-round, for all species found in the South Atlantic states, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina, and not just coastal counties. It covers the entire states.

This encourages anglers who fish in different areas, inshore and offshore and freshwater, wherever, to log all their trips and keep them in one location. The input from anglers drove tons of the improvements, but that portion of expanding allowed a more -- A better flow for anglers that were really truly looking to log, and it provided that habit for getting them involved.

The outreach for the project was pretty in-depth, and much more than this graphic can really depict. Each year, a report is delivered, following the red snapper mini-season, to participants in the app first, and then it's released publicly, and so the MyFishCount users do get to see that report first, and the report shows what red snapper numbers and information they're reporting and it makes a big difference that the people, or fishery managers, are listening, and that's how it comes across to them.

Other outreach included several updates to the MyFishCount website, the addition of a Facebook page and Instagram page, monthly newsletters and incentives to share the app with friends, updated training videos, working with state partners, working with several industry partners, and numerous in-person outreach events, prior to the pandemic. Those included fishing seminars, fishing club presentations, marketing presentations to state entities, conferences, store visits, and tons more.

The social media outreach really helped MyFishCount reach an additional audience that they hadn't reached before, and there are definitely pros and cons to that social approach, but some of the cons hopefully will be turned into pros in the future. For example, we reached a lot of anglers beyond the South Atlantic that showed interest. Working with industry partners and influencers allowed MyFishCount to gain some momentum and develop a following to help encourage others to download and begin logging trips.

Here, we've got some graphs, thanks to Nick Smylie, who put together a lot of information for us, synthesizing that, so that you could see the correlations for us, but, looking at these, you can see some of the major events, including the in-person events, correlated to the number of downloads and trips logged. You can note that there is a strong presence of downloads and trips that are logged during the red snapper mini-seasons, which is also about the time of ICAST, and so you can also note sharp increases during what was the Sportfishing Industry Summit by ASA and the four saltwater seminar series in the spring of this year.

There were several efforts to engage app users, including accepting feedback, directly contacting the app users, and time prohibited a lot of that communication, and we had app users and their friends follow us on social media and participate in incentives, and we did some contacting of lapsed users, to re-engage, and surveying the app users. There, you can see some of those events and that bring Engel cooler that was donated, which was great, and that went to one of our incentive winners.

Another way that we engaged app users was using a newsletter, and each of those newsletters, monthly newsletters, had four main parts, in most issues, and there were a few that were different, but, in most issues, there was an opening message, an incentive from an industry sponsor, a best fishing practice, and that was used as a way to encourage responsible angling and get folks familiar with some of those best fishing practices, and then we highlighted an app user, to bring more buy-in from folks, and every single angler that I contacted about being the highlight angler in the newsletter, and we spread it far and wide, and we covered all four states, but they not only gave me permission to use their name and their photo, but they also gave me, in every single case, a detailed description of why they used the app or why they thought it was important to use it.

One of the updates that Elemental Methods made was to allow us, on our end of the app, to be able to quickly view all the photos that were entered, and I will touch on that a little bit more at the end of the presentation, but this photo on this cover was one of the photos that was entered during this year's red snapper season.

On the incentive front, we knew we couldn't reward folks for entering, for example, multiple species or logging a certain number of trips, because that could skew the data, but, instead, we offered an incentive to folks for spreading the word, and that was a good way to share that MyFishCount is a valuable and free tool and that people should be using it, and so they didn't get rewarded for logging number of trips, but they got rewarded for tagging other people or sharing it on their page.

As we were getting our feet wet with all of the incentives, and building up to some of the big brands, we saw some growth due to those incentives, but, with a combination of some major brands and the pandemic shutting down the in-person outreach, we leaned on that social media a little heavier, and we saw a surge in reach and engagement over the summer months, with June, July, and August showing the highest marks, and those were a lot of our monthly sponsor logos at the bottom there.

Our June post highlighted that it was National Fishing and Boating Week, and one of Plano's big projects -- They are very interested in helping to spread the word and participate in National Fishing and Boating Week, and so that allowed us to piggyback on that and secure Plano as our

incentive partner for June, which was a huge month of getting reach and engagement. During July, everyone was a winner, and so everybody that participated could send a photo, direct message, of their app open, and tag and share on their page, and then we mailed a sunglasses bag to them.

In August, that showed the most growth in our Instagram following, where we offered a \$100 gift card from Huk, and that was about a 350 percent increase in our following that month, and we worked really, really hard to create these partnerships with the industry, and we especially reached out to a lot of the industry partners within the South Atlantic region.

As mentioned, the in-person events were highly successful in recruiting new downloads, in hopes of getting more app users to log trips, and the Poveromo seminar series was an incredible place to recruit all of these new download -- Or all these new users, and his shows really consisted of our target audience, which was recreational anglers.

There were very few, or maybe not any, extraneous attendees. If you were at that event, you fished, or you wanted to, and so his support at these shows was really encouraging and supportive. He encouraged folks to come out in the hallway and check us out and see what we were about, and he even did this commercial, and I think you have seen it, but I'm going to play it for you again, because I'm pretty proud of it, but this is what we debuted at ICAST this year.

Like I said earlier, we're going to have some information on the data and the survey findings from Chip and Brian, but this was a natural stopping point, to see if there were any questions in regard to outreach, and, like I said, I will also be following up the presentation with some general observations, at the very end, of the things that I actually saw on the ground while I was out, and so I will open the floor.

MR. BELL: All right, BeBe. Thanks. Any questions at this point about what BeBe has gone through, related to outreach and all. Chester.

MR. BREWER: BeBe, thank you for that report. That's very, very encouraging. I just wanted to point out that the guy that's on the pier that's holding a snook --

MS. HARRISON: Yes.

MR. BREWER: I am pretty sure that's not a legal snook. It's too big.

MS. HARRISON: We'll be talking about that too at the end. That's one of the things that we'll have to consider, that will have to be considered. When you get your information reported, you're going to see everything, good, bad, ugly, legal, illegal, random mug in an office, strange pictures, and so that's one of the things to really consider and think about. I can go in there and look in that and see if it was released, see if it was kept, or how it was reported, but, generally thinking, and I will -- If Chip or Brian or Myra want to jump in on that, but this is a tool, and this is what you're going to get with some of these.

MR. BELL: It's kind of like interacting with fishermen at a boat landing sometimes.

MS. HARRISON: Right.

MR. BELL: Any other questions? If you see any, Chip, you can let me know, and we can call on people, or you can call on people.

DR. COLLIER: I am not seeing any hands right now, and I'm not seeing any emails.

MR. BELL: Okay. If we're clear on questions right now, what's the next step then, BeBe?

MS. HARRISON: We can continue on to the next thing, which would be data, or we can -- If you want to stop now, just let me know, but we've got three sections, and so I'm happy to continue on, or we can break now.

MR. BELL: Got you, and so Chip is the next section. Chip, how long would that take, or would it be better to break here, right at about noon, and come back, or do you want to do that and then we come back?

DR. COLLIER: My section will only take five or ten minutes.

MR. BELL: Okay. Well, why don't we go ahead and roll into that then.

DR. COLLIER: All right. As BeBe had mentioned, this app has been available for fishermen to use for almost three years now, being available as an app, a little over three years, and so what I wanted to do is update you guys on the information that's been collected so far in MyFishCount and then provide some comparisons to what's available through MRIP.

One of the big concerns with data that has been collected by self-reported anglers is there might be some bias associated with the data, and so what I have provided here is the length distribution for MyFishCount in blue and MRIP in red for four different species. Up on the top-left is black sea bass, and the top-right is red snapper. The bottom-left is gray triggerfish, and the bottom-right is king mackerel. Here, you can see there is a little bit of larger fish reported for black sea bass, compared to what was reported by MRIP, and you can see that, in general, most of the anglers were reporting fourteen-inch fish in MyFishCount for black sea bass and about thirteen-inch fish for the MRIP, and that's what they are observing.

Then, if you go over to red snapper, you can see a broad distribution in both groups, with MyFishCount anglers reporting a slightly larger size distribution for fish that were kept, and then, if you go down to the bottom, it's a pretty low sample size for gray triggerfish and MyFishCount, and you can see a lot of them are right at that fifteen-inch size that they're bringing in right now. Then, finally, king mackerel, you can see that it's a low number of fish that have been reported in MyFishCount, but you can see it's beginning to follow that same pattern that's been observed in MRIP data.

The other good thing about MyFishCount is you begin to get information on released fish, and, if you go to the next slide, BeBe, in here, I had the exact same data, where MyFishCount remains in blue for kept fish, and MRIP is in red, and then that great area behind it is the size distribution for the released fish, and so, for all these species, it kind of makes sense. For black sea bass, you have a minimum size limit at thirteen inches, and you can see that many of the fish are being released when they are under thirteen inches.

Red snapper, you have pretty much a year-round, or you have a very small open season, and so you're going to be releasing a lot of fish throughout the year, and you can see a variety of sizes being released. For gray triggerfish, fishermen have always said that they only keep fish over a certain size, and you can kind of see that in the MyFishCount data. Then, for king mackerel, once again, you begin to see smaller fish being released, and then you also start to see some of the larger fish being released. You hear a lot of fishermen say that they don't want to keep the larger king mackerel, due to the quality of the meat issues.

If you go to the next slide, building on this, this is some of the new information that's being provided through MyFishCount, and the first one that we have is, obviously, length of fish released, and I just give you numbers of fish that have been reported in this, and it's not -- This is just a random selection of fish from a couple of different FMPs, and so we have the Snapper Grouper FMP represented, with black sea bass, gag, gray triggerfish, red porgy, and red snapper, and we also have the dolphin wahoo fishery, and that's represented by dolphin, and then we have the king mackerel fishery represented by -- The coastal migratory pelagics represented by king mackerel.

Here, we're beginning to get information on the length of releases, but we also have the treatment of release as well, and that's important when you're thinking about survivorship for stock assessments and also the benefits of a regulation. Recently, the council -- You guys enacted the regulation to require descending devices, and now we're getting some information on whether the fish are not treated, if they're vented, or if they're descended, or if they're even descended and vented, and so we're getting some good information on how the release treatment is going.

Now we also get information on depth of capture, and this is extremely important, when you get depth of capture and release treatment, and so what we were finding with red snapper species, where we have a lot of information, is we're seeing that fishermen are actually releasing the fish without treatment in shallow water, but, in deeper waters, where they are seeing signs of barotrauma, they are actually either releasing the fish by venting or they are descending the fish, and so that's going to be important for stock assessments, once again, knowing how the survivorship of these released fish are doing, but it could also be useful for understanding how species are shifting. Not all species are necessarily going to move up north, and some might move to deeper water, where it might be a little bit cooler, and so we might be able to figure this out over time, as we're gathering more and more information.

These are the last two that I wanted to talk about, and we also get information on fishing location, and so fishing location is important when we begin thinking about marine planning, and we do have the Kitty Hawk wind farm that is being proposed up off the northern part of the range that the council manages, and so understanding where recreational fishermen are going is going to be very important, moving forward, as some of these marine developments are going on. It's also important for understanding the impacts of managed areas. Right now, we don't have very much location data, and understanding, when we're placing these managed areas out there, what kind of impact we could be having on the recreational fishery.

The next slide goes over -- We do have a button in there now for sharks, and so we do have black sea bass being eaten, and red snapper being eaten, by sharks, and this is an opportunity for fishermen to provide information on what kind of predation, or depredation, is occurring on some of the managed species. Right now, we're not going to be able to quantify the overall impact of

this, but we might be able to look among species, to see which ones might be most commonly eaten by sharks, and then, over time, as we gather more and more data, we might be able to see how these things are changing.

Then this is going to be my final slide that I have on the data, and one of the things we've been talking about quite a bit is the validity of self-reported data, and, here, I have a plot of the length and the weight, and the weight is on the Y-axis, and the length is on the X-axis. Each point represents a fish where the user reported both the length and the weight for that fish. In red, there is the SEDAR length-weight relationship that was created in SEDAR 41 for red snapper, and then we also have a power function that's been estimated through these points, and you can see how well the self-reported data does match up with what was reported in the last stock assessment. Even though there is a pretty big spread on the data, it ends up being fairly accurate, as far as the length-weight relationship.

That is all that I was going to provide for the data, and I didn't want to go too far into the details of it, and I know you guys are talking about bigger-picture items, but I just wanted to let you know what self-reported data looks like and what can be collected in a voluntary program like this.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Chip. That's informative, to kind of know that this tool can provide some additional things related to management and all, and so it's kind of nice to see how those actually work out. Any questions for Chip at this point about the data aspect, the types of data? Rich.

DR. CODY: Chip, just a couple of questions. When you showed the length distribution for released catch from MRIP, that wouldn't have come from the dockside survey, and so did it come from -- Is it at-sea?

DR. COLLIER: That was for kept fish from MRIP.

DR. CODY: Kept fish. Okay. Good. Then the second one is I know you showed the length-weight relationship, and why would you expect it to be different for the reported catch from the app versus what is sort of reported in SEDAR, because the length-weight is something that would be, I would think, unimpacted by the reporting.

DR. COLLIER: I think that's a really good point, and it's just one of those things that's out there, that self-reported data might not be that accurate, and this is indicating that it can be fairly accurate. In this instance, with them reporting both length and weight, I think it shows the utility that there are pieces of information in self-reported data that might be valid and could be useful in future descriptions of what's going on in the recreational catch.

DR. CODY: Thanks, Chip.

MR. BELL: All right. Any other hands? Clay.

DR. PORCH: Thank you. Chip, looking at the size distribution for -- I think it was for black sea bass and red snapper, but it seems that the MyFishCount has a much higher proportion of the larger fish, and, in fact, the difference is quite significant, and so I wonder why you think that might be happening. Do you think you're possibly tending to get more high-liners reporting to

MyFishCount that are fishing in a way that targets bigger fish, and they're just more effective at their targeting?

DR. COLLIER: I think, for black sea bass, we focused on offshore anglers, and so we're not going to get some of the trips that are catching black sea bass from shore, and so that could be some of the issue. If you look at the size distribution, there's a lot of undersized fish that are being observed in MRIP, and so that was a little bit of a concern. In looking at the red snapper data, and so, here, once again, the releases are in green that were reported by MyFishCount, and it's kept fish in red for MRIP, and then MyFishCount is in blue.

If you look at red snapper, it just could be the longer season. For MRIP, they're only sampling during the mini-seasons, and we had fishermen that were -- Never mind. For kept fish, they would be the same, and it could be the area where we're getting -- If we're missing some of it, and I'm not exactly certain, for red snapper, and gray triggerfish could be a low sample size issue, and the same thing with king mackerel.

As we get more and more fish, we're going to be able to figure this out, but, looking back at Ryan Jiorle's paper that he did with Rob Ahrens, he was indicating that the length distribution that are reported by fishermen are pretty good, and there's additional research that is showing that the length distribution in some of these self-reported programs can be good, and it just needs to be validated and made sure that it's expanded in the proper way to best represent the catch.

DR. PORCH: Thank you for that, Chip, and especially for the discards, because we have so little information on there, and so I can see how this could be really, really useful in the future.

DR. COLLIER: Thank you.

MR. BELL: Any other hands or questions for Chip related to the data component that he briefed us on?

DR. COLLIER: I am not seeing any other hands.

MR. BELL: Okay. Well, hearing none, hearing no hands, what would be -- You said there's another thing that you guys were going to brief on this before we kind of break back around to the end, or was it --

DR. COLLIER: Brian has done another survey of the anglers in MyFishCount, and he was going to give some of the results of that.

MR. BELL: Okay. Brian, would that be good to do in say twenty minutes or so?

DR. CHEUVRONT: Mr. Chairman, we could probably get pretty close to that, and we may need to have some discussion after lunch or something, but I think we can probably get through the presentation, or pretty darned close to it, by 12:30.

MR. BELL: Okay. I think that was the original intent on the schedule, and why don't we go ahead and do that, and then we can come back and hit questions after lunch.

DR. CHEUVRONT: That's fine with me.

MR. BELL: All right.

DR. CHEUVRONT: I am going to be talking about two sections here related to MyFishCount. The first is I'm going to go briefly over what we're doing about the transition, and some of you may know that MyFishCount was funded through grant monies, and actually two separate grants that the council received, but we worked with the Angler Action Foundation from the very beginning in the development of MyFishCount, and, in this last grant, when BeBe was hired, we focused largely on outreach and recruitment and retention.

What we're doing now is we're into the final months of MyFishCount funding, and the grant money was carried over for one year in our grant cycle, and it's going to end at the end of this calendar year, and so we've been working on our transition, so that, at the end of this calendar year, the Angler Action Foundation is going to be solely responsible for managing MyFishCount. We're still going to be supporting it, in the sense of promoting, but not actually working on the development of the app any longer, and so I don't want to go too much in-depth here, but we're going to continue to encourage anglers to use the app, and we are able to update the data that are collected by the app to the ACCSP data portal, and so we are able to do that.

We're actually working on developing automated methods now, with Elemental Methods and the Angler Action Foundation, to automate much of this, and using human intervention to develop rules and criteria for deciding whether there are errors or anything in the data, so that we can correct the data as much as possible, so that we're sending only the highest quality data possible to the ACCSP and correcting as many errors that may possibly be there before the data get up there.

This slide just shows the timeline, from the time that we worked out our transition plan, and the plan is that, by early December, less than a month from now, that MyFishCount will transition over to the Angler Action Foundation, and we will be working on focusing our attention on largely writing our final grant reports and getting our final work done and getting that turned in, but, as I said, the council is not walking away from MyFishCount, and we will continue to encourage the use of MyFishCount, work on outreach, and, in fact, we have some coordinated outreach efforts with the Angler Action Foundation as well as making sure that MyFishCount continues to collect data that are designed to help fisheries management.

That's how MyFishCount was developed from the very beginning, and it was to collect the data that fisheries managers were going to need to help them manage the fisheries. I think I have pretty much hit most of these things, and we're continuing to do it, through using social media, et cetera, to continue the outreach, and now let's get into some of the survey results.

There were two major survey efforts that occurred, one with each of the two grant funding mechanisms, and the 2020 survey that we did, earlier this year, had some survey questions that overlapped with some of the survey questions that were asked that were conducted by a researcher from UNC Chapel Hill, and, now, the survey that we did, we were always -- Everything that we've done is in partnership with the Angler Action Foundation, and so we partnered with them to do the survey that we've got.

Our survey in 2020 focused on many of the same things that happened in 2018, but we also looked more closely at what drives an angler to download the app and to report, and we're also interested in what drives anglers to consistently report. Now, we've done a lot of analysis on the survey results, and what I really want to do here is to provide you with some highlights, and it would be overly tedious to go through everything, and so I'm not going to do that. That will all be available in our final report.

I did want to show some of the results that we have, and about 95 percent of the respondents were male, and the average age of men was about fifty-six, almost fifty-seven, years old, and women tended to be an average of forty-one years old, but you can see the minimum and maximum ages of men and women who responded to the survey. Now, we had 260 respondents to our survey this year, and it was sent to -- The surveys were sent to all of the MyFishCount-registered users, and we had more respondents than they did in 2018, and we had over twice as many respondents than they did.

The respondents -- To get folks to participate, we were actually able to offer an incentive that, if they would fill out the survey, that they were able to get three free issues of *Saltwater Sportsmen Magazine*, and so, when they finished the survey, and it was done online, they got a link that took to them where they could sign up to get three free issues of the magazine.

One of the things that I wanted to point out is that the percentage of the respondents from each state pretty much matched what we saw in 2018, and it was very, very close, and we only had -- We had 5 percent of the respondents actually come from out of state, and I think, largely, when we were able to do outreach and other materials, a lot of these were folks, I think, who had attended an event in one of our four states, or were fishing in one of our four states, and that's how they found out about MyFishCount and participated in it.

What we did is we asked people about their private saltwater trips last year, and we have two columns of information here, and you can see how many trips people reported that they took last year, and we looked at just all saltwater trips versus those who also targeted snapper grouper, and you can see that there were eleven folks who had said that they didn't take any trips last year, out of our 260, but the vast majority of people took some trips, with the majority of all private trips being two to three trips per month, and, when we look at snapper-grouper-targeted species, they were about one trip per month. When you think about it, usually those snapper grouper trips are further offshore, and it takes a bit more effort to get out there, but there are a significant number of folks who are taking two to three trips per month, on both sides, whether they're targeting snapper grouper species or just all trips.

One of the things we also -- Because this followed along with the survey that we did in 2018, we wanted to look at the importance of snapper grouper species compared to other species, and so this shows here the number of folks who were saying things like snapper grouper species importance compared to others, and, really, the majority of folks were saying that snapper grouper species were among the most important target species.

Now, this result may be a little bit biased, because remember that all of the people who signed up for MyFishCount who had created a profile, and that included the people who signed up during the red snapper mini-seasons, especially earlier on, were included, and so there is the potential for a little bit of repeated measure design here, and some of the people who did the 2018 survey also

could have ended up on our survey, and we haven't had direct access yet to the 2018 data, and that's still being held by UNC Chapel Hill, because I believe those data have not been published yet, and they didn't want us to jump out in front of them, and so we haven't been able to match up who their respondents were specifically to ours, but we know that that possibly exists. Then there are some folks who just simply don't go offshore like that and fish for snapper grouper species, and so they don't consider those species to be particularly important.

Looking at some of the things that people said that affected their decision to report electronically, and now remember, at this point, electronic reporting is totally voluntary, and we asked folks to - - We tried to encourage them, and nobody is being coerced or forced into doing this, but I do want to point out -- You can see, on the left column, the average and what -- I want to explain kind of what those values mean, and the average score -- These were done on a Likert scale, and the range is from one to five, and one was the lowest possible score, that these things didn't influence me at all, to five being extremely influential.

In this case, when you get a score that is higher than three or so, you are trending more positively. When you get a score of three or lower, you're trending a little more negatively, but you also have to understand that, sometimes, some of the responses, especially the ones that may look negative, just may not be relevant to that respondent, but, the higher the score, it's also a measure of importance, or, in this case, influence, as well as important to me.

The way I've arranged these -- We've got a few slides that have these statements like this, and they're all arranged from highest to lowest, and so the factors that affected the decision to report electronically, the highest one was members in my angling community report electronically. The more likely they were to believe that statement, that affected their decision to report electronically, and then, also, similarly, people that they think who are like them, and not just people in their community, but the people who they think who are like them that also report electronically influenced them, and, also, companies, or agencies, that they are interested in support electronic reporting.

I think that can go some way to help explain why some of the partnerships that BeBe was able to get to help support MyFishCount influenced the greater involvement, because people, whether it was Plano or Huk or whoever, people trusted those companies, and they were pushing MyFishCount, and so that had a more positive appeal to some folks.

Other anglers believed that electronic reporting will improve management, and so, in this case here, it's less important what other people think about whether electronic reporting is going to help or not, and it was mostly about what I think and what I think about other people who are like me influenced the decision to report electronically.

What is starting now to become less important though is the expectations of fisheries managers, and fisheries managers expect them to report electronically, and the lowest influencer was I would like to improve recreational data reporting, which is a little bit counterintuitive to some of the things that we hear sometimes from some recreational folks, and it doesn't mean that it's not really important to some folks, because, on every single statement that we had, we got the full range of responses, from one to five, but it's just that the average of this was pretty low, and so this was not a huge influencer for a lot of folks.

The factors that influenced the decisions to create a MyFishCount account, folks thought it was pretty high that they wanted to participate in fisheries management, which seems a little counterintuitive to the last statement, but it matters to me whether I'm participating in fisheries management, and they also believed that using MyFishCount will help their interests as an angler, and so, if they believe that the app works, and it's going to help them, they're much more likely to participate.

It's interesting that also positively is that, if they're convinced that MyFishCount is a more efficient way to keep track of the status of fisheries than other electronic reporting systems, they are more likely to participate in creating a MyFishCount account, and somewhat positively is some people are just curious about the app, and they wanted to download it, and I will talk about -- Actually, I'm not going to talk about it in this presentation, but one of the things we did ask in the survey is about what other fisheries apps people had used, and almost 85 percent of the participants in our survey had used other fishing-related apps, and that's also important, and so we have a group of folks, at least who responded to the survey, that have had some experience with angler apps.

Not as many people used, or created, a MyFishCount account because another angler had told them so, and it doesn't mean that that's not important, but it just means that the number of people who had done that is still fairly low, and I read that -- My interpretation of that is that the mission field for BeBe is still quite great out there, and there's a lot of folks who haven't gotten the message yet, because one of the cool things is that it doesn't cost us anything when we can get one angler to tell another angler to download and use MyFishCount, but there are some folks who have done that, and so, when there is outreach, and the people that we reach through outreach are talking to others, now you have multiplied the value of the outreach that you have already done, and so that's really an important technique that could be used for the future.

The importance, and this really should be titled The Importance of MyFishCount really to me, and why is it important to me, and so the main reason why people think that MyFishCount is important to them is because they believe it really does directly help fisheries managers, and Chip showed you some of the ways that it's already starting to help fisheries management, but they also thought that it gives them the satisfaction that they're helping with conservation.

By participating, they realize that -- They think that they are being able to help protect their fishing spots from different kinds of development, and, a little less so, and, again, not because it's not important, and I think it's important to the people who participate in it, is that MyFishCount provides incentives for them to use it. There were the giveaways and the other promotions and things, and some people choose to participate in that, because they enjoy it, and others don't, and I think that is a fairly common response for lots of different apps.

One of the things that a lot of fishermen maybe aren't taking advantage of, maybe as much as they possible could is that one of the things they can do is they can go back in MyFishCount and they can check all of their fishing trips, and so, whether it's checking out what was the weather that day when I went out and I had that really great fishing trip, with all that great bite going on, and where was I, and what was going on, and how many black sea bass did I catch last year, that I reported, and all of that is tracked, and you can go back and look at that in your own MyFishCount account, and so you can keep track of your own fishing count, and it's kind of a fishing diary, so to speak. Also, one of the things that BeBe talked about is that, for some folks, it stores pictures from their fishing trips, and that can be kind of fun to do, but some folks don't use it for that.

The next thing that I want to get into is now -- Remember we got to folks who created an account, but not everybody who created an account logged trips, and we wanted to look into this and find out what's going on, and so what we did is, for those who answered the question, is did you log at least one trip using MyFishCount, and you can see that the majority of people said, no, they didn't.

If you didn't log a trip, why not? Well, the number-one response, and this is the 141 people who said that, no, they didn't, fifty-eight of them said I haven't taken a trip since I signed up with the app. Well, okay. Of those who had taken a trip, the remaining folks, some of them felt that logging a trip is too time consuming. If you have worked with the app, it has improved some, quite a bit, over time, and BeBe mentioned that it is user-driven in its development, and it's gotten better, and there are some quick data entry things, but there is a bit of a learning curve that goes with using the app, and so the first couple of trips may not seem quite as intuitive as the person thinks, and so they may have found it to be a little bit difficult.

Another one that's hard for us to work around is people said that they forget to enter trip information into MyFishCount, and how do you help out with that? That's a real tough one to get around, because, if you don't know if somebody took a trip, how do you know to remind them, and a few people found it to be too confusing, and the other reasons -- I put that on there because there was a lot of other reasons, and they were just all over the place, the reasons that people gave for not logging a trip.

Challenges that people listed for using MyFishCount, the biggest one that people said the hardest thing for them to do, in using MyFishCount, was remembering to log a trip after it is done. The second one was figuring out how to enter information. Now, there's a couple of different ways it could be done, and we've worked on trying to make it as easy as possible, but it's not a huge thing, and you can see that value is less than three, and so that means that that's probably the majority of people who responded did not find that to be a terrible problem, but it is a significant issue for a number of people.

One thing is making sure the trip is closed, so that you can open a new trip, because, once you're logging fish, the app needs to know whether you're finished with that trip or not. Now, it has an internal timing feature in it, and so it knows that, after a certain amount of time, if you haven't said, okay, we're done fishing, and it's five days later or something, it probably figures you're not still on that same trip, and so it will send you a reminder to close your trip out and all that, and so you have to go back into the app and tell the app that I'm done fishing, but, if you forget to do that, and you go in to start a new fishing trip, it's going to say, well, you didn't close out the last trip, and you might be confused by that, and so that has been an issue on occasion, and there's been times that the administrators of the app, which has included council staff members, can send reminders to people to remind them to close a trip, if they haven't done so.

Earlier on, and much less so now than early on, the app would sometimes get stuck, in development, and that doesn't happen so much today, but apparently it had happened to some people, and a few folks, and not many, and they wondered what people would think if they saw me using the app, and they were wondering if they thought that that might be -- To see if they were sort of closet app users, thinking that they were colluding with fisheries managers, and they might think that it might not be a cool thing to do in their fishing community or something like that, but that seemed not to be a huge issue. Anyway, that is the end of that presentation, and so, Mr.

Chairman, I think you said you wanted to wait until after lunch to come back and see if there's any questions.

MR. BELL: While you've got it teed-up there, if anybody just has a quick, or a couple of quick, questions for Brian, while he's got the presentation up, if you need to go back and look at something, we could handle a couple of quick ones now, and then we would come back after lunch and have a little more time for that and then to wrap it up with BeBe, and so, if anybody has a quick question -- What I would like to do is still have us -- I would like to be back in session by 1:30, and so I'm stealing a few minutes from you. Any hands? I am not hearing any hands.

DR. COLLIER: I am not seeing any hands.

MR. BELL: Okay. Anybody on a Mac that needs to raise their hand? Okay. All right. We'll follow that then, Brian, and if we could just -- We'll pick it back up at 1:30, and we can finish up with this and get on to the next agenda item, and I want to make sure that we've got plenty of time to discuss everything, big-picture-wise, and then we'll end with recommendations that we might have and anything that might come out of needing a motion or whatever, and so, if that's good, then we'll just see you back here at 1:30. Please raise your hand when you get back. That way, staff will know we've got you, and, for all the Mac users, email Chip. Good deal. Thanks, guys. See you in a little bit.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MR. BELL: It looks like we've got everybody. Let's go and pick up, and I hope everybody enjoyed your lunch, and let's pick up where we left off, and Brian had finished his presentation on the survey aspect that he covered on MyFishCount, and I know BeBe had some stuff she wanted to wrap up with, but were there any -- We didn't give a whole lot of time for questions for Brian, but are there any questions for Brian at this point related to his part of the overall presentation? No hands. Okay. Then I guess the next thing, I believe in wrapping it up, was BeBe mentioned something about kind of a session that she was going to -- That we would have some more discussion, and is that where we are?

MS. HARRISON: Yes, sir.

MR. BELL: Good deal. Okay, BeBe. I will let you take it away then, and we'll work through this. Thanks.

MS. HARRISON: All right. Well, we're just going to leave that slide in the background, and I don't have any additional slides to present, but I'm just going to kind of take a few minutes to share some of the things that I actually saw and experienced with app users over the past year-and-a-half.

Before I do that, I'm going to thank the MyFishCount team for everything, with Myra Brouwer, Brian Chevront, Chip Collier, Mike Errigo, and then I also want to give a big shoutout to the outreach team, with Cameron Rhodes, Kim Iverson, Julia Byrd, and Allie Iberle, who have been really great, and I have worked really closely with them on a lot of events and a lot of projects with this. Also, I appreciate the efforts of College of Charleston student Nick Smylie, who summarized

a lot of the data on the graphs that correlated the outreach. There will be much more of that in the final report that will be available later, maybe the first of the year.

That being said, I know a lot of you are very much in your comfort zone in the data realm, and so, when Chip gave his presentation, I think a lot of you probably felt comfortable in that zone, and not so many of you, necessarily, in the outreach zone, and cleaning data and practices to collect it can be designed and redesigned, but the outreach is a little bit different. You have to kind of do a lot of trial and error, and there is a lot more that goes into really learning, and it's a lot of human dimensions work, in addition to building those partnerships and building the actual brand of the app, and so I want you to kind of keep that in mind as I go through this, to understand that big picture and how it varies from data, and so step outside of that comfort zone.

Lessons have to be learned, and they're going to change if it's moved from voluntary to mandatory as well, and so you have to kind of look at it in the eyes of the anglers and how they will be perceiving it. Just that magnitude of the outreach is just a huge component, and I think it might be more than some folks actually even realize.

As you can see, the folks that use the MyFishCount app enter all kinds of photos, and we mentioned that earlier, but the option that I mentioned -- Elemental Methods added an option to our dashboard, and that, to me, was one of the most important and useful tools for me and my role, and that was you could just scroll and see the photos, and so you can see the trips that are added, but this one allowed you to see the photos as they were added.

No matter what, folks like to show off their catches, right or wrong, big or small, kept or released, legal or not legal, and people like to show off their photos. When I would message an angler, and that was another thing that they added on our dashboard. We could directly email an angler from their logged trip, which was a great addition, and so when I would message them, after seeing them log a fish, versus commenting on a photo of a tagged fish, they were generally excited to learn that someone was actually taking time and looking at the trip logs, and they were even more excited when you commented directly on a photo that was logged.

For example, I watched an angler log a trip who said that he had used his descending device for the first time. I reached out to that angler directly and encouraged him to continue to not only log the trips, but to add photos, and so that was one that I caught with no photos, but he said that I used my descending device for the first time, and he had gotten it at an event in Georgia.

Once the easy access to photos was established, I looked back at some of the past photos, and one angler I reached out to expressed his concern over the app not functioning properly, and Brian mentioned that, where it was getting stuck. Once I was able to help him troubleshoot, he came back as a consistent user for a while, and then there was another break that I noticed in his logged trips, and so, after reaching out again, he had actually been having health issues, and then he said that I promise to let you know when I'm getting back out on the water, and so that personal connection is one that is really, in my opinion, a requirement for success in that electronic reporting format, which is also one of the most difficult things, I think, in this electronic reporting.

Reporting to a computer can sometimes be pretty meaningless, but, if you have somebody associated with the app, and giving it a face and a name, I feel like you're going to have a stronger response to the app itself, and, although the professional and scientific approach has a standard

response email to users as the accepted way to do business, I -- Like I said, I had a tab that was added that would allow me to directly email an angler. There were computer-generated ones that we wrote script for, and they were very official sounding, but, if I saw a photo or a comment from a trip that was logged, I could respond.

One of the anglers posted a photo and said that was his PB, and so I took time to respond to the angler with a congrats on your personal best for that species, and that really catches people's attention, and it starts to lead them to becoming that committed app user that we want, but, unfortunately, time is everything, and time is money, and so, with app glitches, that have diminished a lot, daily checks on making sure that everything is working in it, and, even with me being that dedicated MyFishCount employee, there was still just not a sufficient amount of time to communicate effectively with everyone participating. There were just a lot of other job duties.

As we saw with the survey work though, we also tried different approaches to the R3 realm, or recruiting, retaining, and reactivating lapsed users, and reaching to industry, who agreed to climb onboard, was a huge time commitment, but so very worth it. We worked to show industry folks, in addition to recreational anglers, the huge contribution that this can have on fisheries management, and that did take a large portion of my time, but I feel like it paid off in so many ways.

Getting support from some of the major players, and, like, Brian mentioned, we had *Saltwater Sportsmen Magazine*, and they agreed to do the three-month subscription to all app users, and so that started at the Poveromo seminars, and so we launched that at the beginning of the year, and so, prior to that, those were the anglers that Brian mentioned. If they had registered prior to January 1, 2020, then they were given that same incentive offer, if they filled out the survey.

That was just a huge nod from the industry, in my opinion, and I actually remember sitting at the ASA summit and Scott Salyers said, but what does the app user get, and so very aware of that need and that structure, to have some sort of reward associated with it, or some -- Not necessarily a reward, but some incentive.

In addition, this paved the way for so many other sponsors to step up for promotions, and, like I showed you earlier, Plano, Z-Man, Huk, Berkley, Engel, and tons more. I think we have Berkley on pens coming up, but that George Poveromo Saltwater Seminar Series in the -- I went to all the ones that were within the South Atlantic, and I vigorously recruited app users with that show of support from Poveromo himself, and his seminars were full of recreational anglers, 500 at a time, and that was usually a sold-out audience.

Like I said, he encouraged participants, during the seminar, to come out and see what we were doing, because he believed in it, and, since those shows were a direct audience, you could definitely tell that in our data slides there, but being there and having folks show me their app, and here it is, and I downloaded it, and making sure it worked, and helping them if it didn't, and that is the in-person approach that worked. We did take incentives to those tables, and show me your app, show me your profile page, and you can get something from my table, and that was huge. Seeing and hearing peers and leaders in that fishing world talk about and use MyFishCount really did appear to be a positive step for MyFishCount success.

In saying that, the public-private partnerships -- I know a lot of people talk about that as a buzz word, but that really seems to be working, and seeing the growth of MyFishCount over the past year-and-a-half shows this, and I think, if I'm not wrong, there were about 700, a little over 750, when I came in, and I think we're at about 1,800 users now, and it's definitely growing, and so that's positive, but building relationships with the entities, the public-private partnerships, really does take time and effort, but their resources, and their teamwork, can be invaluable.

We have essentially asked these private groups and industry partners to spend their own time, and their own resources, to promote something for the greater good of the council, which will be in the future for Angler Action Foundation, and recreational fishing in general, and, really, just for fishing in general, and so they not only showed up to help, but they have, in essence, spent thousands of their own dollars in advertising and developing commercials, developing assets for us to use in social media, and even more, and so this portion of the job requires effort that is really hard for me to express in a presentation.

When I first came on, I remember asking how much my budget would be to get a commercial made like that, and, you know, he did that with his own people, his own time, and the only thing I did was write the script and provide a few still photos, and so it really was a huge nod to us.

With regard to data, yes, people want to know that they're being heard and people are actually looking at the data. I think most folks understand that better data will lead to better management, and that better management may not mean more fishing, and I think most folks understand that, but they're hopeful for the best, but, just like with the fish tagging programs that are popular, if you show participants that someone is listening, and you're showing results, I think you'll have better participation.

App users who directly see information that has been entered being shared by scientists will give a better outcome and produce a better showing of support. Again, summarizing data and making it shareable to the public, so that it shows valuable information, while maintaining anonymity, takes time and dedicated effort, and that's what we did with some of those red snapper reports. Then I also entered a few things, and that's why we did that highlight angler. A lot of times, we would highlight some particular species that they were catching.

Survey observations, after seeing some of the survey findings not match what my experiences were showing, I feel like, in a lot of cases, people might be answering the way they think they're expected to answer, instead of how they actually feel. Even though surveys are anonymous, I think that a lot of the app users answered according to what society may think they should answer, instead of how they really feel. Society says we should want to win the gift card, but the action of those participating in the events and the social outreach I think suggests otherwise.

I do find that a survey is necessary, and it's a necessary step to help evaluate efforts, but I don't feel like sometimes folks even understand certain aspects of how they are supposed to answer that survey and be forthcoming. I don't think they mean any ill-will, but I think they sometimes answer the way they think society is telling them to, and so, overall, the personal connection with the participants, in addition to the actual personality of individuals driving the outreach, I think is pretty key when determining the effectiveness of a program like this.

Many people can run the app, and many people can communicate with the industry, and you may have success, but I want folks to understand that, in my opinion, in order to have a successful electronic reporting app, it's going to take far more time, effort, and commitment from a single person who is fully supported by a team than some folks realize.

MyFishCount is leaving, and it is now going to be completely out of the hands of the council and administered by the Angler Action Foundation. The council will continue to encourage the use, through social media and things like that, but it will be run by the Angler Action Foundation, and so, as you consider that electronic reporting as a viable option to obtain information, I just want you to keep in mind that it's a tool. It can be a tool in your toolbox, but there's not a single tool, or a single organization, that can handle every aspect of data collection.

Angler Action has shown true dedication to make this a user-friendly and management -- As user-friendly and management-friendly as possible, and it's the only fishing app that has ever been developed from the beginning with management in mind, and so please remember to consider that enormous value of public buy-in. As you proceed with your choices, I just want you to -- I want to make every effort to present this as a tool, and I want you all to keep that in mind as you do that.

Remember the amount of time needed to foster all the relationships necessary to make it successful, and just keep in mind the value of the data collected, and so, with that, I am happy to answer any additional questions you may have, and I have enjoyed my time here at the council, and I'll be here until the end of the year, and thanks, everybody.

MR. BELL: Well, BeBe, thanks so much, and, like you identified earlier, this was a major team effort, but we really appreciate your hands on it and directing and the energy that you've obviously put into this, and so it has paid off, and you're right that it is a tool, and it's got potential. As you mentioned also, it will be shifting locations, but hopefully moving on, and it has some unique features to it, obviously, as you pointed out, being developed specifically to be user and management friendly, but we do thank you so much for all you have put into this, and it's a tremendous amount of work, and I know you presented to the APs as well, and we got a lot of kudos there, but any questions for BeBe right now? I am looking for hands. Okay. Any Mac people? Okay. No hands and no emails.

MS. HARRISON: Thank you all so much.

MR. BELL: Thank you, and hang on for the rest of the meeting, obviously, because we're going to have kind of a wrap-up towards the end here with things, but I do really appreciate your presentation, but, more so, I appreciate all that you've put into this, because I know it's been a tremendous amount of work, and it's a really cool program with really neat outcomes.

That will take us to Item Number 4 on the agenda, which would be a presentation, or a briefing, on the working group, the Section 102 Working Group, that is joint between the Gulf and the South Atlantic, dealing with the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Act, and so I believe I've got this right, and, Steve, are you going to kick this off?

MR. POLAND: I think John is going to do the first part, and I'm going to do the workgroup summary.

MR. BELL: Okay. I guess you need a second to tee that up, but we're just looking, basically, for an overview of what's gone on so far. As was mentioned earlier, the group has met twice already, and we have talked about the utility of working groups in other things here, and so I think this is very applicable, because, obviously, the group is touching on the same things that we're dealing with here in this discussion. Whenever you're ready, John, I will give her to you.

MR. CARMICHAEL: All right, Mel. Thank you. I'm ready. What I'm going to do is kick this off by giving an overview of the Act, the Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Act, or the Modern Fish Act, as it's been called, and it was passed in 2018, enacted on December 31, with the intent of expanding recreational fishing opportunities, and so, when we refer to the Act several times, this is what we're talking about. There are quite a few things that were in it, and several things have been addressed, and some are underway.

There are several titles within the Act, and I am just going to go through them in the order as they were presented there, and the first one, Title 1, was Conservation and Management. It had a couple of sections. Section 101 was the allocation study, and I think most of the council members probably remember the interviews being done last summer by the GAO, in the report that was completed by them, and it was available in March of this year.

The link to that report there is provided, and it's also in the documents package. I tried to get as many of these reports as I could get my hands on and put them in that package for you guys to keep up with, and, basically, this required them to work with the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils to document the process for conducting allocation reviews, and so that's something that we have gone through, and we have the report on that in-hand now.

Section 102, and the workgroup has referred to some of this stuff too, and so you'll notice that it's in these, and this is getting into the fisheries management issues, and so the first part of this was that the Secretary should submit a report that described various actions and how the councils are being flexible with recreational fisheries management approaches, and so this is a report that was completed, and it's provided in the package, and it just went through, council-by-council, and highlighted different things that the councils are doing that are sort of viewed as being a flexible approach to recreational fisheries management.

The other part of Section 102 was the idea of providing flexibility, and this is the part that's been the focus of the South Atlantic and Gulf joint working group, and so what this section said was -- It started with, in addition to complying with these various things highlighted here, which are the basic requirements of the Magnuson Act about ACLs and AMs and all of that stuff that we're so familiar with, but, within the requirements of meeting those, the councils would have authority to use a variety of flexible, as they have been termed, fisheries management measures.

They highlighted things such as extraction rates, fishing mortality targets, harvest control rules, and then traditional or cultural practices of native communities, which is more of use, I think, on the west coast so far than what we've certainly seen here in our area, but this is the section that led to this workgroup that Steve will be talking about next and that is currently underway.

Title 1 had Section 103, which was a LAPP study, and this study is underway, and I have provided a link to the National Academies page that details the study, and they're supposed to be looking at limited access privilege programs in mixed-use fisheries, and so that one is underway.

Then we get into Title 2, which was information, research and development, and Section 201 required a data report, and this was also completed in I think sometime around late last year, or early this year, and so you've got that document also in your package, and this was where they looked at how data had been used and some of the ways of bringing in state data and such, as far as use in stock assessments and estimating recreational catches and monitoring recreational fisheries, the key phrasing being there "greater incorporation of data, analysis, stock assessments, and surveys from state agencies and non-governmental sources". This was the thing addressing the better use of state data, essentially.

Section 202 was recreational data collection, and this was trying to develop best practices for federal and state partnerships, and it was requiring another evaluation by the National Academies of Sciences, and this one is directed at how MRIP can be improved to better meet the needs of in-season management of ACLs, and then also looking at what actions -- Essentially federal management, the Secretary, the councils, and the states could take to improve the accuracy and timeliness of the data and MRIP.

This is the study that is underway, and they have been doing meetings with the study board throughout the various council regions, and one was done in the Gulf earlier, and one was done here with the South Atlantic a few months -- Well, probably not a few months, and COVID time has been funny, but a few weeks ago, actually, and I think most folks here on the council are familiar with this as well. This is in progress, and I provided the link to the page of the NAS, and you can track its progress and see the meetings that are coming up. Then, once the report is available and they have completed that work, it will be available there, and we will keep an eye on it and send that around to the council members when the time comes.

There is actually quite a few things that are going on within this act, as you can see, and it's looking at management that's been done, and it's looking at data collection, and it's looking at things like the LAPPs and the allocation and all of that, and so we're kind of now focused, within our area and the Gulf area, on that Section 102 Working Group and trying to better understand what is meant by recreational management flexibility, but there is a number of other things that were in the Act as well.

With that, I will just pause, before handing it over to Steve to go through the progress so far on the joint working group, and see if anybody has any questions on the Act or the information that we have on it so far.

MR. BELL: Thanks for the overview, John. Any questions about the Modern Fish Act itself at this point? I am not seeing any. We've been calling this one the Act, just to save time when we discuss it, but we know there is the other act, but this is the current act we're kind of dealing with. Steve, if you would like to go through the discussion or overview of what the working group has been up to in the couple of meetings we've had. As I guess everybody has realized, Steve didn't move quickly enough, and he became chair of the working group, and so that's a good thing, that he was selected for that, and so, Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Mel. I was, unfortunately, anointed Chair of the Section 102 Modernizing Recreational Fisheries Management Act Workgroup. John covered a little bit of the background of the Modernizing Fish Act, or the Act, or MFA. The Section 102 Workgroup is

composed of council members from the Gulf and the South Atlantic, and this came after discussions at the CCC, before I was involved with the CCC, but, basically, after the Modernizing Fish Act came out, there were discussions held at the CCC, and the Gulf and the South Atlantic leadership got together and felt it would probably be beneficial to form a workgroup to dive into the Section 102, and, specifically, those flexibility measures included in 102, and try to come up with some recommendations to apply to the two regions.

It's really important in the Gulf and the South Atlantic, because, as far as the other councils are concerned, the Gulf and the South Atlantic do have the highest proportion of recreational anglers, and so recreational issues are kind of at the forefront of a lot of the issues we deal with, fishery-management-wise, here in the South Atlantic and the Gulf.

Again, I was appointed the chair at the first meeting, and we've had two meetings so far, the first one in May, and the second one in September, both virtual, unfortunately, due to COVID, and the meetings reports from these past two meetings were included in your briefing materials, as well as the Section 102 report that John had mentioned earlier.

The first meeting, we just reviewed the Section 102 and had some discussions on our scope of work and workplan moving forward, and we received presentations from NOAA Fisheries staff, as well as presentations from some of our NGO partners in the region, as well as summaries of the National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Summit and our South Atlantic workshops, back in 2018. This meeting was just kind of getting everybody on the same page, as far as what the Act says, what information is out there, and it allowed us to discuss and brainstorm a little bit on what additional information we felt like we needed to progress the workgroup towards eventually providing recommendations to the two councils.

The September meeting was a very long meeting, and we received information from a lot of the Gulf states, as well as a few of the South Atlantic states, on just various data collection tools that they use for the recreational sector, in their states and in their regions, and we also received summary presentations on MyFishCount and some EFP work done in the Gulf with the headboats, and then council staff provided an overview of interim analyses or analyses that can be conducted in between assessments for stocks that have a reliable fishery-independent survey, and this allows for information that fishery management decisions can be based off of in a more timely manner.

For example, for a stock that has a reliable fishery-independent survey, like the trap survey here in the Southeast, we can -- The Science Center can perform these interim analyses, and not necessarily annually, but in a shorter timeframe than regular assessments, and provide some catch level advice, and so, for things like -- I think, in the Gulf, they have used it on red grouper, maybe, and that pops into my mind, but I could be off on that, and so certainly refer to the briefing documents.

It allows for those species that tend to have very intensive assessments, or long time lags in those assessments, to maybe respond to a stock that shows signs of growing, through the fishery-independent surveys, or vice versa, to respond to a stock that might be showing declines, so we don't fish a couple of years under outdated catch level advice.

We also received presentations on carryover and phase-ins of ABC control rules, and these are things that the councils can already use, through the National Standard 1 Guidelines, and I think

the Gulf has a few plans where they can carry over or phase-in ABCs, but, in general, over here in the South Atlantic, we haven't incorporated carryovers yet in any of our plans, but they certainly do offer a little bit of flexibility for some of those stocks that might have some catch level over to transition to the following year, to avoid any potential season closures or in-season actions like that. We also discussed conditional accountability measures, and that's something that we have already utilized for a few of our stocks, but that's certainly a tool in the toolbox that we can certainly explore more with this workgroup process.

At the end of the September meeting, the workgroup established their charge and workgroup action, and it's on the screen, and I won't read it to you, but this concisely captures kind of our plan and our approach and deadline to providing recommendations out of this workgroup.

For the next steps, we still have to identify potential problems to solve and stocks to address and come up with specific examples that we maybe can apply some of our recommendations to. Clarify what flexibility is actually available within Magnuson and the Modernizing Fish Act, and there were a lot of questions, during both workgroup meetings, as far as what this flexibility actually means, as far as managing for extraction rates and such, when we still have to comply with those requirements in Magnuson for ACLs and ABCs.

If you do refer to the Section 102 report, it does go into a little bit of detail on how things like extraction rates and fishing mortality targets that are already incorporated in ABC and ACL recommendations, but the workgroup still feels like there is some questions that are begging to be answered, as far as some of the specifics of how to actually apply, or the potential to apply, those, and not necessarily in place of ACLs, but how to use that flexibility when -- Be a little bit more flexible when setting those ABCs and ACLs.

Consider other metrics to monitor catch in fisheries, and then, at the very end, and what is paramount out of all of this, is to develop some specific recommendation for each council, and our goal is to hopefully develop these recommendations as more of a plug-and-play, so we can do some of the heavy lifting on the workgroup side, to kind of figure out how our specific recommendations can be plugged into fishery management plans and then deliver those to the councils, to go ahead and get those incorporated in fisheries management. With that, I think that's the last slide, and I will take any questions.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Steve, and so, from Steve's presentation, you can tell that the working group is dealing with pretty much the same sorts of things that we were looking at today from a one-council perspective, but, if there's the ability to rely upon another established group, to kind of feed into our decision-making process on moving forward, and in a way that benefits both the Gulf and the Atlantic, that would be great, and, also, it might help us, with our challenged workload as it is, with all the things on our plate from meeting to meeting and in between.

If some of the necessary groundwork can get done by this group, that could kind of benefit us, from a council perspective, as well, and so any questions for Steve or John at this point, or any thoughts about the working group? You all are quiet after lunch.

I will point out that there is several of us from the council on this group as well, and so we talked about the possibility of another kind of workgroup earlier, but we do have this effort going on, and it's underway, and I think there is a lot of obvious overlap with what will come out of this group

related to, again, what we're dealing with, just as a single council right here today, and so all right. No questions and no emails. Okay. I am not the only one on the call, right? Spud, do you want to go ahead and weigh-in? That would be great.

MR. WOODWARD: I am just trying not to leave you stranded at the podium there, Mel. I think that this workgroup is functional, but I will say that having to do this in a virtual environment I do think has handicapped us. We've been able to do some of our other council business fairly acceptably, but, when you're in an environment where you're really needing to brainstorm and interact with people, it's been tough, because we all would like to have a face-to-face meeting at some point of this workgroup, because there are some diverse and varied opinions about things within that group, but the one that we still are hung up, and Steve described it, is we're trying to make sense out of what was said about having to abide by ACLs, but yet having this list of things that we can use.

If ACLs have to be in pounds or numbers, then we can't substitute an extraction rate, or a fishing mortality target, or some other quantitative element, for an ACL, and so that begs the question of, well, can you really do anything different than status quo, and that one we continue to struggle with, and we're hoping to get definitive guidance at some point, because, otherwise, we'll keep having this circular argument back and forth, and so thank you, Mel.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Spud. I mean, that's the reality of our world, is that we are bound by law to do things a certain way, by the regs, and, yes, you only have so much flexibility, I guess, within the confines of existing regulation as it exists, and so that is a constant challenge to sort of thinking outside the box. If you want to think outside the box, great, but you can't get too far outside the box sometimes, because then you're stepping across a regulatory line or something. Any other comments or observations or input or thoughts? A lot of head scratching? Chester.

MR. BREWER: Following up on what Spud said, he's exactly right, because what I've been trying to get my head wrapped around is, if you are forced to, because of the ACL requirements, to manage the fisheries, recreational fisheries, in the same way that you have managed them in the past, what in the world -- Why was Section 102 passed? What was meant to be accomplished there?

To me, the purpose of that was to settle a longstanding question as to how much flexibility there is in the MSA. There have been two different camps. One is saying there is enough flexibility, under MSA, to use these techniques to manage certain recreational fisheries, and another group says, no, you have to manage to a hard number, and, to me, the purpose of Section 102 was to lay that question to rest, and that debate to rest, and, yes, there is going to be -- Under our laws, there will be enough flexibility to use say extraction rates and to manage in that fashion, and so I know that we've asked for some guidance, and I hope we get it pretty soon, but, to me, that's sort of the basic issue and the reason that Section 102 was passed.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Chester, for putting that on there. Any other comments or observations or questions or solutions? Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Mel. I mentioned this earlier, but I will say it again. Even though we've only had these two meetings, to me, these two meetings were really kind of covering the background and giving us information that we were asking to look at, and I feel like some of the

more informative discussions, and the back-and-forth and really diving down into ideas and possible next steps for moving forward, I just really think that's going to come in the next meeting, or the next couple of meetings, and I just don't feel like we've gotten as far as we would have liked, but it was because we had all of these questions about data and permits, and we tried to get input from people that spoke to the CCC about the Modern Fish Act, like ASA and Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation and others, and so I just feel like we're kind of in the thick of it still, and I don't know if we know enough yet to try to answer some of these questions, just because we're just starting to get to this real discussion phase.

MR. BELL: Jessica, I would agree with you, and Steve mentioned that earlier, that like the second meeting was the tremendous data download, and, I mean, the group did a -- At both meetings, it was kind of basically in the receiving mode, and we didn't have the much time to kind of sit around and kick things around and discuss, and it was really a lot of where are we and what have we got and what's going on kind of thing, and so I would agree with that. John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I was going to say, and Jessica really hit the nail on the head with that, that the first meeting had some general background, and it really led to a lot of questions that were then addressed with information at that second meeting, and so I was going to highlight these couple of links at the Gulf website that go to the briefing book from those two meetings, and you can dig into all of those different background materials and documents and stuff that the CCC --

Things that have been presented at other times and information from that Recreational Fisheries Summit that was in early 2018, or I forget exactly when that was, but there's a lot of information there that's really good background on the issues in recreational fisheries and the various things that are underway now, and a lot of this crosses over into much of the discussion we had this morning. That's a really good resource that's there, and I think Jessica is exactly right that there's going to be some good discussions to come, now that the group is kind of in the collective same place, as far as what has happened and the information that's out there and where we need to go from here.

MR. BELL: Thanks, John, and I appreciate you pointing out the links, and I would encourage any of the council members or partners or anybody listening -- If you want to -- You can get the same sort of data download that we got if you basically go and check out the two previous meetings, and it kind of gets you into the same place we are, with a lot of information, and then we really now, as Jessica said, need to sit down and start crunching through some of this stuff. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thanks, Mel, and thanks for that, Jessica. Absolutely. I mean, we received a lot of information, and, at least from my perspective, there already seems to be a few nuggets that have kind of stood out, or a few themes that the workgroup has kind of brought up a couple of times during our few meetings, and so I think we certainly have some direction to explore, but I also wanted to take this opportunity to ask the council --

You know, given all the discussions that we've had today up to this point, and the overview that was just provided, and we've already heard from Spud, who is on the -- Spud and Chester both are on the workgroup, and their perspective on some of the difficulties with applying the language to the hard-and-fast mandates in Magnuson, but are there any other comments or suggestions from the council of things that we can explore? I mean, we've had discussions on mandatory reporting

and permits, and even landings tags and such, during these workgroup meetings, but is there anything else that, as a council, you would like to see us address?

MR. BELL: That's a good way of looking at it, Steve, and I think we're also kind of segueing into our fifth agenda item, which is just discussion of issues and recommendations and things that could be identified, but, yes, we have this working group up and running, and so Step 1 might be how can the workgroup, perhaps, better assist us as a council, as well as the Gulf Council, but we're talking about our world today specifically, and are there things that we could utilize the existing working group for to kind of help us move along and then identify some of that, if there is any, and then that kind of takes us into, perhaps, our last item of discussion, which is just big-picture, to step back and look at everything we've talked about. Answering Steve's question, I guess, has anybody got any input specifically related to that?

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Can you hear me? I don't have a hand-raise feature.

MR. BELL: Dewey, we've got you. Go ahead.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I would just ask a question here, with this -- Are you all waiting for interpretation from the lawyers to tell you what the Act says you can do or not, or are you all -- It seems like you're gathering a lot of information, and you don't know when to apply it, or what to apply it, according to the Act, and is there going to be something from the DOJ or the lawyers that says, yes, you can do this, or, no, you can't do this, or do you just go down the route and do something, based on the information you're gathering and the meeting and different committees, until somebody sues you? I mean, it seems like --What is the tipping point of when something will take place? Thank you.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Dewey, and that's a good question, a good, direct approach, but, as was mentioned, Spud and Chester were kind of pointing out some of the -- They had some frustration related to interpretation of the Act, and so how are we to interpret it, and I don't know that we're waiting on a specific response related to that that we have requested, but he hits on the head there. I mean, if we're kind of stuck in a rut here, what will get us out of the rut? What are we waiting on? Jessica, why don't you weigh-in there, and then I see Monica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I don't know that we're waiting on anything. I think that we're just getting into the discussion of are there things that we could try, because I don't necessarily think we're going to get very specific direction that you can do this or you can't do that, and so I think that part of the reason this group was formed was to try to figure out some things that we either want to try together with the Gulf or separate, and so that's just to respond to Dewey.

Then, to respond to the question you had a minute ago, Mel, I mentioned earlier that I feel like this accountability measure, the topic as a whole, and thinking about how we want to move that forward -- We're already moving it forward with dolphin and wahoo, and then, as species are assessed, as Myra said, we're kind of looking at it when we're looking at allocation and other things, but I was also hoping that the workgroup could have some more discussion of accountability measures before we came back to that amendment that we discussed today.

MR. BELL: Right. I follow you, and I think, to Dewey's question and all, I think part of the answer to that, like you said, is the group doesn't really have something, necessarily, at this point,

or it doesn't have something that we could sort of say, hey, this is what we would like to try, and can we do this, or does this fit, but, yes, those are good points, and particularly I think related to the AMs as well, because we haven't really discussed that as a group in detail, but that would be something that's tied into this. Monica, do you have some input for us?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: It's more along the lines of what I planned to do, or what I would do, and I'm assuming the Fisheries Service has looked at this, and I recall, in this conversation this afternoon, and maybe it was John, or maybe it was somebody else, that talked about this issue of what you -- Some of what you could and couldn't do under the Act was discussed at the CCC meeting, and so what I could try to do is see if I could gather anything that's been given out to the councils, and I'm sure you already have that, or whether GC is working on something more globally, more nationally, because this Act doesn't just apply down here. I'm not sure that they are, and I'm not sure that they're not, but I can definitely bring that back to you at the next meeting, when this topic comes up.

MR. BELL: Okay. Thanks for offering, and I guess that would help, again, sort of define the world, the box, that we're working in, and then, as the group, the working group, comes up with things, approaches and things to try and recommendations, then we can see how well that fits, and, if we need further interpretation at that point, then you've got something to actually provide feedback on, but, like Jessica keeps mentioning, the working group isn't at a point where it has something ready to look at or ready to ask people about. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Mel. To Dewey, yes, ideally, if we had some more direction on how to interpret and apply the language in Section 102, that would certainly be great, and we don't have that yet, per se, and I appreciate your comments, Monica, for looking into that, and I would really appreciate any feedback the Service may have.

We had this discussion at the last two workgroup meetings, and, at the last one, there was even some discussion on what is catch, and how is catch defined, and I think that's something that, certainly at the next workgroup meeting, we need to dive into a little bit more and kind of set the record straight, so to speak, from the workgroup's perspective, on what is catch, what is a catch, and maybe, after that discussion, make another request to the agency for some specific guidance, and I don't know, and that's just kind of what I am brainstorming for the next workgroup, but that still doesn't stop the workgroup from working on other issues, other ideas, other ways to apply flexibility to managing the recreational sector.

Like I had mentioned in my comments, there is things in National Standard 1 that we as the South Atlantic Council have not yet applied to any of our fisheries that are left to explore, and Jessica mentioned accountability measures and really diving into that, looking at conditional accountability measures, or tying accountability measures to some level of uncertainty, or looking at multiyear ACLs in reference to -- All that kind of stuff, and so, I mean, that's still on the table as well.

I certainly -- I don't think the workgroup is going to get bogged down, one way or another, on interpretation, or waiting for interpretation, on language from Section 102, and the workgroup is, by name, the Section 102 Workgroup, but, looking at the charge that we adopted and the action, I mean, it's a little bit broader than that, and we're looking at all alternative management approaches and not just Section 102, and so I certainly expect that -- Hopefully, after the next meeting or two,

we'll be able to bring our council and the Gulf Council some recommendations, but I certainly don't see it either as we'll conclude with one suite of recommendations and that will be done.

I mean, this might be a workgroup that kind of stays around for a while and kind of see how these alternative approaches are applied and how they work, and if they don't work, and maybe go back and discuss it a little bit further, and so, I mean, I certainly see this as more of kind of an adaptive process, an iterative process, and so I guess, to answer your question, Dewey, we're going to continue to work on it, and we're going to put forward some recommendations that hopefully apply to our fisheries and see how it goes.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Steve, for that. That was very helpful. Chester.

MR. BREWER: Thank you, Mel. Something that Dewey said got me to thinking, and that is that there is a good possibility that all of this stuff is going to end up in a lawsuit somewhere, and that got me thinking about statutory construction, and the courts, when they are faced with what appears to be conflicting language in the different statutes, one of the things that they will look at, and it's not necessarily the most important thing, but one of the things that they look at is the legislative history, what was said during the debate with regard to, in particular here, Section 102 and what were our leaders trying to accomplish in passing Section 102. Monica, I have an ask. I am not sure how voluminous it is, but how much trouble would it be to get the legislative history for this act? With that, I will mute myself.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Chester. Monica, is that something you can comment on?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Sure, and I will see what I can find, Chester. You know, in the legal world, some people like legislative history, and some don't, in the courts, but I would be happy to see what we could dig up for the legislative history of this act, certainly.

MR. BREWER: Thank you, Monica, and I agree with you that it should not be the primary thing used to construe the legislation, but, sometimes when they get stuck, and you're saying, all right, what in the world is going on here, they do look, occasionally, to legislative history, and so that's why I had that thought.

MR. BELL: Those are both good points and all, and I appreciate that aspect, the legal interpretation and all, but, again, kind of going back to the -- I think, once there is something in terms of recommendations coming out of the workgroup, plus there's something for somebody to look at, and it's they're asking for legal interpretation, or legal assistance, with something, and a lot of times the answer is, well, it all depends.

Well, it all depends based on the details of what it is we're asking, exactly, but I truly understand your point, Chester, about legislative intent and all and how that might play in, and so that would be good to have in the background as well, but I think, again, going back to the outcome, or some of the outcomes initially of this workgroup, it might take us a little closer to having something to look at that somebody could provide a legal opinion on, and then we would be moving down the road. Okay. Anything else?

MR. BREWER: Mel, if I might follow-up on that?

MR. BELL: Sure.

MR. BREWER: I am not saying that we hold off on going forward. If it sounded like I said that, or meant that, I did not.

MR. BELL: Not at all. I didn't mean to say that, and I'm sorry.

MR. BREWER: Okay. What I'm really looking and thinking about is I think that the legislative history would be something good to have in our record that we consider when making -- During our rulemaking process, because I think I know pretty much -- I know what the intention was here, and so it would be a very good thing to have that in the record, in case we are challenged in court. Thank you.

MR. BELL: Sure. That's fine. Good point. Thanks. Any other comments or questions or ideas? Okay. We can sort of segue right into the last item, which would be actually kind of bringing this all together for today. Steve, do you have something else?

MR. POLAND: Just before we left that item, I just wanted to make sure that there wasn't any other recommendations from the council for the workgroup to look into. I mean, I've heard loud and clear this concern over interpretation of that language in 102 and all that, and just one last kind of grasp, as the workgroup chair, to solicit any more suggestions.

MR. BELL: We mentioned AMs, looking at AMs, and some discussion of that, I guess.

MR. POLAND: Yes.

MR. BELL: Anything else that Steve can use to kind of help direct the workgroup along? I am not seeing any hands, or not seeing any emails. Okay. Then we can transition to our last item on the agenda, which would be kind of tying all we've talked about today, in the four different sessions we've had, into some final discussion and just kind of brainstorming discussions, which could lead to recommendations or motions, whatever you guys would like, and I don't think there's really anything to kind of tee this up with, John, and it's just sort of based on the discussions we've had so far today, and are there any -- We've got some questions that were put in the meeting objectives. Chester.

MR. BREWER: Thank you, Mel. I think that probably the best idea I've heard today is certainly with regard to some sort of a recreational permit that would be utilized throughout our region, and that's to get the state folks together and form a working group to give us an idea, or some thoughts, on how that might be accomplished within the confines of the different requirements of the different states.

I mean, I think back, and, Mel, you've told us all in the past that, well, if you put forth something that there's going to be a fee for it, or there's going to be a charge, it's going to have to be approved by our legislature. Well, maybe you can get around that by not having a fee charged, and sort of do what Florida did, but I do think it's important that the state folks get together and give us some ideas of what they think can work within the region. Maybe it's not identical for every state, but I do think, and have thought for the longest time, that having some sort of a stamp, permit, whatever you want to call it, but that it would be very important for us to understand what the universe is of

people that are going out and fishing in the deeper water, bottom fishing in deeper water. I think that certainly it's -- Probably it ought to be in the form of a motion, and I see Jessica is up next, and she will be wanting to make such a motion, and so I will shut up and mute myself.

MR. BELL: We can certainly see, Chester, and thank you. Jessica, you're not committed to a motion, and this is whatever you would like to input.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I did send a motion over to staff earlier, as a place to start, and I said a workgroup, and I don't know if we actually have to create a council committee, but maybe we could put that up there.

MR. BELL: All right. I think there's some specific language in our SOPPs, I believe it is, that kind of dictates how these things can work and how they are to be considered structured or officially designated, and John can help us with that, and I know he researched a little bit of that.

MR. CARMICHAEL: There is allowances for working groups, and then there is some language in there that says, if it includes council members, then it should be considered as a council committee, and then there's other language on council committees that does clarify that committees can include council members and other representatives, as necessary, and so I think we can form a -- I think, saying it like this, we know it will be officially a council committee, and we can call it a workgroup for our purposes, so we know what it's about, and that seems fine to me.

MR. BELL: Right, and I think it's important to clarify that it can have council members, but it could also have additional folks appointed from different places as needed, and so it's not like a pure council committee. Jessica, do you have any more to say at this point?

MS. MCCAWLEY: No, and I just have -- There's the start of a motion on the board to form a workgroup of council and state representatives to explore options and feasibility of state-administered recreational data collection programs. People can feel free to tweak that, but I was just trying to throw something out there to get us talking about it.

MR. BELL: Okay. That's a good place to start. Spud, did you have something to weigh-in on that?

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, I did, Mel. I would actually -- Do you want me to second it, so we can start discussing it?

MR. BELL: Officially --

MR. WOODWARD: Does it need a second at this point, or are we still developing it?

MR. BELL: I kind of thought that maybe we were in the group drafting mode, if Jessica then can come back, and, if we're happy, we'll make it as a motion and then have a second, and we've got something that we don't have to kind of try to wordsmith inside the Rules of Roberts here.

MR. WOODWARD: Okay. Well, I would actually suggest some modification to the language, to replace "explore" with "identify" options, and determine feasibility thereof of state -- Also, and

I know it makes everybody cringe, but I would actually suggest putting in a date certain for a product from that workgroup, so that we know we've got a deadline to meet, whoever is on that workgroup, so it doesn't just go on ad infinitum, and so I don't know what would be appropriate as a deadline, and we could go the end of 2021 or whatever, but this is something that's urgent, and, if we don't put a deadline in it, I think it's doesn't identify urgency.

MR. BELL: Of course, when you put a deadline in there, now it kind of raises to elevation, in terms of attention within the overall council working schedule and that sort of thing, but certainly I understand the utility of a deadline and the benefits from it. Let's kind of look at how the wording is turning out.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Spud, does that capture it? I thought we should have reports-out to the council complete by December of 2021, and that seems reasonable. I wonder if recreational data collection -- Are we interpreting that to mean like the angler identification aspect of the Florida program and the other stuff that was discussed? Do we need to make that more explicit in the motion, recreational data collection and permitting?

MR. BELL: It's a little broad right now, I think.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes, and should it be catch and effort data?

MR. BELL: Do you want to weigh-in here?

MR. POLAND: Are you talking to me, Mel?

MR. BELL: Yes, sir, if you had your hand up.

MR. POLAND: All right. I mean, I'm fine putting a date certain in there. I mean, I agree with Spud that that will kind of hold our feet to the fire on this one, and I do have some concerns about council workload, but, really, it's going to be the states that are kind of driving this. I mean, there will be support from the council staff, but, as far as the report to be provided, do we need to expand on that a little bit more or just leave it as a report, and then, as far as council and state representatives, I also want to make sure we capture NOAA Fisheries in there, and Rich Cody offered their time and their support for this, and I certainly think somebody from MRIP needs to be represented on this workgroup.

Again, as a workgroup, I guess, technically, it would be an ad hoc committee, I guess, at the council, but I guess we just need to be clear that nothing out of this workgroup, or committee, is binding on the states, and I guess we can get into kind of the weeds once the workgroup convenes, but even the need for things like motions and that kind of stuff -- To me, this is more of a group to facilitate these discussions among the states, and hopefully come up with something, recommendation-wise, for each state that is kind of like a general -- If your state develops a data collection program targeted at recreational anglers and permitting, these are kind of the things that a regional, federal perspective, or MRIP perspective, that will be needed to ensure that data collection under your state programs kind of meet the standards needed for MRIP or federal fishery management decisions. That was long-winded. Sorry.

MR. BELL: No, and, also, we've got our NMFS partners in there and all, and, going back to the very true statement that Roy made, you build this, and you put it together and all, and what do you expect it to do, or what do you expect to do with it, and that's why we need to have all the players involved at the state and federal -- Because it has to be able to practically work. A quick technical question. Should we change -- Because of our SOPPs, should we change it to move to form an ad hoc committee? That's the language we should use?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, I think that would probably be good.

MR. BELL: I am just trying to keep us sort of street-legal with our SOPPs and all. Spud, something else?

MR. WOODWARD: I guess a question is -- I mean, we seem to be focusing in on reef fish, and so, somewhere in this motion, does that need to be reflected, so it doesn't sound like -- Because, if you just say -- If someone reads this and goes, wow, that's everything, everything that's out there, and does that need to be --

MR. BELL: Good point. Our discussion that started today was about snapper grouper. We need to have that in there.

MR. WOODWARD: Does that need to be included in the actual motion?

MR. BELL: I think the clearer we can make this, and the more focused we can make it, the better, if that's the way you all want to go with that. Any thoughts on that?

MR. WOODWARD: Also, another suggestion that I think -- We're all watching what's going on in the Gulf right now with red snapper with great curiosity and interest, and we're contemplating doing something similar to what they did in the Gulf, and everybody, I think, thought it was working perfectly, and now we see that it maybe didn't work perfectly, and so what has been learned from the experience in the Gulf that we need to carry over, if we're going to do something similar with state-based data collection programs?

MR. BELL: Right, and I think we're capturing that, and that's definitely something we would want to look into. Steve, did you have something else to add to that?

MR. POLAND: I mean, Spud made two great points, and I think this needs to be focused on reef fish, because I think, if we start to get into some of our other managed species, like coastal migratory pelagics, or even dolphin wahoo, that kind of opens up another can of worms, and, in reality, the reason we're interested in this is improved precision on recreational catch estimates for snapper grouper species.

Relative to snapper grouper species, dolphin wahoo and the mackerels and such, it's a little bit more precise, from a catch estimate perspective, and I also agree with Spud that let's learn all the lessons we can from the Gulf, but now, as I look at this list of direction to staff, I realize that we only have twelve months, and, really, once we get started with this, it will probably be after the new year, and then we'll have to get it done by the -- I mean, we've really only got about eleven months, if that, of work on this, and I want to make sure that we're not being too overly optimistic on the amount of work that we can get done.

MR. BELL: That's a very good, practical consideration. Doug.

MR. HAYMANS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would be remiss if I didn't stick to my guns, and I've lost every single discussion on this point, but I am in favor of every species, and not just the reef fish. If we're developing a program, it should be for everything that we're trying to count. We have, at other times, had just snapper grouper, and then later on we decided that folks wanted to include other species, and I think, if we're going to look at this from at least the perspective of what the state can do, we should consider everything and let us have a discussion amongst ourselves as to whether or not we can do all the species, but, to limit it right here -- I just think we should include everything.

MR. BELL: Okay. There is a point for other species other than just snapper grouper, and I follow your logic, Doug. I mean, if you can kind of do one, can you do the others, and the pros and cons of that. Jessica, did you want to weigh-in?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Sure. I guess, to respond to what Doug is saying, I would stick to snapper grouper, or reef fish, right now. As a state that has one of these programs up and running, this is not as simple as you think it is, and I think that you could decide that you wanted to carry this over to other species, and I think you would do it a little bit differently for things that weren't reef fish. At least right now, I would focus it -- I would just recommend focusing it in on reef fish and figure out how to execute this per state, and, as part of the discussion, determine if we want to, at the same time, expand it to other species, but I would just caution you that this is a big task, and, if you go beyond reef fish, it's a much bigger task.

MR. BELL: Good point, Jessica. You're also speaking from experience down there, and so perhaps you can build something in an add-on later, if you go that route. Myra.

MR. HAYMANS: Mr. Chairman, if I may, real quick, I never said this would be easy, and I didn't think this would be easy, and it's why we've been talking about it for how many years now, because it's not easy, and so just for that.

MR. BELL: Understood, and it ain't going to be easy, and we all know that. Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Mel. Just a point of clarification. It says that an angler permitting program -- Would that then exclude looking at a vessel permit, or are you thinking about just individual permit options or not?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I don't think they want to exclude it. I didn't write that thinking it would exclude the potentially looking at vessels, as Anna mentioned earlier.

MR. POLAND: So maybe just add "angler and/or vessel permitting", just to make it clear.

MR. BELL: Then that's consistent with kind of what we had in the document we were looking at this morning.

MR. POLAND: Mel, I was just going to speak again to primarily reef fish. I mean, certainly from my perspective here, my agency, ideally, I feel like we would want to, if we go down this route of

creating a license, or tag, or endorsement, or stamp, or something, we would want to do it in a way that we could build upon it and not just reef fish, but I think, for just this conversation, just primarily focusing on reef fish is -- To me, it seems like the best way forward, but I certainly acknowledge that, if we can develop -- At least for my state, if we can develop something that works for reef fish, I mean, we would also develop it with the perspective that we could expand this to other fisheries and other species and other complexes.

I mean, I guess to Doug's point, I understand what you're saying loud and clear, and I agree, but all I can do is speak from my state's perspective, and I don't want to say this is baby steps, because this would be a monumental step, but certainly eating an elephant one bite at a time.

MR. BELL: Right, and that makes sense. I mean, you start with something and build on it, if you can, or need to. Kind of back to the -- Just a question from me for you guys. I mean, we've committed ourselves to a December 2021, and we talked about the different things that need to happen, and we're aware of our current menu of things that we're dealing with, and is December 2021 -- Do we feel like that's reasonable, John, from a staff perspective, working with us and helping us through this? Is that reasonable, or are we being a little overly optimistic? I am just asking.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think it is, if it's to identify the options and discuss feasibility and not necessarily prepare all the information that you would be doing for an amendment or something, and it's really to do some fact-finding and perhaps get some options that the council will then move into considering, and so maybe it's a grandiose effort to lead up into a good scoping document, and so, in that regard, I think it is something that we can do in that time.

I agree with Spud that we do need to put something out there that we don't end up having this drag on forever, and I heard earlier too, and I think this helps, that, to a big extent, council staff will be providing support for this, but not so involved in necessarily getting the information together, and I think that's why we want to have the state representatives who have been involved in these things, the federal representatives who have been doing it, to actually be the ones to come and report to the group and provide the information.

As long as that's the plan, then it makes this, I think, pretty feasibility, from our perspective. If we had to get in and prepare a bunch of information and do the ground-level research, I think it would be a whole different story, and then, while I've got the mic, I will point out that I added that last bullet, because a lot of this does go back to that rare-event species estimation process, and there is the working group, and, along with the Florida presentation, I think, if this is something MRIP could report on, that would certainly help this group get up-to-speed and know what sort of universe we're working with within MRIP.

MR. BELL: That makes sense, and, to my state partners, I mean, I think it's fine, from my perspective as a state, and we can work within that timeframe, if you guys are okay with it. As John said, the states are going to be doing a lot of the grunt work, but, if everybody is okay with that, I'm fine with it. Anything else on the draft motion there, any little details? When we're saying state-administered recreational data collection and angler or vessel permitting program -- I mean, we're all clear on what we've identified, and did we have snapper grouper? That is direction to staff. Okay. Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Just to bring this up, so we don't omit discussing it, do we need to actually put in there "private angler data", because that's what we're focusing in on here, and we're already dealing with the for-hire sector, and does that need to be addressed somewhere in that motion?

MR. BELL: I was going to ask that, and that was one thing that was potentially missing, and what do you all think about that?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

MR. POLAND: Yes. We have already taken care of the for-hire sector.

MR. BELL: Lord willing. How does that look to you guys? If there is no other comments on that, would anybody care to make that motion? Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **So moved.**

MR. BELL: Very well. Is there a second?

MR. POLAND: Second, Mr. Chair.

MR. BELL: Okay, and so we have a motion and a second. Any further discussion on the motion? Geoff.

MR. WHITE: Thanks very much, and it's really not a point on the motion, but I was just simply -- Part of the discussion pointed to the need to improve PSEs, and I just wanted to remind folks that, this year, MRIP did increase the Atlantic and the Gulf -- Atlantic is Maine through Georgia, but the APAIS sampling funding, and so, for Calendar Year 2021, there will be additional APAIS shore-based sampling to help address PSEs, and I just wanted to remind folks of that. Thank you for indulging me.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Geoff, and I appreciate you being here. Any other discussion of the motion? Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thanks for that, Geoff, and since I didn't realize, and ACCSP hadn't crossed my mind until I saw your name, do we need to modify the motion or ask for some involvement with ACCSP, since they will probably wind up being the data curators for this?

MR. WHITE: I would love to be involved, and I didn't see the -- Because the state representatives were there, I didn't see the need to specify it in the motion, but that's up to the council.

MR. BELL: I am okay either way you guys want to go with that, and obviously they're a close partner in all of this, and they would be, in effect, kind of potentially represented back through the states, but we can certainly add them.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I will add them, and I haven't read it, and so, Mel, when we're done with discussion, I will read it into the record officially. If you think there's support for it, you could try to just pass it by consensus.

MR. BELL: That's what I was going to try to do, and I can go ahead and read it. **The motion is to move to form an ad hoc committee of council, National Marine Fisheries Service, ACCSP, and state representatives to identify options and determine feasibility of state-administered private recreational data collection and angler and/or vessel permitting programs. The committee will report to the council at each meeting and complete its work by December of 2021.** Do we need to read the direction to staff into that, or that's just separate?

MR. CARMICHAEL: That's just separate.

MR. BELL: Okay. All right. That's the motion. We've had discussion. **Is there any objection to the motion? Just raise your hand or holler, if you're on the Mac, or email. No hands or hollers. Then the motion carries.** Thank you.

We're still on the last topic, recreational issues and discussions and recommendations, and what else, given the things we talked about today? Is there any other specific recommendations? They don't have to result, necessarily, in a motion, but any other further discussion? We've got some time here, and let's take advantage of it. We don't get to kind of brainstorm on specific subjects very often, and so we're looking for any additional input. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. I was looking at those questions on the screen there, and I think we've talked about tags in the past, and it was my understanding, but maybe I'm wrong, and maybe Spud can help, but I thought we weren't interested in considering tags at this time, but maybe I'm wrong.

MR. BELL: You're right that we have talked about that in the past, and we seem to have always steered away from it, for the probably technical reasons and all, but, to Jessica's point, any other comments on tags, good or bad or indifferent? Spud, do you want to weigh-in on that, and then I'll go to Steve?

MR. WOODWARD: I think we actually talked about that in our MFA 102 Workgroup some too, and it didn't get a lot of traction. State data collection programs are complicated, and tags get really complicated.

MR. BELL: Right. Okay. Steve.

MR. POLAND: I raised my hand for another thing, but, I mean, as far as tags are concerned, we've heard it from some stakeholders. From time to time it's come up, at various venues and reports and that kind of stuff, and, myself, I'm a little interested in it, because I see how it works on the wildlife side, but, I mean, I think we've got enough things to work on right now, but it's certainly something that I would be interested in revisiting at some point.

Back to my original comment, it was to the point of making recommendations to staff, or providing guidance to staff, and we've pretty much taken care of Snapper Grouper Amendment 46, and I think it's clear that we're going to not work on that right now, and we see this state recreational reporting workgroup. As far as the accountability measures, I just want to make sure that I'm clear on where we left that, and I think we were going to discuss accountability measures a little bit more within the Section 102 working group, but then Myra provided that input back, during the

discussion this morning, as far as we do have the ability to modify accountability measures species-by-species as they arise.

I think Brian said the only reason that Regulatory Amendment 31 was initiated was to take care of it all at once, and so I didn't know if we needed to provide staff any clear direction on that or if we needed to discuss it a little bit more as a council and decide if want to keep Regulatory Amendment 31 on the back burner and just address those accountability measures species-by-species as they come up or let's see what comes out of the workgroup. I am posing that question to the council.

MR. BELL: Yes, and I had kind of remembered, particularly after Myra pointed out that we could deal with this, obviously, on a species-by-species basis, and I didn't detect a lot of interest in moving necessarily forward on 31 right now as it was, in kind of a more uniform fashion, but, yes, if you guys have any input on that, and I would like to give clear direction to staff, if that's where we're going to go, and, Anna, you may not want to have commented on that, and so, if you've got something you want to say first, that's fine.

MS. BECKWITH: I just wanted to speak to the tags issue. I mean, I remember the discussions pretty thoroughly, and I think we always got sidetracked and decided to not move forward with them when we were talking about a tag program that would be processed by National Marine Fisheries Service for species with low ACLs and all the complications involved in them. There was some potential, if the tags were administered by the states, but, when they were administered by National Marine Fisheries Service, we always hit some pretty significant roadblocks, and so I would not be that interested in revisiting that discussion anytime soon, and I believe, that when we discussed the state-administered tags, there was some distaste for that from a couple of the states, and so that's where I'm at with that.

MR. BELL: I remember that as well, and part of the problem was distribution to the states and how do you do that, and who gets how many, and amongst the for-hire, and there were all kinds of issues with it, and I would agree with you on that. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree with what Steve said about the accountability measures and what Myra said, and I agree with this guidance that whoever is typing that on the screen about evaluate AMs on a species basis, as needed, for other upcoming FMP amendments, and I would add, and it looks like it's on there, that we're looking at this through the Modern Fish Act Working Group, and I agree that do not further develop 31 or 46 at this time, and so I just wanted to throw that out there.

MR. BELL: Thanks for being clear on that, for guidance, and I think that's very helpful for staff. Anything else, folks, that we need to provide more direct guidance to staff, or any other things we've left off at this point?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Mel, I'm the one typing that in, and so I appreciate the support, Jessica, for that one. Tags not at this time. I guess one thing -- This starts with what issues does the council consider most important, and I would say, based on our discussion today, in just a few words, it's the quality of the catch estimates and access to the fishery. They seem, to me, to be the biggest issues that we keep coming back to.

MR. BELL: Okay. That makes sense. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree with what John said, and then there were two more questions on the screen there about mandating large hooks to reduce discards, and I don't necessarily think that I want to get into that right now, and I think there's a number of other issues with that, and then it said, is the council interested in pursuing regional management approaches, and, to me, if we're going to talk about that, I would like to talk about that more when it's species-specific, like maybe after the Spanish mackerel stock assessment comes out. I just wanted to offer my two-cents on those two questions at the bottom. Thanks, Mel.

MR. BELL: Good. Thank you, Jessica. That's helpful. The hook topic, just my two-cents, is consider all the time and effort we put into talking about any other kind of gear-related things, and that's not necessarily a simple thing, and I don't know that that's something we really necessarily would get a lot of benefit from working on right now, and I agree with you on the regional approach thing, myself. Anybody else have some feedback on that? Steve.

MR. POLAND: As far as the large hook thing, we've investigated that here at the state level, and there are a lot of issues associated with that, and, mainly, hook sizes aren't standardized across, or even within, manufacturers, and so, if you do move forward with a hook size requirement, then it needs to be a discrete measurement of something like gap or something like that, and then added enforcement considerations and all that kind of stuff, and so I don't see mandating hook sizes to be a feasible fishery management practice.

As far as regional management, I mean, I'm all for having those discussions and investigating that, and I agree with Jessica that it needs to be at a species-by-species level, and I stress species-by-species, because, I mean, even within a complex, there might be some considerations between certain species that might warrant it over another, and I think that's best served as those issues come up at a species level.

MR. BELL: Right, and I think we heard a little bit about that at the Mackerel Cobia AP the other day, and so let's definitely focus on a species basis for that. Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, Mel. I was just going to throw my two-cents' worth in, to agree with what's been said. Look at the difficulties we had just getting started on circle hooks and the definition and all that, and the large hook -- I do like the idea of examining regional management approaches, but, as has already been said, I think we've got to deal with it on a species-by-species basis, and there is definitely going to be, in some cases, like Spanish mackerel, a state waters and interstate management component.

MR. BELL: Right. I agree with you 100 percent, and the large hook thing -- When I saw that, I guess my law enforcement side of my brain was going, oh god, what's a large hook, and how are we going to define that? Anything else related to the last two items, folks, or anything else that we're missing, in terms of guidance to staff here?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Mel, I wonder, on the hook issue, if you think about that, a large hook keeps you from catching small fish, and there's also some cases where they use like weak links in the line to keep you from catching the biggest fish, and it could be something that we could highlight as a potential research need. 2021 will be an odd year, and we'll be updating our research

priorities document, and maybe something that is generic to look at gear modifications, or gear configurations, in private reef fish fishing that could help reduce discards.

MR. BELL: Yes, and I guess that kind of thinking would be consistent with where we're going with best practices discussions and things, and so there's perhaps things you can learn, but you do have to have the data, which is going to require the research, I think, to back it up, from what I've seen. Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: I wasn't going to bring this up, but, when John started that discussion, it stimulated me to do it, and I've had some folks ask me about us revisiting the concept of size slot limits for certain of reef fish. Right now, you're basically creating an environment on red snapper where people go through a lot of fish to get the absolute biggest fish they can, whereas if there was, in the future, some greater opportunity, where the ACL was larger, would it be better for the population of fish to actually have a slot, where the larger, older fish were released, and you kept medium-sized fish that were desirable for the table.

I guess the thinking has changed, with the requirement for descending devices and the increased knowledge about the merits of recompression and that kind of thing, and so people see that there is the possibility of releasing fish and reducing release mortality, and so they're just asking me if that's something that we need to be thinking about now, as we did previously.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Spud, and I think we actually heard that at the Snapper Grouper AP, in some of their discussion about an optimal-sized red snapper for marketability purposes, and it wasn't the big ones and all, and so I think, once we pull all the information together from the AP meeting, we may find some discussion of that in there as well. Chester.

MR. BREWER: I was just going to mention that the State of Florida has a slot for snook, and it is put in place for exactly that reason, that you don't keep the larger breeders, and it seems to be -- It seems to have worked very, very well, and so it is something that warrants us having it in the back of our minds, or maybe even at some point in the future acting on.

MR. BELL: Right, and I guess that would -- That's something that would require some research or something that -- Obviously, you've got an understanding of how that would factor in, in terms of sizes of fish and where they factor in with spawning potential and all that, but, yes, those are good points to capture somehow, and I'm not sure what we would act on, necessarily, or just kind of -- It's something to be thinking about. Anything else we need to capture, or any further guidance? Again, this is the benefit of being able to have a little time to brainstorm. We don't get that very often.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Mel, I think this is good guidance, and I feel that a lot is sort of being put in motion with these two working groups, and we need to let them run through their work and see where they go, and that should help give us a better handle on where we need to go in terms of amendments to start addressing these issues.

MR. BELL: I just want to make sure that -- We've got some things here that I think are good deliverables from the meeting, and we've got a path forward in a couple of areas. I want to make sure that you guys are satisfied with where we are right now, in terms of what we anticipated maybe getting out of the meeting, and I know we're not necessarily finalizing an amendment, or

moving forward on an agreement to move forward on an amendment, but we've got a path forward, and I think we've had a lot of good discussion, and I just want to make sure, while I've got you here, and kind of pull everything out of your head that we can.

MR. WOODWARD: Mel, I've got a question.

MR. BELL: Go ahead, Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Who is going to lead the working group? Is it going to be council-staff-led, or who is going to lead it, and when are the appointments to it going to be made, because, if the goal is to produce results next year, I mean, it's November, and plans have to happen, and so I'm just curious.

MR. BELL: I think we can let Steve do it, since he's already doing one, and it's just a different group.

MR. POLAND: No.

MR. BELL: That's a good point. It's kind of establishing this group and some direction to the group, and is there -- I don't remember how Steve became the chair, other than he was nominated, and the group kind of decided to do that, but, if we have a specific -- If you guys think there's a specific way we should proceed on that, in terms of who -- If a council member would be -- We could vote on that at the first meeting or something, and it won't be you, Steve, but go ahead.

MR. POLAND: No, it won't be me. I think we just need to, at the next meeting, and I don't know if we have time in December, but go ahead and populate the workgroup and then let the workgroup pick their chair and develop their charge and everything like that. I mean, certainly, it's going to be the four state reps on there, and there may be other council members that have a specific interest, certainly, but we need to reach out to NMFS and ACCSP and all the other partners that we identified and ask for some suggestions for membership, and, at the state level, we need some time to identify an additional staff member or two to participate in this, or if we feel like we need an additional staff member or two from the state agencies to participate on it.

I don't know if we have time to dispense with that in December, and I know our agenda is pretty full in December, but maybe it's something that we can talk about on Thursday, during our Executive Committee meeting, or something like that, but that might not be enough time to get a list of names together.

MR. BELL: Yes, and I was kind of thinking that what we've set up is the basic kind of skeleton of the framework we would like, and I was going to kind of lean on John and staff a little bit for recommendations for how we might best flesh that out and then communicate with the other partners in it and kind of build it, and then perhaps we'll get kind of feedback -- We'll get feedback on this as we get to the December meeting, which is not that far off now, and then I think, perhaps, the committee, the working group, or the ad hoc committee itself, could select a chair at the appropriate -- At their first get-together. I mean, that was just my thinking. Has somebody got a different idea?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think, if people could think about who they would like to see on this group, and perhaps submit names to you and Steve and I, and then maybe we can have a roster that we can review, as Steve said, at the committee in December.

MR. BELL: I would think that would be reasonable. Anybody have a problem with that?

MR. POLAND: I think that's fine, and it would be a great Christmas present.

MR. BELL: We've got to have something positive going. It's the week of the 7th. Okay. So that's some more direction to staff. Anything else we need to capture today, folks? Okay. I hate to turn you loose early or something, and that would be terrible.

Well, that's all we had on the agenda. As I mentioned at the beginning of the meeting, if we're finished, what we were going to do is provide opportunity for public comment at the end, perhaps, and so we could do that for a couple of minutes, if there's any brief public comment that anyone would like to weigh-in here. I know Kellie wanted to this morning, but she had a technical issue, perhaps, and I don't know if there's anybody, anybody that would like to make public comment at this point. Kellie, do you want to give it another try?

MS. RALSTON: I'm Kellie Ralston, representing the American Sportfishing Association, and I just really wanted to express our thanks for this meeting today. I think it was a really great conversation on a variety of topics related to recreational management, and I think you all made some really great progress.

I wanted to also express our support for the working group on recreational reporting, and we look forward to kind of that discussion of state programs and how to implement that. I wanted to mention that MAFAC, the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee to the Secretary of Commerce, just recently completed a report related to defining, better defining, the universe of anglers for recreational fisheries, and one of the primary recommendations was for NMFS to work regionally with councils and stakeholders on kind of what the best approach might be there, and so I think that recommendation and timeline actually fit in very nicely with your working group, and so I just wanted to point that one out, with the idea of really to look at how can we improve precision and accuracy in these data collection programs.

Also, I wanted to thank the council for how proactive you have been on electronic reporting, and I think the MyFishCount app has proven not only its worth within the council, but actually outside of the council, and kudos to Chip and BeBe for all of their hard work on that. MAFAC also has an electronic reporting taskforce that Chip actually sits on, and they are working on kind of how - - Recommendations for NMFS on how they can either integrate, incorporate, or support electronic reporting platforms for anglers, and so I think this fits in nicely there too, and that taskforce is looking at not only how to use the data from those programs, but also kind of how to best get anglers to use them, and so more the social side of things that BeBe was talking about earlier.

Then, finally, just another big thank you for the continued work on that joint working group on Section -- On the alternative management portion of things, and we appreciate Steve stepping up as the chair, and he's done a really great job with that group, kind of laying the groundwork for what is to come, and one other thing to point out there is -- I think I mentioned this at your last council meeting, but thank you very much for the NS 1 clarification language that you included in

your response to the Presidential EO, and I just wanted to let you know that the Gulf Council, as well as the Mid-Atlantic Council, have very similar language there, and so I think, between the three councils making that specific recommendation of NMFS, I think that gives you a lot of leverage to hopefully get a response back, and we'll certainly be following up with them on that as well. With that, Mr. Chairman, I just want to say thank you again, and I hope to see you guys in person someday soon.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Kellie. We'll get there eventually, and we really appreciate everything you do to help move things along, and we're all trying to get to the same place together, and so thanks for your help. Any other public comment from anyone at this point? I don't see any hands. All right.

No other business to come before the committee, or before the council, and seeing none, gosh, I could knock you guys off twenty minutes early, almost. That's all we have, and thank you so much for your time today, and, as I mentioned, it's, I guess, one of the benefits of living in the virtual world, and we've become pretty good at this, and kudos to staff. They have become experts in running these things, and so I'm glad we have the technology and the staff with the capability to do it, and I appreciate everybody's involvement, and we will see you at the -- Well, virtually, we'll hear you, or see you, at the actual council meeting the week of December 7. That's all I've got, John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: All right. Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's all we have too, and I do appreciate all the council members as well for struggling through our technology and becoming quite good at it. We have done a very good job with these meetings, I think. Thank you, everyone.

MR. BELL: All right. So then we are officially adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on November 9, 2020.)

Certified By: _____ Date: _____

Transcribed By
Amanda Thomas
December 21, 2020

SAFMC Recreational Topics

Attendee Report:

Report Generated:

12/22/2020 10:52 AM EST

Webinar ID

355-302-595

Actual Start Date/Time

11/09/2020 09:27 AM EST

Last Name

First Name

Anderson	Lee
Aukeman	Trip
BRETON	ALICIA
BYRD	01JULIA
Barbieri	Luiz
Batsavage	Chris
Beaty	Julia
Bell	00Mel
Bergeron	Bobby
Bianchi	Alan
Blough	Heather
Brame	Richen
Brancart	Kendall
Brennan	Ken
Brouwer	01Myra
Burgess	Erika
Carmichael	01John
Caycedo	Mario
Chevront	01Brian
Christiansen	Kyle
Clarke	Lora
Cody	Richard
Conklin	00Chris
Copeland	Robert
Crimian	Robert
Dalton Harrison	BeBe
Dancy	Kiley
DeVictor	Rick
DiLernia	Anthony
Dixon	Michael
Duval	Michelle
Errigo	Michael
Finch	Margaret
Foss	Kristin
Friedrich	Tony

Glasgow	Dawn
Goldsmith	Willy
Gore	Karla
Griffin	Aimee
Grimes	00Shepherd
Griner	Tim
Guyas	Martha
Hadley	01John
Haymans	00-Doug
Heffernan	Katie
Helies	02Frank
Hemilright	Dewey
Howington	02Kathleen
Iberle	Allie
Iverson	Kim
Knowlton	00Kathy
Laks	Ira
Laks	Ira
Lam	Elliott
Lee	Jennifer
Malinowski	Richard
Marhefka	00Kerry
McCawley	00-Jessica
McCay Merritt	Bonnie
McGovern	Jack
Mehta	Nikhil
Perkinson	Matt
Pieper	Nicholas
Porch	Clay
Pugliese	01Roger
Ralston	Kellie
Rhodes	01Cameron
Salmon	Brandi
Sartwell	Tim
Sauls	Beverly
Schmidtke	01Michael
Scott	Tara
Sedberry	George
Sinkus	Wiley
Smit-Brunello	00Monica
Smith	Duane
Sneed	David
Spanik	Kevin
Spurgin	Kali
Stephen	Jessica
Sweetman	CJ
TARVER	TIM

Vara
White
Wiegand
Williams
Woodward
barger
beckwith
brewer
collier
crabtree
moss
moss
poland
sandorf
sminkey

Mary
Geoff
01Christina
Erik
00Spud
jeff
anna
00chester
01chip
00Roy
david
david
00steve
scott
thomas