

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL MONDAY SESSION

**Town & Country Inn
Charleston, South Carolina**

September 25, 2017

SUMMARY MINUTES

Council Members

Dr. Michelle Duval
Anna Beckwith
Zack Bowen
Mark Brown
Dr. Roy Crabtree
Ben Hartig
Dr. Wilson Laney
Lt. Amy Hockenberry

Charlie Phillips
Mel Bell
Chester Brewer
Chris Conklin
Tim Griner
Doug Haymans
Jessica McCawley

Council Staff

Gregg Waugh
Dr. Brian Chevront
Kimberly Cole
Mike Collins
Dr. Mike Errigo
Kathleen Howington
Dr. Kari MacLauchlin
Cameron Rhodes
Dr. Julie Neer
Christina Wiegand

John Carmichael
Myra Brouwer
Dr. Chip Collier
Kelsey Dick
John Hadley
Kim Iverson
Roger Pugliese
Amber Von Harten
Julia Byrd

Other Observers/Participants

Leann Bosarge
Monica Smit-Brunello
Rick DeVactor
Erika Burgess

Dr. Jack McGovern
Dr. Bonnie Ponwith
Dr. Marcel Reichert
Dr. Luiz Barbieri

Other Observers and Participants attached.

The Full Council Session of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened at the Town & Country Inn, Charleston, South Carolina, Monday morning, September 25, 2017, and was called to order by Chairman Michelle Duval.

DR. DUVAL: I would like to go ahead and call to order this council session of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. My name is Michelle Duval, and I'm the North Carolina state agency representative on the council, and, just for voice identification, for folks who are on the webinar, I would like to go ahead and just ask folks if they could identify themselves by name and the state they're representing, and we'll start down at this end with Mr. Bowen, please.

MR. BOWEN: Good morning. Thank you, Madam Chair. Zack Bowen, Georgia, for-hire.

MR. HAYMANS: Doug Haymans, Georgia.

MS. BURGESS: Erika Burgess, Florida FWC.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Jessica McCawley, Florida.

MR. BREWER: Chester Brewer, Florida.

MR. HARTIG: Ben Hartig, Florida.

DR. COLLIER: Chip Collier, South Atlantic staff.

MR. WAUGH: Gregg Waugh, South Atlantic staff.

MR. PHILLIPS: Charlie Phillips, Georgia.

MR. GRINER: Tim Griner, North Carolina.

MR. CONKLIN: Chris Conklin, South Carolina.

MR. BELL: Mel Bell, South Carolina.

MR. BROWN: Mark Brown, South Carolina.

LTJG HOCKENBERRY: Amy Hockenberry, U.S. Coast Guard.

DR. PONWITH: Bonnie Ponwith, NOAA Fisheries.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Monica Smit-Brunello, NOAA General Counsel.

DR. CRABTREE: Roy Crabtree, NOAA Fisheries.

DR. MCGOVERN: Jack McGovern, NOAA Fisheries.

MS. BOSARGE: Leann Bosarge, Gulf Council.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you to Madam Chair Bosarge for being here as our Gulf Council liaison this week. We also have Anna Beckwith, who is joining us by webinar. Anna was unable to make this meeting week, due to a prior business commitment, and so she'll be joining us by webinar for the first couple of days.

I also wanted to note that Tony DeLernia, who is our Mid-Atlantic Council liaison, will also be joining us by webinar for the first couple of days, and then I believe he expects to be here in person for Wednesday through Friday. Dewey Hemilright, who flips with Mr. DeLernia on being the council liaison versus the council representative on different committees, was unable to make this rescheduled meeting, unfortunately. Those are just some of the, I guess, oddities that we'll be dealing with for this meeting.

First of all, I just want to say that I'm really glad to see all of our council family here healthy and safe. I regret obviously having to reschedule this meeting due to circumstances surrounding Hurricane Irma. Our thoughts absolutely go out to all of those folks who are trying to recover from this hurricane, particularly in Florida, and especially in the Florida Keys, where there have been devastating and certainly unrecoverable impacts in some cases, and we're also thinking about our colleagues on the Gulf Coast recovering from Hurricane Harvey. It's going to a long effort there as well, and then, finally, our thoughts go out to our colleagues in the Caribbean, who have gotten a double-whammy from both Irma and Maria, and so let's just all keep thinking positive thoughts about those folks. Thank you very much.

The first item on our agenda is Adoption of the Agenda. We have revised our agenda a little bit. Unfortunately, Mr. Chris Oliver, the new National Marine Fisheries Service Administrator for Fisheries, was unable to make this revised council meeting, and so what we're going to do during that time is engage in some discussion regarding issues of importance to the council. Mr. Oliver has asked that all of the councils provide him with sort of your top-priority issues, so that we can engage in that conversation at a future meeting when he is able to attend, and so that's the one change in the agenda.

Unless there are any other changes to the agenda, we will consider the agenda approved by consent. The next item is Approval of our June 2017 Minutes. Are there any modifications to the minutes? Seeing none, the minutes stand approved. The next item on our agenda is the Swearing in of Council Members Mark Brown and Chester Brewer, and I am turning things over to Dr. Crabtree.

(Whereupon, Mr. Brown and Mr. Brewer are sworn in.)

DR. CRABTREE: Welcome back, and thank you both. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

DR. DUVAL: Welcome back aboard for another term in prison. Okay. The next item on our agenda is the issues for discussion, and you all should have received a draft from -- I guess Mike Collins sent this around to all council members, or Gregg sent this around to all council members, and so these issues for discussion were sent around on Saturday.

There is a number of items that I am going to turn this over to Gregg to walk us through, but these are based on past discussions that we have had during Executive Finance, and some of these items are based on discussions that we've had with regard to Magnuson-Stevens reauthorization, and some of this is in regards to conversations that we have had during other committee meetings, and

so I'm going to turn things over to Gregg to walk through these, and we can add, edit, prioritize, or delete.

MR. WAUGH: Thank you, Madam Chair. The first item deals with funding level, and, since -- Well, to back up a second, the councils and the commissions are all in one line item, and, since 2008, there has been an increase of approximately 30 percent, and that level for that line item is set by Congress. There is an allocation formula that the councils use to distribute that money amongst the eight councils.

In 2016, the council received about \$23.9 million in that council line item, but what is critical is that NMFS also provides additional funding to the councils, to the tune of about \$4.7 million, to address other issues, NEPA and annual catch limits and stock assessments, and that includes the money for running the SEDAR. That portion of the funding is up to NMFS.

It's been done in prior years, and we expect that to continue, but that's up to the agency, and so, if the agency was to suffer a significant cut, then we would expect those funds to be probably reduced, and none of the councils can continue their operations and meet their obligations with that additional funding to be cut. In discussions, the councils have agreed, amongst themselves, that, if the council portion of that line item was at \$30 million, which isn't much of an increase from the total that we're getting now, \$28.6, that would allow the councils to continue to function and meet their obligations. Plus that would remove the risk, if you will, each year of wondering whether you're going to get that additional funding or not to make up the difference.

The outlook in the future is that we will be lucky to be level funded, and so, as you all know, in this day and age, if you get level funded, that equates to a cut, and so I think the best way to deal with this is to go through section-by-section and then have some discussion and then get some direction from you all of whether you want anything added or modified from this and give us some direction on what to pursue.

MS. MCCAWLEY: The way it's listed up there, it's a little confusing to me. I'm wondering if what we're asking for should maybe come first and then maybe there is some sub-bullets. It's the i and ii that are somewhat confusing to me about what the ask is or what the concern is, and so I'm wondering if maybe iii and little iv maybe should come up to the top. Then i and ii, are they just explaining what has happened in the past? I am a little confused as to the whole bolded part set by Congress and then up to NMFS. What is our goal with those two bullets, I guess?

DR. DUVAL: I think just setting -- Like you just said, i and ii really just say out what has happened in the past and sort of provide some context for, I think, iii and iv, in terms of the resources that are needed to adequately do our jobs. We could certainly -- I don't think that this is something that we would just provide to Chris in this format. It's really this was -- Given that we kind of found out late in the game that we were going to have this change in our agenda and trying to figure out the best use of this time and what the Assistant Administrator has requested, in terms of input for what each council's priorities are, Gregg quickly put this together, and so we can rearrange this in any way that we need to.

MR. WAUGH: Okay, and so then we'll go forward. The ask there is Roman numeral iii, that the councils need to be funded at \$30 million, and that would be in that line item, the portion of the line item that includes the councils and the commissions, and so we will go forward with that point.

MS. MCCAWLEY: So can we somehow indicate that that's our particular ask?

DR. DUVAL: Yes, I think we can certainly bold that. Chip is putting some additional language in there just to indicate that the council requests to be funded at \$30 million, or we can even just put in the words "our ask", and we can modify that later as we put this in a format that's probably a little bit more digestible. We really just want to kind of get the discussion on the record, in terms of what our priorities are.

MR. WAUGH: The intent would be to take the guidance we get from you and rework this into more of a document that has what we're requesting and then the discussion.

DR. DUVAL: Anything else right now? Okay.

MR. WAUGH: Next, in terms of timing, the lack of an approved budget at the start of the fiscal year has some significant impacts. This year, our council, we would not have been able to meet payroll and our operating expenses if we didn't have two grants that we were operating on until we got our portion of the funds, and obviously this is up to Congress when they approve the budgets.

We do plan on carryover to cover us at the start of a new fiscal year. Sometimes that is possible. We have been able to do that consistently, but, as you get to the end of a five-year grant cycle, that's not going to be possible, and we will get into a little more details about that under Executive Finance, and so the councils can plan for some carryover.

There is also talk that the councils can request that the agency provide some funding, interim funding, at the start of a fiscal year if the budget hasn't been approved, in order to help the councils move through, and so, again, in terms of the point that Jessica made, i, ii, and iii are sort of background, and the ask would be Roman numeral iv.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any questions or concerns about that? Okay. Seeing none, we'll go ahead and move on.

MR. WAUGH: Then, in terms of reauthorization of the Magnuson Act, these are not in priority order, but, for those of you that have listened to some of the hearings, Chairman Sullivan consistently asks of a number of witnesses, okay, what is your top two or three items or what are your highest priority items for reauthorization?

I pulled, with Michelle's input, some of the items here, and I think it would be good if we could indicate which of these are our highest priorities, in terms of asking for. The first is phasing out overfishing over three years, and you see a reference here to page 15 of the CCC working paper. The working paper that's under Executive Finance that we dealt with at our Executive Finance meeting that you all saw at the last meeting, that's been updated, and so that has regional perspectives of each of the councils and a consensus position. You will see a number of references there, if you want some more information.

B is flexibility to manage the recreational sector without in-season closures. This will require setting seasons short enough and bag limits low enough to constrain the recreational harvest to

their target allocations, and the presentation that we sent out on that recreational visioning amendment gets into this in a little more detail.

C would be to exclude species like spiny lobster and dolphin from the ACL requirement, species with short life cycles. With dolphin, we couldn't implement the results from a stock assessment before all those species from that year class was gone from the fishery. Spiny lobster has an exceptional life cycle with a lot of external recruitment.

D is future catch share and IFQ programs. E is exempted fishing permits. Some of the bills would make significant changes to exempted fishing permits. F is to add "depleted" in addition to overfishing and overfished to indicate when stock status is due to things other than overfishing. G deals with cooperative data collection. Some of the bills propose some changes to how data collection programs are funded and what is collected and how they are used. H is recreational data collection. There some issues identified in some of the bills there, and, of course, any others. Now, we have the CCC working paper that shows all of our points. The intent here would be to pick some that we want to highlight.

DR. DUVAL: I know that's kind of a hefty list for folks to digest, and we'll get a little bit more into this in Executive Finance, I think, when we review the results of our one-day webinar that we had in July to really kind of dig into all of these MSA issues, but some of these items have been sort of on our list of stuff for a while.

I think probably one of the most important is allowing phase-out of overfishing over three years. This is something that Ben has provided testimony on, when he was Chair and was called before Congress, and we have provided examples of allowing circumstances for phase-out. For some of the other councils, one of their priorities is actually flexibility in the rebuilding plans, but, for us, the major impact here, and I dare say in the Gulf as well, has really been the impact of ending overfishing immediately, and so having a little bit of flexibility there seems like it would be a priority for this council. I think if folks have any thoughts on that -- Are there any of these that you think that we should not include in this list or others that need to be added?

MR. BREWER: Thank you, Dr. Duval. I agree that that three-year phase-in is very, very important, perhaps the most important thing that we see up here, because of really the economic damage that happens when you have to shut down a season in the middle of the season. I did want to comment on the recreational sector portion of this and the flexibility to manage the recreational sector without in-season closures.

This somewhat follows along with that three-year idea of overfishing, and this is personal to me, or I should say my personal opinion, but I don't know that we will ever, ever, ever be able to count every fish that is being caught recreationally. You can work on MRIP until you're blue in the face, and I just don't know that you're ever going to have the kind of accuracy that's necessary for in-season management.

The first sentence that's up there, the subtitle, "Flexibility to Manage the Recreational Sector Without In-Season Closures", I agree with that 100 percent. It's the second part that causes me a little bit of heartburn, because, to me, the long-term solution in managing recreational fisheries is going to be something like we've already talked about, where you're talking about extractions and

you're talking about long-term trends within the fishery, to show, where you've got your regulations right now, are you seeing the fishery go up, or are you seeing it kind of trend down?

I don't know that it's necessary that you emphasize setting short enough seasons to allow bag limits, blah, blah, blah, but rather the emphasis, at least in my mind, should be on managing these fisheries based on trends in the recreational sector, rather than having the incredibly hard TACs and whatnot that we've had to deal with and that have caused some disruption, really. That is my comment with regard to the recreational sector.

DR. CRABTREE: Just to follow up with that, I think that what Chester is getting at is a fundamental problem in managing with ACLs in the Southeast, and the trouble is that we set ACLs, but we're not able to update them for any number of years, and, with recreational fisheries, I think, if you look at them, by and large, when they're catching a lot of fish, it's because there are a lot of fish in the water, and so what I see happening in the South Atlantic, and in the Gulf, is we get big year classes that hit the fishery, which is good thing. We have lots of fish, but what happens is the recreational fishery catches a lot of fish in response to it, and the current management paradigm forces us to react as if something bad happened, when in fact something really good happened in the fishery.

Then, in some cases, with overfished stocks, we even get forced into a payback. Well, the fact is, if there are more fish than you thought in the water, why would you pay anything back because something good happened? It seems to me that's a fundamental kind of out-of-sync artifact of managing with ACLs that we ought to address, and I think, too often, the answer to that is, well, we need better science.

Well, the fact of the matter is, to get the kind of science we would need -- I mean, I agree with Chester. We're never going to be able to count every fish, and we're not going to get to a situation where we get annual stock assessments with recruitment indices so that we can do year-end specs. It's just the cost would be very high, and I see no appetite right now to pay for that, and so, at some point, we've got recognize that the management regime has to be brought in line with the science we're willing to pay for, and I think that's fundamentally one of our problems now, and I think it's why we hear from fishermen, quite often, that your management doesn't match what I'm seeing on the water, and that's because, a lot of times, we react to really good things as if they were bad things.

We've got a situation in the Gulf right now with cobia which is the opposite of what's happening in the South Atlantic. They can't catch the cobia ACL in the Gulf. They catch about half of it, and fishermen are telling me the stock is in terrible shape, but, because they're not catching the ACL, it hasn't risen to a high priority for us, and, in that case, this management paradigm is kind of causing us to ignore what's going on.

Red snapper is probably on the most rapid increase in stock size of anything we've seen in the South Atlantic, yet we spend the majority of our time worrying about that, and so I think those are fundamental problems with this whole management paradigm. I don't think the answers of how to fix that are all that easy to get to, but I think, until we come to some better way of dealing with this, we're going to continue to have a lot of the problems that we've been facing in recent years.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks, Roy. Yes, it really seems that it's a disconnect between the type of information that we have to manage our recreational fisheries and then how we are required to apply accountability measures. That is kind of how I see it, and that forces us into those types of situations.

MR. HARTIG: I think what Chester and Roy said, I think we need to lay that out the way that Roy has said it, the major problem in the Gulf and the South Atlantic with ACLs. You know lay out, front and center, the problem we're having with management and then A, B, and C, what are the best ways to address it that we see going forward, because Roy has made that point a couple of times, and it's not lost on me that -- The observations over time are pretty good about what he has landed on there.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Thanks for that input. I appreciate it. I think, just in terms of the rest of this list, and we still have another page or so of stuff to go through, if there is anything on this list, such as excluding species like spiny lobster and dolphin, the language on future catch share IFQ programs, exempted fishing permits, use of the term "depleted" in addition to overfishing and overfished, some of the data collection issues -- I mean, I think I have heard folks that probably I would say our top two are phase-in of ending overfishing and then laying out this fundamental difference in terms of the management paradigm for recreational fisheries here in the South Atlantic, but are there other items on this list that folks want to include or not include, or do folks want an opportunity to look through the information in Executive Finance and come back to this?

MR. BREWER: There is some stuff that I would like to talk about, but we can come back to it in Executive Finance.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Maybe all I would ask then is, if there is anything missing from this list that people see right now -- I am not seeing any takers, and so why don't we go ahead and walk through some of the rest of this?

MR. HAYMANS: I would ask a question of Roy, but he is walking away, and so I will catch him when he comes back.

MR. WAUGH: Okay, and so Item 3 is Unfunded Mandates, and this is listed on page 21 of the CCC working paper, for Data Collection. Obviously this is something that our council has dealt with quite a bit. Item A is to work with NMFS to implement charter vessel electronic logbooks. That was sent for formal review on March 3, 2017, with a request to implement it on January 1, 2018. We're going to get a report at Full Council on Friday on where we are with that, but that's certainly something that would help improve our data.

Commercial electronic logbooks, there was some work to allow them to voluntarily start providing their logbook data, instead of on paper, electronically. There was a request that that be implemented sooner rather than later. C is request NMFS to support efforts to develop electronic permitting and reporting for the private recreational sector. That's something we'll be talking about in Amendment 46 in December.

D is NMFS develop a written plan for collecting adequate length, age, and reproductive samples for those species for which an age-based stock assessment is possible. E is provide full funding

for fishery-independent sampling, for programs like MARMAP, SEAMAP, and SEFIS. Then any others that you all want to add.

DR. DUVAL: It seems to me like this falls into sort of two broad categories, like electronic reporting tools and then basic biological sampling and having resources available for that, or at least a plan to get those. Any questions or comments or thoughts or additions or deletions on that? Okay. I am not seeing any. Let's go ahead and move on to I guess it's Item 5.

MR. WAUGH: Item 5 is Stock Assessments. A is NMFS develop a method to do annual projection updates for priority species. This is a point that Roy mentioned, and I know John is working with the Beaufort Lab and the SSC to come up with something approaching this. B is conduct assessments for those species for which an age-based assessment is possible every three years, and some of the bills talk about requiring this every three years or every five years. C is data to be used in stock assessments. A number of the bills talk about how data should be included, and we address that in the CCC working paper. That is the items on stock assessments.

DR. PONWITH: On the periodicity of the assessments, one of the things that we'll talk about in the SEDAR discussion is the three T's, the timeliness, the thoroughness of the assessments, and there are tradeoffs between the periodicity of a stock assessment and the type of assessment you are able to do, and so I think it's laudable to press on wanting stock assessments more frequently. I think that's a good thing.

When you do the math, if there isn't an influx of money and that is held stable, to be able to do an assessment every three years is still possible, and what that would take is to reduce the complexity of those assessments, so that it could be done more frequently, but in a way that is less thorough, and so it's just a matter of recognizing those tradeoffs, and we can set what the driver is for a stock assessment plan, but we just need to make sure that when we set the driver, if the periodicity, the timeliness, is the thing that you want to be the driver, that you recognize that the other aspects of the assessment will have to be adjusted accordingly.

I think that's a really -- It's something valuable to talk about, because, again, there are gains by doing it that way, but there are costs about it too, so that, if a decision is made to take that path, that we understand sort of the full accounting of what that would look like.

I am eager to do more work on the exploration of those index-based indicators of stock response to management, because Dr. Crabtree did a pretty good job of depicting the challenges of understanding exactly what's in the water in any one given year without a stock assessment within six months prior to that of being able to actually measure those changes and interpret things we're seeing in the fishery correctly. I think these are important areas to explore, and I think that that's an important aspect when we get into the SEDAR Steering Committee, to have good discussions, so we understand those tradeoffs.

MR. HARTIG: Bonnie, one thing that I've been thinking about on the periodicity of assessments is, for a number of species in the last few years, we haven't got the management in place from the assessment for at least two years, and in some cases three years, down the line. If you're going to try and do an assessment in three years and you haven't even put the management in from the first assessment, I think we need to look at this.

I think, as we get updates and things maybe get less complicated, and I'm hoping over time that we will, that we can put our management in one year in place and then we can get on a more reasonable timeframe, but, right now, we're not getting the management from the assessments we have into -- It's quite a while, and so that needs to be taken into consideration in how we set this up as well.

MR. HAYMANS: Dr. Crabtree has left again, and the question was for him, but I will ask it of Bonnie, and I don't know that there's an answer there, but I realize the \$30 million ask that we were talking about in Number 1 here is for the council, and we don't really know what NOAA Fisheries' total budget is, but continually asking for more money for additional data collection when the fishermen aren't fishing, to me, that's a difficult ask for the fishermen, from a tax perspective, right?

I guess the question is -- Roy said it's a difficult request to get more money. Within NOAA Fisheries, specifically within the Southeast, is there any effort to reprioritize spending as it exists now, such that we get at -- This is, I guess, under Data Collection, Number 4, such that we get at more independent sampling and more age length and that sort of sampling, because we really need to abandon ACLs.

I mean, that, to me, needs to be point number one in the Magnuson reauthorization, is we can't count recreationally-caught fish, and there has got to be these other indices, and Roy is back at the table, and so I will sort of readdress it. When Roy said that we don't have money for this additional data collection, but is there any effort to reprioritize how we spend those dollars and get at some of the indices that we really need to be addressing and not the ACL? I know you came in late, Roy, and I was getting at your point from your first discussion about not being able to get additional funding to add on, and I'm asking if there are efforts to reprioritize.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, I would say the answer to that is yes, and clearly improving MRIP has been a priority in the agency, and then improvement of stock assessment programs has been a priority in the Southeast for some time, but it seems to me that, to successfully implement ACLs, you need, in recreational fisheries in particular, you need a couple of things.

One, you really need a good recruitment index, so you can know when those big year classes are coming, and you probably need annual stock assessments, and then we need to do annual specifications, where we reset the ACLs every year. That is a considerable investment, and it would require a great deal of funding, more than has become available to do the fishery-independent surveys and recruitment indices.

Then the second thing that you need is a more real-time way to generate recreational catch estimates. We are making some progress on that with electronic reporting, and my hope is there will be funding that comes available when the program is implemented to help us with that. That though remains a huge challenge with private recreational anglers, and it's not clear to me how exactly you get to that with private recreational anglers, because it's not clear to me that self-reported-type data, outside of a survey, will produce data that is free enough of biases to be useable.

It's not clear how to me how you get to that, but my point is it would take a very substantial funding increase that isn't -- We're not going to be able to get to it just by reprioritizing. I think it would take a substantial increase in overall funding levels to get there.

DR. PONWITH: Because you were giving me eye contact at the beginning of the question, I will answer too, and I will tell you that you are exactly right. The fishery-independent data collections are extremely powerful in the quality and the reliability of the stock assessment, and so it is really crucial to get the precision of those data as refined as possible to help us understand the true status of that stock.

The second important thing is to have a clear understanding of what the removals are, and so the fishery-dependent data are important as well, because you need to know what has been caught. What has happened to us with ACLs is that remains true, but, in addition to it, you need to know, really, really soon, what was caught, as opposed to a year down the road, to be able to know whether you hit or exceeded or undershot an ACL.

If you go back to those basic concepts, those two basic inputs, to a stock assessment, that good accounting for removals is really, really important, and having a way to monitor ACLs that doesn't rob those two elements that are inputs for the stock assessment would be a way of getting that highest-quality data into the stock assessment.

I agree with Dr. Crabtree that, when we make huge investments in real-time data reporting for kind of in-season management decisions, that is very costly, and there are cases where we're uncertain whether the quality of that information is going to be better, even though we know the timeliness of it is better. The money that it takes to pay for that is money that could have been spent in that fishery-independent data collection.

You will see, in the SEDAR Steering Committee meeting, that we'll be looking at the SEFIS index and the directions that -- Not SEDAR, but later on today. I'm sorry. That will be in our red snapper conversations, but you will see the CVs on those data, and what we would love to see is those error bars get as close to that line as possible, because that gives us a lot more certainty in how reliable those trend lines are, and those are, again, the tradeoffs.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks, both Bonnie and Roy, and Doug for raising the question. One quick follow-up, because I would like to move on.

MR. HAYMANS: Sure, and Roy was out of the room when I started that, but the essential tenet that I was after is getting rid of ACLs, because we're never going to have enough good information to manage based on ACLs, and has there been any discussion about how we redirect those funds to some of the other indices that we could manage for, rather than adding to, but I understand that we're time limited, and we can talk about this later, but that was essential to my question.

DR. DUVAL: Just to note that it would require an act of Congress to get rid of ACLs. Lots of good discussion here about things to take into consideration as we consider this list of priorities, and we understand that there is not necessarily going to be money for everything, but I think it's important to highlight what are the most important things to this council, and so I just want to let Gregg finish up this list. There is a lot of information under the Executive Finance tab with regard to a lot of these items that has really been driven by Magnuson reauthorization, and so, Gregg.

MR. WAUGH: Thank you, Madam Chair. The next two, Climate Change and Forage Fish, we are addressing those through our FEP activities. These are two topics that get raised quite a bit, in

terms of some of the MSA reauthorization and discussion, and so I think, when we have time, we should address those some, and then the final one is Deeming and Transmittal Process. Again, this has to do with how fast documents get reviewed and implemented, and we'll be talking about that in the Executive Finance meeting as well.

DR. DUVAL: I think, unless there are any other things -- This is just a preliminary list for folks to chew on. We can come back to this list later. As Gregg said, we will be discussing quite a few of these things during our Executive Finance session. This is not something that has to be completed at the end of this meeting. I expect that this is something that we would like to be able to get to Chris Oliver probably by the next council meeting, so that NOAA Fisheries can incorporate our council's input into their big picture, and so I appreciate folks continuing to think about this over the meeting week.

The next item on our agenda is a Florida -- We're going to jump into our red snapper things, and it's a Florida Red Snapper Data Overview, and so this is Attachment 1 in your briefing book under Tab 1, Council Session Monday. We have Dr. Barbieri on the webinar, and Luiz was going to walk us through this presentation, and we'll have some time for questions and answers, and so we'll just make sure that Dr. Barbieri is here. Luiz, can you hear us?

DR. BARBIERI: I can hear you loud and clear, Madam Chair. Good morning to you and everybody else.

DR. DUVAL: It's great to hear you, and we have your presentation all queued up, and so dig in.

DR. BARBIERI: Wonderful. Thank you. As Chairman Duval pointed out, this is really an effort to present you some of the fisheries-independent information that Florida FWC, the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, has been collecting over the last six years or so, doing a number of projects in the South Atlantic, in the main area of distribution, the center of abundance, of red snapper in our region.

The idea here is to supplement some of the information that you have already seen and will be seeing later today in terms of indices of abundance and trends in abundance, and we also have some information on the age composition of red snapper in the area that I think would be helpful for us in evaluating progress in rebuilding and rebuilding the age composition of the population as well.

I already presented or told you what was the point of that first bullet there, and that is that we have collected data over the six years, and this is the variety of projects that were conducted, most of them conducted through cooperative research with members of industry, and we really appreciate all the support and the effort that industry in the northeast Florida area has put into this. They really have stepped up to the plate and helped us enormously in getting all of this accomplished.

Unfortunately, because these studies were developed as studies over time and they represent a number of different methodologies and approaches that we used, all collecting fishery-independent data, but not necessarily addressing the same standardized or applying the same standardized methodologies that a fisheries-independent monitoring program would have.

The results need to be interpreted carefully, and so I just bring this up, because you're going to see there's a lot of variability in the methodology and potentially the value of this information is more from a qualitative perspective, to sort of supplement some of the other inputs that you're already seeing from the MARMAP and some of the other analyses that are being conducted.

Here is what I was talking about. You can see a timeline there at the top from 2011 through 2017 and six different projects that were conducted for different purposes. We started back in 2011 with a cooperative tagging study, and this was really focused on trying to understand connectivity and movement of red snapper in the region and also in trying to get some information that could be used to inform selectivities of hook-and-line gear for our stock assessment.

Then, over time, we conducted some other studies, and you can see the progression there towards the right, as you go down the list of projects, and so you don't have a real long time series of the same project being conducted, and that is what prevents us from having a more strict quantitative approach here to be used to present the results to you.

Again, when you look at the different sampling years that are used over this timeline, you can see that there were a variety of methods, and those were experimental in nature. We wanted to see things that were working and how well they would work and test the use of different gears and different methodologies, because we were trying to zero in on what would be the best method to be used.

One thing that I want to call your attention to is that first line there, the unstandardized captain's choice. For each one of those projects that you see below, we gave the captain, the fisher that was taking us out for these cooperative research studies, we gave them the opportunity to go to a place that they felt had high abundances and perhaps larger sizes of red snapper, because this is something that they really felt was important information that needed to be brought up to our attention.

That, over the years I guess, through most of the time series, is what was done, but, of course, there was a lot of variability there as well with those methodologies used by different captains, and so it's really difficult to standardize those methods and come up with something that would be equivalent to an index of abundance, and then the fourth one down, the repetitive time drop, the RTD, that is the standardized active fishing methods that were used by our biologists even when onboard these fishing vessels, and so that is more comparable than some of the other methodologies, because it's more standardized over time. This highlights the fact that, throughout the talk, I'm going to be talking, at times, about the qualitative nature of our results and the fact that, at times, it was difficult for us to come up with something quantitative that was measurable.

Here is just to give you an idea of the distribution of samples. Like the sampling sites of the 2012 study, you can see that we had three different gears. The repetitive time drop are the red dots, the green dots are the horizontal longline, and dark blue dots are the vertical longline, and they cover a fairly broad range in terms of north/south distribution as well as shallow to deep, and so we get a very good representation, probably, of what was there during that time.

During the 2014/2015, the spawning aggregation study, that's the graph on the right, and you see that we used the repetitive time drop and some camera work as well, but the sites sampled for that study were more focused on the likelihood of finding spawning aggregations of red snapper and

gag and scamp, and so this universe of samples there is a little bit more biased towards the deeper sites and some specific sites, and so, again, lack of randomization and standardization that we would like to see in scientific surveys.

Then, for the 2016 selectivity study, this study -- We had a couple of years, actually, of work funded through Cooperative Research Program grants that allowed us to look at the repetitive time drop compared to the chevron trap, just, again, trying to get some estimates, some idea, of the selectivity of the different gears, so we can best interpret the data that's coming out of these surveys.

Then, this past summer, we used our Sportfish Restoration dollars to conduct some additional repetitive time drop, and that's the right-hand side there, and we were able to get a fairly broad range of depths and north/south distribution of that sampling, and we got about 500 individual fish for ages, and so, because the repetitive time drop from 2016 and 2017 and some portions of the previous years was used, that's going to be our most standardized method of looking at abundance and age composition over the years.

Here, just to give you an appreciation, these are actually the nominal catch per unit effort for the different gears used, and you can see right there on the bottom right some of the gears that we used. These are the acronyms that I used in the graph, and you can see that the repetitive time drop, going from 2012 all the way to 2017, shows a nice increase over time, in agreement with what we are seeing, as indicated by the MARMAP survey and some of the other indicators, that the stock is rebuilding and abundance is actually increasing over time. Of course, this is a nominal CPUE plot, and so there is a little bit of variability there from year to year, but the trend, the increasing trend, is clear.

I need to give you an appreciation for the sizes and ages that were collected by the different methods over the years, and you can see on the left column, going from 2012 all the way to 2017, those are the sizes of the fish that were sampled by different fishing methods in different years, and the sample sizes are indicated there. Then, on the right-hand side, you can see the ages of those fish.

To me, this is very reassuring to see that there was a broad range of ages and that we were able to effectively collect fish of relatively larger sizes for the maximum size of red snapper in our region and that, over time, as we look there from 2012, especially for the repetitive time drop, you can see, from 2012 all the way to 2017, that there is a rebuilding of the age composition and that we have a number of older ages, in the mid to upper teens, that start appearing as the age composition rebuilds. To me, this is a qualitative sort of assessment, but it gives us some additional supplementary information to evaluate or assess the success of the rebuilding plan for red snapper that has been taking place for several years now.

Here, for the repetitive time drop, since that was our most standardized and scientifically-conducted survey, we actually developed standardized indices over time, standardized abundances over time, and this was using a GLM, a general linear model, and a negative binomial distribution, and you can see there that, when you take into account a number of the factors, going from 2014 to 2017, the blue is the nominal average catch per unit effort, and then the standardized one -- You correct with some of the variability in methodology and some of the factors that influence abundance, and you get a more expected trend there.

It's nice to see that, for 2014, when we had so many of the samples coming from that spawning aggregation study, that the standardization actually was able to correct and adjust the abundance there, and the same thing on the right-hand side, as you can see an increasing trend.

Here, just to give you an appreciation for the captain's choice sampling, which was great to give us information on sizes of fish in different areas and to give us access to a large number of fish to be tagged, and then the fish that could be used for collecting age information and reproductive condition, but there was so much variability, depending on the captain and depending on the project and the site that was being studied, that, when you look at the left, the graph on the left is the different types of bait types that were used over the years. On the right-hand panel is the hook size, again over the years used for the different sampling trips and different captain's choice trips. There was so much interannual variability in the sample methodologies used that we couldn't really find a way to standardize this and provide anything useful, and so that information is being used primarily in that qualitative way.

Here, when we look at the selectivity study, which actually used the repetitive time drop that was very standardized, a hook-and-line sample methodology, we used stereo cameras that were coordinated. We thank Marcel and Julie for helping us develop this study and assisting with the identification of all the methodological and instrumental type of setup there for the MARMAP surveys conducted, so we could compare what the cameras were collecting with the repetitive time drop and the chevron traps that we tried to apply as closely to the MARMAP survey as possible.

We actually put here the 2016 captain's choice, just to give you a reference point there, because those samples were really focused or were biased towards larger sizes and older ages, and you can see that the repetitive time drop, the more standardized scientific statistically-valid survey there, compares very well even with the captain's choice.

The chevron traps had a tendency to not sample larger sizes as well, and it also wasn't as effective in sampling older ages, but some of the older ages appear even in the chevron trap, and so we are now in the process -- That first panel up top on both sides, we are now in the process of going through the long review, the process of review, of tons of video and coming up with the sizes and abundances of those video-based data collection points, so we can compare them with these other more active fishing gears.

Then I thought that this was very reassuring, because when you look at -- This is the catch per unit effort, the nominal results, the nominal index values, for the repetitive time drop, if we standardize the captain's choice, which wasn't, and then the chevron traps, which, of course, represent a very scientifically-implemented survey for index of abundance that, even though the chevron traps had some limitations, instead of collecting larger sizes and older individuals, that actually was able to, in my opinion, index abundance very well. It's comparable to the repetitive time drop result there on the left and even the captain's choice in the middle. It's within that bar there of a little over two to a little less than three fish per set, three red snapper per set.

Again, this is, to me, a way to use some independent information sampling that was conducted completely independent from the MARMAP study to sort of validate the abundance values that we are getting from the MARMAP survey are representative, are picking up the signal, of the

population abundance, and it can be used, in my opinion, legitimately, to indicate the trends in abundance in the red snapper stock.

We are going to see later today, as Chip and others give presentations on different alternatives being considered for the red snapper fishery, that we used the MARMAP survey index as a way to provide guidance to us on the progress of rebuilding and that our results, which are very much in the center of abundance of the South Atlantic red snapper stock and using more active fishing gears that are very effective to cover a broad range of size and ages, agree very well with the result from the MARMAP and that the age compositions that we see over the years also shows a very increasing trend.

When I looked at those ages in the mid to upper teens and I compare with what we see in the Gulf of Mexico, to me, this is very encouraging for red snapper in the South Atlantic, in that it demonstrates to me a very strong signal of population rebuilding and responsiveness to the rebuilding plan that has been implemented. Madam Chair, I think this is my last slide, and so this should complete my presentation, and I am available for questions if there is time.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you very much, Dr. Barbieri, for that presentation. I am sure that there are probably some questions from around the table from folks.

MR. HARTIG: In the assessment itself and this information that you have collected, in the age matrix from year to year in the assessment, can this information -- Even though the studies are disparate and different, there are fish that are in the population, and can they be used to fill in the age matrix over time?

DR. BARBIERI: That's a tough question. My short answer to that is, yes, that those ages would be informative, but that is to be decided. How to do it, Ben, will have to be decided, in my opinion, by the next SEDAR data workshop and the assessment panel that is put together for the next quantitative assessment of red snapper, whenever that happens, to find a way to appropriately integrate this age information into the assessment. So the short answer is yes, but how is the question.

MR. HARTIG: I mean, given the limitations of our sampling, and we just don't have a lot of information, other than the chevron trap, and thank goodness that there was a push to get the cooperative research done and Bonnie supported this information to supplement the fishery-independent work, but the information that you have compared to chevron traps with your other sampling, your hook-and-line sampling, does show that chevron traps collect smaller and younger fish, at least in your work, on average, and so, from the fishery-independent information, we'll never get a true age structure from that alone, and so we're never really going to know how our rebuilding is progressing and how we're filling in our age structure based on just the fishery-independent information.

It's critical to have at least your work continue and then preferably actually have fishing occurring at some level to produce ages that actually come from the fishery, because if you compare -- I don't have a real in-depth comparison of the ages from the mini-seasons, but, when you look at that information, it looks like the most robust ages come from the fishery itself, the recreational information and the commercial information, where those animals were sampled and measured and aged.

It looks like that's more robust than any of the information that you've put forth so far in your studies, and so, to me, if you don't at least have some data that comes from the fishery, you're essentially missing out on a lot of the questions about your rebuilding, and that is a really critical addition to the red snapper problem.

DR. BARBIERI: Yes, I agree completely, Ben, and this is why we have been working, in cooperation with the MARMAP program and the Science Center --

(There is a gap in the audio recording.)

DR. BARBIERI: -- selectivity and some of the other issues, so we can develop future sampling strategies that can supplement MARMAP. MARMAP does a great job at indexing the population itself. There is very valuable information there, but we just need to supplement that with some other methodologies that allow us to better monitor the rebuilding of the age composition, and so I agree completely.

MR. HARTIG: Thank you, Luiz, and my point wasn't to say that MARMAP isn't a great way, and SEFIS and a combination of those two, a great way to sample this population, but it's just that we need some additional sampling to get the real answers to the questions of rebuilding.

DR. DUVAL: I would agree, and I think we -- I mean, you see that in other fisheries as well. Certain surveys have a selectivity associated with them, and so that -- They will provide a picture of just a certain portion of the population, that's all, and so are there other questions for Dr. Barbieri or comments on the presentation?

DR. CRABTREE: Good morning, Dr. Barbieri, and I really appreciate you being with us this morning. I know you're having some difficult circumstances back there, and our thoughts are with you. I guess the bottom line, from what I am hearing here, is that the stock is recovering, that it is rebuilding, and I know, a couple of years or a year ago, when you appeared before us as Chairman of the SSC, you told us that you believe that we are making adequate progress in rebuilding. Is it fair to say what you're seeing from this data would be consistent with that?

DR. BARBIERI: Yes, absolutely. The rebuilding trend I think continues, and, to some extent, from what we can see there, it actually has improved over time.

DR. CRABTREE: You're seeing improvements -- We, at the last meeting, Dr. Reichert showed us the trap index through 2016 that had showed some significant improvements, and what you're seeing here is yet more improvement between 2016 and 2017?

DR. BARBIERI: Correct, yes.

DR. CRABTREE: Okay, and so I guess we're then in a situation where it looks like the rebuilding plan is working and the age composition is recovering and we're making progress, and I guess what the council is struggling with right now is, at the last meeting, Dr. Reichert told us that the current yield streams and ABCs that we have were not useful for management and monitoring, because of uncertainty in the catch and the discard information, and so the SSC said that they were unable to provide us with an ABC. Right now, it appears that we don't really have an ABC or a

catch level recommendation that we can use for management, and I just wanted to see if that's consistent with your read on where we are at the moment.

DR. DUVAL: Luiz, do we still have you?

DR. COLLIER: It appears we're the one losing audio.

DR. DUVAL: Hang on a minute, Luiz. If you're replying, we can't hear you, and it sounds like we're having some technical difficulties on this end, and so just hang tight for a minute.

DR. BARBIERI: Hello.

DR. DUVAL: We can hear you again.

DR. BARBIERI: Yes, and thank you.

DR. DUVAL: So, Dr. Crabtree, I think, if you wouldn't mind just repeating your last question, and then we will --

DR. CRABTREE: I don't know where you lost me, Luiz, but it sounds like what we're struggling here with is we have an extremely uncertain stock assessment, the terminal year of which now is just about three years old, but we're seeing all sorts of more recent information from various fishery-independent sources that are showing a very strong positive recovery in the stock.

At the last council meeting, Dr. Reichert, the Chairman of the SSC, talked about the projections and the ABCs, but he pointed out that the current yield streams and ABCs are not useful for management and monitoring, because of uncertainty in the catch and discard information, and the SSC is currently unable to provide an ABC for red snapper, but that there is a lot of evidence since the assessment that indicates a very strong recovery. Is all of that consistent with your scientific read on where we are?

DR. BARBIERI: Yes, and the SSC discussed this, and I don't want to overstep my bounds here and speak for Dr. Reichert. I know he is going to have his report of the SSC, but, specifically to that point, Dr. Crabtree, is the fact that the SSC discussed this issue at the end of our last webinar meeting, and there is still some level of uncertainty or confusion about where exactly we are, but from my own personal perspective, I went back and reread all the letters that had been transmitted between the council and the Science Center and Dr. Ponwith's responses. To me, now the understanding is that the assessment --

DR. DUVAL: Hang on, Luiz. We lost you again. Nobody is going to be hearing this on the webinar, but it's going to take us about five minutes to change out what mechanism we're using to actually conduct the webinar. Mike is going to need to change us from the hotel's Wi-Fi service, and so you've got about five minutes, if you need to take a quick break.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Let's try this again. Dr. Barbieri, can you hear us?

DR. BARBIERI: I sure can, Madam Chair.

DR. DUVAL: We apologize, to you and to other folks who are on the webinar, for the technical difficulties we've had at this end. Unfortunately, the hotel's Wi-Fi service keeps blinking in and out, and so we think we have this fixed now. We have switched over to something else, and so I think if you would like to finish answering Dr. Crabtree's question, that would be great.

DR. BARBIERI: Yes, and I don't remember which part, or I don't know which part was cut off, but, to put it in summary, in short, basically the SSC's issue was that the letter from the Center in response to the council that Dr. Ponwith sent basically clarified the issue that the recommendations, the ABC recommendations, the short-term projections, that the SSC had provided were very difficult, if not impossible, to be implemented, in terms of regulations that would make sure that we stayed within the catch levels that were being recommended and with a way to monitor those catch levels as well as the discards, given the high uncertainties in the assessment and in the MRIP survey, especially the discards portion.

We came to our April meeting, and I would imagine that Chairman Reichert will bring this up during his presentation at some point this week, and we came to our April meeting really prepared to move on into a different approach, because that letter clarified the issues, and basically it articulated the point that implementation of the ABCs that were recommended by the committee was not possible, from a practical perspective.

DR. CRABTREE: Essentially, that's what I think Dr. Reichert said at the last meeting, was that the ABCs, the yield streams we have, were not useful for management, and that all gets at what you're saying, is they would be difficult, if not impossible, to implement in a meaningful way, and so that sounds like you're all on the same page with that, that we just don't have an ABC at this time that we can use for management purposes.

My last question for you, Luiz, is, given the improvements we've seen in stock status over what has now been, I think, seven years, or maybe eight, of rebuilding this stock, and particularly in the last years, your opinion that we are making adequate progress in rebuilding, that would be highly unlikely to be taking place if overfishing was occurring in the stock, and would you say that would be a fair statement?

DR. BARBIERI: I would say that's a fair statement. When we look at the increase in abundance in the indices that I indicated over time, even during times when the fishery had some openings, some of the mini-seasons, and, since then, we've seen really clear signs of a responsiveness in the rebuilding plan and a continued rebuilding of the age composition, and so my interpretation of that is that those benefits, a population increase and rebuilding of the age composition, could not be taking place, really, if you're still undergoing overfishing. As a fisheries biologist, that would be my interpretation.

DR. CRABTREE: All right. Thank you very much, Luiz. That was very helpful, and we appreciate you being with us.

DR. DUVAL: I had Mark and Bonnie also in the line. Mark, did you have a question?

MR. BELL: What Mark was going to ask about was on one of the slides that is entitled "Project Sample Sites", and it indicates SEAMAP trawls, the purple boxes. Those aren't -- I am not sure what those are, but I don't think those are really SEAMAP trawl sites. It would leave you the impression that SEAMAP does a lot of trawling out all over the place in deep water and maybe catches red snapper, but that's just something for Luiz to kind of deal with, but those purple boxes aren't really SEAMAP trawl sites, I don't think.

DR. DUVAL: I am wondering, Mel, if you're looking at the previous presentation, because the one that Luiz just provided, if you're looking at those maps --

MR. BELL: Yes, I am looking at the previous one. Sorry, but that's what Mark was wanting to ask about.

DR. DUVAL: Gotcha.

DR. PONWITH: Thank you, Dr. Barbieri, for your presentation this morning. We appreciate the work that the state has done in these data collections, and, as is always the case, when there is uncertainty in science, one of the things that can assist in that kind of scenario is to have multiple lines of evidence to be able to look at multiple sources of information, to see if they are trending in the same direction, and that builds a level of confidence collectively that you might not have in looking at just one data series, and so the value of this kind of work is really important.

There is one question and answer though that concerns me a bit, and I am very happy to see the direction of these trend lines. This is what we're working for. This is what we've been aiming at being able to see in these presentations, but, when I hear the question asked of are we seeing signs of rebuilding and is that rebuilding adequate, it concerns me to hear an answer of yes, based on these data, because the adequacy of rebuilding is really a term of art that's written into the Act that is governed by our National Standards, and I want to be very careful about looking at data from these studies and making generalizations about the adequacy of the rebuilding.

I think that the trends in these data are positive, and that is a good thing. It's what we're expecting to see, based on the management measures that we are taking. These are our objectives, and this is the direction we all want this to be going, but we do need to be careful about over-reading these data, in the absence of an ABC from the SSC from the last stock assessment, and I just want to make sure that we're taking into consideration that what Dr. Barbieri is presenting isn't a stock assessment. It's important that corroborates the data that were included in the stock assessment, and it expands from there beyond the terminal year, but it isn't a stock assessment. Thank you.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Bonnie.

DR. CRABTREE: I appreciate those comments, Bonnie. I think where we are though right now as a council is we had an extremely uncertain stock assessment, and we're now a few years beyond it, and everyone seems to be in agreement that the projections and catch levels that come out of it aren't going to be useful for us, and so we, effectively, don't have an ABC or a catch level at this point.

We also don't have the ability to really quantify how much progress we're making, and so I think we're in a situation where we have to rely on the scientific judgment of our advisors and the other

lines of evidence that we have, and it is, I know, rewarding to all of us to see the level of improvement that we're seeing in all of the different sources, as Bonnie mentioned, and all of these different indices, but you know I think the Guidelines and all envision situations where the science becomes very uncertain and very unclear, and that's where we are.

Dr. Barbieri has given us his best-informed scientific judgment on it, but I think the message that comes ringing loud and clear through all of this, to me, is that the rebuilding plan we have put in place is working, and it's working extremely well, and one of the lessons that I have learned in the Gulf of Mexico, where I have spent it seems like twenty years dealing with red snapper, is that this stock responds very quickly to reductions in fishing mortality, and we have seen very rapid improvements in the stock, more rapid in the Gulf than we would have expected to have seen when we reduced fishing mortality, and I think we're seeing the same thing in the South Atlantic.

We made some very tough decisions to reduce fishing mortality in this fishery in the South Atlantic, and we're seeing a response by the stock similar to the Gulf, and so we don't have any way to really quantify right now the progress we're making, but I think the basis of all the scientific opinions we're hearing and what we're seeing are all consistent with the belief that we're making adequate progress towards rebuilding and that achieving that would not be consistent with overfishing this stock, and so, to me, in my personal view, what I am seeing is a rebuilding stock, and I don't see any evidence that overfishing is occurring at this point.

MR. BREWER: I think one of the things that has really concerned the council is the economic damage that has occurred because we found ourselves in a catch-22, and that catch-22 is, as the stock has improved, as we rebuild, more and more of these fish are being encountered, and we are seeing situations where the dead discard mortality has become a very limiting factor and in cases where we're seeing dead discards being estimated at numbers that are in excess of the ACL.

If we were to have a limited season for red snapper with robust sampling, with regard to the issue of dead discard mortality ratios, would that be a benefit in attempting to properly manage this fishery and determine whether in fact we are overfishing or not?

DR. BARBIERI: That's another very hard question to answer, but let me tell you that, Chester, my assessment here of the situation is that you think it's in the right place, but we do need to have a better idea of the magnitude of discards, have more definite information on that, and having better informed release mortality rates and have better estimates of what the removals, due to discards, are.

Whether we would be able to accomplish this during this upcoming season is questionable at this point. Getting these types of data involves quite a bit of planning and funding and logistics, and so I take your input really, as a suggestion that we -- I agree that we should focus on those issues and start developing ways to address those data uncertainties more fully, but, unfortunately, I cannot reassure you that we'll be ready to accomplish that in the very near future.

MR. BREWER: A follow-up. I understand exactly what you're saying, and I think we all recognize the limitations that would be involved, but would it help if we could, through I guess you would say an outreach, encourage the states to make sure that they are sampling as best they can during a proposed limited season, an outreach by NGOs that people do utilize descending

devices, and then report to those folks that are conducting the surveys what their findings are with regard to the use of those devices?

Really, there's a myriad of things that come to my mind of things that would help, because I mean we've got to do something. The economic impact has been really, really awful, and that's, of course, one of the things that we need to take a look at, is socioeconomic impacts.

DR. BARBIERI: Yes, I think all of those things would help, and I take your suggestion seriously, and we are working with both our federal and state partners in trying to plan a coordinated sampling effort for any kind of fishery-dependent data collection to take place, should the fishery have some opening, and so we will definitely be attentive to that and try to get those very issues that you brought up accomplished.

MR. BREWER: Thank you, Luis.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Any other questions for Dr. Barbieri on the presentation that he just gave with regard to the sampling that has occurred in Florida? Okay. Seeing none, we are going to go ahead --

DR. BARBIERI: Madam Chair?

DR. DUVAL: Yes, Dr. Barbieri.

DR. BARBIERI: I just wanted to make a quick comment and basically apologize to Dr. Ponwith, and to everybody else listening, if I made it sound like my comments regarding progress in rebuilding were in any way quantitative. They are not meant to be, and, if I sounded that way, that was not my intent.

I really cannot, and I don't think anybody at this point can, make any statements on whether the rate of rebuilding, the adequate or proposed or estimated rate, is being accomplished. I mean, my point was really on whether I see qualitative signs of progress that indicate that this stock is actually making progress in rebuilding and, how much progress, that's to be determined by some more thorough and complete methodology, and so, if I misspoke or made it sound like it was any more than that, my apologies. I agree with you completely that this information is most valuable from that qualitative perspective, and so I just want to bring out the point that this is something that is important, and I agree with her point completely.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you very much, Dr. Barbieri, for those clarifying comments. We certainly appreciate them, as well as your willingness to provide this presentation and to be here with us via webinar, given your family circumstances right now, and we're certainly thinking of you, and we appreciate the effort that you went to to put this presentation together. The data are certainly timely, and so we thank you for that.

DR. BARBIERI: Thank you, Madam Chair.

DR. DUVAL: I would like to go ahead and move on in our agenda, and I just want to give folks a quick overview of how we're going to manage this discussion. We do have an emergency action request in your briefing book. I am going to turn things over to Gregg to make some introductory

comments and kind of walk us through how we got to having an emergency action document in the briefing book.

Then, after that, Gregg is going to turn things over to Chip, who is going to go through a presentation that was posted on the website, and it is titled "Tab 01 RS Emergency Action for Public Comment", and so Chip is going to walk through that presentation then. Then I think, if there are any clarifying questions from council members about the document -- I don't want to get into discussion, because we have a noticed public comment period that is going to take place, but just, if there are any clarifying questions, we will handle those, and then we're going to take public comment on the emergency action document. Then, after we've taken public comment, we will go into our discussion, should we have time to do so.

Once we finish taking public comment on the emergency action document, then Chip has got another presentation on Amendment 43 that he will walk through quickly, and we will take public comment on Amendment 43. Then, depending on where we are in our timeframe, we will break for lunch and then come back and have our council discussion, and so is everybody clear on that? Okay.

MR. WAUGH: Thank you, Madam Chair. Typically, when you all deal with an emergency action, we would outline the issue to you, and maybe give you a little bit of background information, and then you all would have your deliberations and make a request. This situation is different, in that you have a document, and it's even more different, in that you have a preferred alternative.

Now, let me just give you a little bit of background. We did a scoping hearing in January for our red snapper activity, and we got a lot of requests there for public comments to open the fishery. At our June meeting, Representative Rutherford's staff presented a paper making that same request. Then, in late June, there was a letter from Senators Marco Rubio and Bill Nelson to Secretary Ross asking for action to be taken in the Atlantic, and there was some concern that, based on what had happened in the Gulf and what had happened up in New England, that there could be some action taken. Dr. Crabtree contacted me and asked if I thought that the council would want to weigh-in on this issue, and I knew that our council would.

I talked with Dr. Duval about how we would schedule that discussion. We considered having a webinar meeting, but we didn't feel that was transparent enough, and we wanted to have it at a regularly-scheduled meeting, to give the public adequate opportunity, and this would also allow us to put some material into the briefing book, so that public was well aware of what was considered and could comment, and we built in several comment periods and ways for the public to comment.

The issue with timing, and this was timing with respect to our previously-scheduled meeting two weeks ago, is the time is so short that the only way to preserve your opportunity, if you desired to have an emergency, to have that go in place, was for our two staffs to work together to produce a document.

If we waited until the council meeting and then started work, it wouldn't happen this year, and so Roy's staff worked closely with ours, and I would like to thank Roy and his staff, Jack and Rick. Frank Helies, who is here with us, did a lot of the work, along with Nick Mehta. Dave Records in the Region did a lot of the economic analysis, and Christina Package-Ward did a lot of the social

analysis, and Monica has helped a lot. There has been a lot of give-and-take between the Regional staff and our staff. All of our staff pitched in as well, and so that's why you have a full document here.

We also talked about preferred alternatives, and we worked with the Region to come up with one that we thought would be reasonable for you all to consider, and that's why you have a document with a preferred. You are not limited to that preferred, but what you have to weigh in the emergency action is, if you select a different preferred, then that document is going to have to be reworked, and that's going to cost us time, and we're already near the end of September, and so you just need to factor that in, but you are not constrained by the alternatives that are in the document.

You will notice that those alternatives are the same ones that were in Amendment 43 that went out for public hearing, and so the public has had lots of opportunity to comment on this, but you have full flexibility in which alternatives you want to take and even whether or not you want to take emergency action, and I have discussed this with each of the council members, to make sure that you fully understand that, even though you have a document with a preferred alternative, you still have all options of, one, whether or not to request emergency action, and then, two, which alternative to choose. It's just that the only way to preserve your opportunity to request an emergency action this year and have it implemented was for our staffs to work together and produce that document, and so thanks again, Roy, to you and your staff for all that help. Thank you.

DR. CRABTREE: Thank you as well, Gregg, and I think that's a pretty fair summary of where we are. At the June council meeting, we had new scientific information presented to us by Dr. Reichert that showed another year's worth of data from the trap index and the improvement of the stock. We have seen new information today that Dr. Barbieri has presented to us, which continues to show improvements in the status of the stock.

We also, at the June meeting, made a lot of progress in, I think, identifying a path forward with red snapper, given the lack of meaningful catch level recommendations that we're able to use, and so it became apparent to me, after that meeting, that the only way to make sure you had an opportunity to meaningfully consider whether an emergency rule would be appropriate was for us to do a lot of the groundwork in advance, as Gregg has talked about.

Now, it's all been complicated by the hurricanes that have come through and postponing the council meeting, and we're later than we would have been, and I think all of us appreciate the economic hardship that Chester talked about in this fishery from the closure of red snapper now for two, going on three, years, and certainly the lost economic opportunities caused by these hurricanes heighten our sensitivity to trying to provide economic relief when we can. That's how we got to where we are at this meeting, is just that I didn't want to preclude your ability to make a decision about whether you wanted to do this or not.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Dr. Crabtree. Are there any questions for Gregg about just sort of the mechanics of how we got here? Okay. Then I would like to go ahead and turn things over to Chip, and he just has a short presentation to walk you through with regard to the emergency action document.

DR. COLLIER: What we're doing here is we recognize that this issue is pretty sensitive with red snapper, and it's also fairly complicated, with emergency action and also an amendment that are very similar to each other, and so what we're trying to do is make it pretty clear to the public, and anyone that wants to comment, that these are the issues that you're commenting on, and we're going to start off with the emergency action and provide some information of why we're doing the emergency action, what the emergency action will actually do, and then the alternatives are listed in the emergency action. With that, I will go right into what we're doing with the emergency action.

As Roy had mentioned, we had new information presented at the June meeting, and this is some information on why we're able to do emergency action. We also have letters from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center and from SERO on the use of discards in management of red snapper and the uncertainty in the stock assessment that inhibits the ability to set an ABC that can be effectively monitored. Finally, we have had requests at public meetings, at each council meeting and at the scoping meetings for Amendment 43, indicating that everyone would like to have an opening for red snapper.

Going into the background of the red snapper fishery, it's essentially been closed since 2010. We have had some mini-seasons in 2012, 2013, and 2014. For the recreational sector, that has been a total of seventeen days, and, for the commercial sector, it's been only 122 days, and so it's been very minimal openings for red snapper over the last seven years.

Our most recent assessment, which was completed with data through 2014, was SEDAR 41. That stock assessment indicated that the stock was overfished and overfishing is occurring. The SSC has indicated that the stock is continuing to rebuild from past levels and the level of overfishing is unknown, based on their discussions of SEDAR 41.

Some background information on the population trends in the red snapper population, and what I have presented here is the chevron trap index. Now, this index wasn't used in SEDAR 41, but this is just the overall index of what happened from the MARMAP index, and, from 1990 to about 2006, you can see an overall declining trend in the red snapper population. Since 2006, you can see a general increasing trend in the population, and what I'm going to do is focus in more on since 2010 and beyond.

From 2010 to 2014, the MARMAP trap index was combined with a video index, in order to put into the stock assessment. This index here that I am presenting is only the trap index, and it doesn't include the video index side of it, and so it's going to be a little different than what was in SEDAR 41, but, overall, the trends were very similar. There was an increasing trend in the red snapper population from 2010 to 2014.

In 2012 to 2014, that was used to determine overfishing, and, if you look at the more recent time period, the 2015 and 2016, you can see that's substantially higher than it was previously, and the comparison between these two estimates, from 2012 to 2014 and then 2015 to 2016, that was a 1.88 increase, and so we're using that 1.88 increase in order to potentially scale up what we were seeing back in 2014, or the average of that time period, to potentially look at a different landings level, but you do have to remember, from 2012 to 2014, the stock assessment was indicating that the population was experiencing overfishing.

What this emergency action would do is establish an ACL for red snapper in 2017, and that will allow a mini-season starting in mid to late October of 2017, and, while this mini-season is open, the recreational bag limit would be one fish per person. There would be a seventy-five-pound commercial trip limit, and that would be in gutted weight, and there would be no minimum size for red snapper.

Going through the different alternatives that were in there, Alternative 1 -- The way we always work these things is Alternative 1 is status quo, and so it's already been determined that that ACL would be zero for 2017. Now, going into the other four alternatives there that are included in the amendment, or in the emergency action, we have Alternative 2, which is simply the average of landings from 2012 to 2014.

We have Alternative 3, which takes that 1.88 scaling difference between the 2012 to 2014 index compared to 2015 and 2016, and so we scale up the Alternative 2 by that 1.88, and that is Alternative 3. For Alternative 4, we take the highest landings that occurred from 2012 to 2014. That was 42,510 fish, and we -- That is simply the maximum, and that occurred in 2014. Then Alternative 5 is, once again, scaling up that value, the highest landings value, that occurred in 2014.

These are the actual values that came out for the different alternatives. For Alternative 2, it's 23,623 fish. Alternative 3, it's just over 44,000. The preferred alternative is 42,510 fish, and the Alternative 5 is approximately 80,000 fish. I am going to focus in on the Preferred Alternative 4 and continuing across, and so, looking at the 42,510 fish, that's a total ACL weight of around 440,000 pounds, and we needed to develop a weight for that, because the way that the allocations are developed is based on weight, and so we had to separate the commercial and recreational ACLs based on the weight of the fish.

The commercial ACL, or the commercial allocation, is 28.07 percent of the total catch, and so we just simply multiplied that 440,000 times 28.07, and then we were able to get the commercial ACL in weight. In order to get the commercial ACL in number, we had to back-convert into numbers of fish, based on average weight for recreational fish, and we got to 29,656 fish.

I am going to go through. This wasn't provided in the emergency action, but what I wanted to do is -- There was a lot of discussion, and I think some people were missing exactly how much we were actually harvesting in the past and what these ACLs mean to past harvest levels, and this is just a rough comparison, looking at the different estimates of the different ACLs that are being proposed.

I have three boxes up here. All the way to the right is the 2012 to 2014, and so those are the years that were included in the mini-seasons. I also have another box there for the 2008 and 2009 time period. Those years are obviously much higher than other years, and, for the same reason that we're not going to include 2010 and 2011, we're not going to include 2008 and 2009 in this comparison. They were out of the ordinary and much different than the previous time period from 1990 to 2007, and, when I am going to be doing is a comparison of the ACL for the recreational and the commercial preferred alternatives, that is what the comparison is to.

Here is a pretty busy graph of the different alternatives that we have for red snapper in the recreational sector. If you remember, the recreational sector -- I didn't actually give you the

numbers for the recreational sector, but, for Alternative 2, it's just under 20,000 fish, and that's well below what the average was from 1990 to 2007. If you look at Preferred Alternative 4, that's 84 percent of what they were catching from 1990 to 2007. Alternative 3 is very similar, and then, if you go up to Alternative 5, that is higher from the average of 1990 to 2007, indicating that that could be a fairly risky number, if that is selected.

Going to probably the most important part of this discussion are what would be the opening dates and how long would the season be open, and so we have two different ACLs and timing that would occur, based on if it's a predicted or if it's a high landings scenario, and the predicted landings scenario is basically we were catching what we were back in 2012 to 2014. All the information that we have is the population is much higher than it was back in that time period, and so, in all actuality, they're probably going to be catching fish much more rapidly than they have in the past. Therefore, we have developed a high landings scenario.

Under Alternative 4, and all this information that I have presented up here is based on an assumed opening of October 6. This was pre-hurricane, and so, under the predicted landings scenario for Preferred Alternative 4, the closure would occur on October 30 and potentially be open for twelve days. For our high landings scenario, the potential opening would be six days, and it would potentially close on October 16.

Going through a similar scenario, and this is using weight of fish for the commercial sector, and once again comparing that time period from 1990 to 2007, you can see that the Preferred Alternative 4 is 85 percent of what they were catching from 1990 to 2007. For the commercial sector, under the Preferred Alternative 4, there would be no closure under the predicted landings scenario and also the high landings scenario. With that, I will be happy to take any questions that you guys might have.

MR. BOWEN: This may be more of a question for Dr. Crabtree, but, with the postponement of the council meeting and the actions that we're considering, is the opening dates that you showed in the last graph, are they still the same, or would they be postponed later as well?

DR. CRABTREE: I suspect they will be postponed and that we're probably looking at an opening in November now, but I don't think that would really affect the outcome of this, given all the uncertainties in predicting these things, but my guess is that, if we go through with this, it will likely be a little bit later.

MR. BOWEN: I think it needs to be noted and brought up and put on the record that, the later that this tentative opening would be -- The recreational fishermen, probably north of the Georgia/Florida line, would probably have a greater reduced access, because of weather issues. I just wanted to put that on the record.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks, Zack. I think that's probably part of the discussion that we'll have after we take public comment.

MR. HAYMANS: Chip, would you remind me of what years you used to project the closing?

DR. COLLIER: The information from 2012 to 2014 was used.

MR. HAYMANS: Right. That's what I thought, but no fishing has occurred in the fall since prior to 2010. Was there any effort to look back to 2010 and see what the level was there, in order to match up the fishing?

DR. COLLIER: Yes, there was effort to go back to that time period. However, the population was much different than it was even in 2012 to 2014, and so there was a lot of concern in going back to that time period, and this was more or less looking at 2012 to 2014, given the change in the population size and also the change in the fishery.

MR. HARTIG: Two things, Chip. That 1.88, it comes from that graph of spawning stock biomass, correct?

DR. COLLIER: Yes, the relative CPUE. That's correct.

MR. HARTIG: Okay, and so that's a productivity? 1.88 is an increase in productivity of the stock? Can you interpret it that way or not?

DR. COLLIER: No, I don't think you can interpret it that way, because it's just numbers of fish. I mean, if it was changing in biomass, then that could potentially give you that number, but, if you remember, as fish get larger, they're going to be producing more eggs and potentially have a longer spawning season. We didn't look at what this overall change was. Was it age-one fish or was it age-five fish? That could have a very different impact on the productivity.

MR. HARTIG: The other question was can you explain -- I saw it in the document, but I don't think I'm still clear on it. We had an original estimate of allocations that came out of the Comprehensive ACL Amendment, and then, relatively recently, we saw a different allocation scenario, where the commercial was a few percentage points higher, and we've gone back to the lower allocation numbers now in this document. Can you explain why we had the larger numbers and why we're going back to the numbers we have now?

DR. COLLIER: That was a screw-up, because I'm a newbie, and, in order to change allocation, that would have to be an action in an amendment, and so the allocations were established through the ACL Amendment, and those are set in place.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Can you tell me what assumptions were made for the high landings scenario?

DR. COLLIER: It's changing some of the likely zeroes to ones, and it's also increasing -- Not everybody that was catching a red snapper was keeping a red snapper, and so it's changing some of those from a zero to a one as well.

MR. BROWN: Chip, when you were doing the calculations, and I saw you put the box on that mini-season timeframe, I know that, the first two mini-seasons, we were only able to fish north of Florida, up in the Carolinas and Georgia, maybe one day for those two first mini-seasons, because of the weather. Was there any kind of -- Did you take that into consideration, because I noticed that you kind of focused on that heavier ACL for the third opening, but the first two I know was really low for us, and so whatever was caught was probably primarily in Florida.

DR. COLLIER: I don't think we put a factor in there for weather. That's just very difficult to predict what the weather is going to be in any of these seasons, and so it's just looking at average catch rates over time.

MR. BROWN: Also, in June, we talked a little bit about -- I can't remember who said this, but anyway, the ACLs were higher when we were told what we possibly could be using for this emergency action, and now it's changed, I guess with the IPT's input. If the council wanted to go with something different, would it delay an opening? I mean, would it have to be reconsidered, or could we recommend something back towards what we were suggesting in June?

DR. COLLIER: Back in the June council meeting, the adjustment factor was lower than it is now, and so these ACLs, for Alternative 3 and Alternative 5, are actually higher than what was presented at the council meeting.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Chip, sorry if I missed this, but, on Slides 13 and 16, and you can just go to Slide 13, there is a percentage listed on Slide 13 of 84 percent, and it's under the caption. Could you just briefly explain what those percentages are?

DR. COLLIER: Both those percentages represent a comparison to the average of landings from 1990 to 2007, and then that alternative compared to that, in order to give the council an idea of what this is relative to historic landings in the red snapper fishery.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Thank you.

DR. CRABTREE: Just to the question about taking into account the weather and things, when you use average historical catch rates to predict, you're sort of assuming that the weather patterns are going to be roughly what they were. The difficulty here is this fishery hasn't been open this late in the year since I think prior to 2010, and an awful lot has changed since then, and so there is just some uncertainty. Georgia and north Florida, and even South Carolina, in November, you might have beautiful weather, or you might have a big blow coming down. It's just hard to predict.

I will say though that, if you do change the preferred alternative on this, yes, it will add on quite a bit, in terms of the timing of this, and it will push everything a lot later in the year, because we would have to reanalyze and relook at the rationale and rewrite the whole document, essentially, and so that would be a problem, given that we have been delayed already by hurricanes and things.

DR. DUVAL: I just had one question for Chip, and it has to do with the chevron trap index, and so that was calculated using the zero inflated negative binomial approach, correct, rather than the delta GLM, which is what we often see when we get the annual updates, and is that correct?

DR. COLLIER: That is correct. MARMAP staff was willing to update the document and the analysis to do a zero-inflated negative binomial. Their feeling is, as well as the National Marine Fisheries Service, that that is a better model to represent the distribution of catches and a standardized index for red snapper.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you. Okay. I think, if there are no other clarifying questions on the details of the emergency action document, I would like to go ahead -- Doug, one more.

MR. HAYMANS: Just back to Roy. The comment that if we change the preferred from what NMFS has selected in this document, we would significantly delay any possible opening, just to make sure I understand that.

DR. CRABTREE: It would delay it. I would have to get Jack and company to tell me their estimate of how much, but it would absolutely delay it, because we would have to reanalyze and rewrite the document, to some extent.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Any other clarifying questions on the document? If not, then I think now is the time when we would take public comment on the emergency action document, and so I think we need just a minute or two to set up a microphone, and so just everybody hang tight.

If folks are ready, we will go ahead. We have a list of folks who have signed up to provide public comment. That is displayed on the screen in front of us. I would like to turn to Monica, General Counsel, first, because my understanding is that we need to keep the record separate for comments on the emergency action versus Snapper Grouper Amendment 43, and my understanding is that some folks here wanted to provide comment on both the emergency action and Snapper Grouper Amendment 43 and that some folks wanted to do that at the same time.

Again, I want to make it clear to the public, who is signed up to provide comment, that, if they want to provide comment on both items under consideration, that we would call your name first to come up and provide comment on the emergency action document and then we would call your name again, should you choose to provide comment on Amendment 43, but, in between, we are going to be moving back to Chip for another brief presentation on Snapper Grouper Amendment 43, and so, Monica, if you don't mind speaking to that, that would be great.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I think that's a fine way to do it. I think you've got some flexibility. It's nice, for the record purposes, to have the comments be separate, and so if the public -- It doesn't seem to me, since these folks are here and they're able to comment, it's not burdensome on the public, and you're going to allow them an opportunity to speak, and so I think that the way you have just set it out for the public and the record is a fine way to go about it.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. I just want confirmation that that's the way that you all want us to do this for the record, to maintain that separation between the emergency action document and Amendment 43.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: If you're asking me personally, yes, I greatly appreciate having that separate, and so thank you.

DR. DUVAL: Then we are ready. I hope everyone out there in the audience and the public understands what we've just said. We're going to take two separate public comments. The first is going to be on this consideration of emergency action.

(Whereupon, the public comment session was held.)

DR. DUVAL: At this point, unless there are clarifying questions, then we are going to go back to the presentation and the public for additional public comment on Amendment 43, and, once that is concluded, we will break for lunch, and so I apologize if we're going to break for lunch a little

bit later, but, given the folks who are here today, I think that's the wisest approach, and it's my last meeting as Chair, and so you just have to do what I say.

DR. COLLIER: Thank you, Michelle, and this presentation is very similar to the last presentation. It has a lot of the same information, but the one thing that is different in this one, as opposed to modifying the ACL, is we are revising the annual catch limits, and that is looking at revising the process, and so, going into a little bit of background, if you remember back in March of this year, Amendment 43 had twelve actions included in it, and then we took these and changed it significantly at the June meeting. Amendment 43 now has one action, which is to revise methods to calculate ACL and hopefully begin harvest starting in 2018.

Then the rest of the actions that were included in Amendment 43 could be considered for Amendment 46, potentially beginning in December. Some of those actions include recreational reporting as well as best fishing practices. Some of these actions are going to take a long time to develop, and, therefore, moving them out of the ACL amendment would definitely be beneficial.

Going into the process on calculating the ACL, based on Amendment 28, what we used are all harvest and discards, and so, looking at this graph, I have the total ABC recommended from Amendment 28, and the second column and the first column are years, and, if you look at that, that's numbers of fish, and so, in 2012, we were allowed 86,000 fish.

If you follow it to the right of that, there was a harvest of 16,591 fish, and then the landings and discards totaled to 80,516. That was below the ABC for 2012, and, therefore, we were allowed to have a season in 2013. If you follow that through 2013, we were below the ABC in 2013, when it was 72,000, and approximately 73,000 fish were harvested, and the ABC was 96,000.

The story changed in 2014, when we exceeded the ABC. The landings plus dead discards were estimated to be right around 206,000 fish, while the ABC was at 106,000 fish. Therefore, we were not able to open the season in 2015. We were not able to open the season in 2016 or 2017, and we have actually exceeded the ACL in 2017 as well, or the ABC in 2017 as well, and so the 2018 season would be -- The ACL would be zero, and there would be no mini-season in 2018, based on preliminary data.

This is the same graph that I had presented before, and I'm not going to go through it in great detail, but, overall, there was a declining trend in the beginning, and then, since 2008, there has been an increasing trend. Once again, we're going to be looking at this comparison of 2012 to 2014, compared to 2015 to 2016. That was that 1.88 increase that I had mentioned earlier and we had some discussion about in the previous questions.

What would Amendment 43 do? It would revise the process to calculate the annual catch limits. As opposed to looking at an ABC that included both the harvest plus dead discards, this would only be looking at the harvest. It would potentially enable a season, a mini-season, for red snapper, with the recreational start date of the second Friday in July and the commercial start date on the second Monday in July. The recreational bag limit would be one fish per person, and the commercial trip limit would be seventy-five pounds gutted weight, and there would be no minimum size limit for red snapper.

These are the same figures for developing the ACL. I am not going to go through those in great detail, since we've already talked about them. Once again, this is the exact same table of alternatives and the same values. They were calculated the same way. Everything is the exact same as was discussed for the emergency action.

Once again, I am going to be comparing the numbers from 1990 to 2007, and the reason that we're looking at that time period is 2008 and 2009 were substantially higher than they were in the previous time period. We're not looking at 2010 and 2011, because there was a closure, and then 2012 through 2014 was used to develop the ACL.

Going into these different landings, we have all five alternatives here, and you can see that Alternative 3 and 4 are very similar to each other. They are basically in between that. They're just below the overall average from 1990 to 2008. Alternative 2 is well below it, and then Alternative 5 is above it.

These are the landings scenarios. We have a predicted landings scenario and a high landings scenario. Alternative 1 for 2018 would be zero, and Alternative 2, where we have 16,480 fish for the recreational sector, it would be open for potentially four days under an average landings scenario and two days under a high landings scenario. Alternative 3 would be potentially seven days for the average landings scenario, and, under a high landings scenario, it would be four days. Alternative 4 is the same, at four and seven days, and then Alternative 5 has a range of eight to twenty-eight days, depending on landings scenarios.

Going into the commercial sector, once again, it's about the same percentages for the recreational and commercial when we're looking at these different alternatives. Under the different scenarios, once again, Alternative 1 would be zero for 2018. Under Alternative 2, the predicted landings scenario indicates that the commercial fishery would be open to September or potentially as short as August 23.

When you get up to Alternative 3 through 5 under the predicted landings scenario, there would be no closure. However, Alternative 3 and 4 would have a closure, potentially, in November or October under a high landings scenario. With that, I will take any questions. I went through it very fast. I didn't want to interrupt anyone's lunch.

MR. BOWEN: Thanks, Chip. You said that we have already exceeded the ACL in 2017, but, in that graph, I didn't see where there were any landings there. Do you mind if I ask where that came from, and will we see those later today or this week?

DR. COLLIER: It's based on mostly discard data, and that's why we have exceeded the ABC.

MR. BROWN: Chip, can the council pick the preferred for the emergency action and then have a different alternative for 2018?

DR. COLLIER: Yes.

MR. GRINER: Will choosing something other than the preferred have any impact on opening date?

DR. COLLIER: There is no preferred for Amendment 43 at this moment, but, if you pick a different preferred for the emergency action, yes, that would have an impact.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any other clarifying questions for Chip on Amendment 43? Okay. I am not seeing any, and so we will go through the same exercise that we did before.

(Whereupon, the public comment session was held.)

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

DR. DUVAL: We're going to go ahead and reconvene, and so, prior to recessing for lunch, we took public comment on both an emergency action document as well as on Snapper Grouper Amendment 43, and so now we are going to enter into our discussion of an emergency action request first, and so, Chip, I didn't know if you had anything additional, in terms of an overview, that you wanted to discuss at all. I believe it's Attachment 2 in Tab 1 in the briefing book is the actual emergency action document.

DR. COLLIER: I feel like I've gone over quite a bit of the information that's been included in it, but, once again, this is information that the council staff and SERO put together in a pretty rapid fashion, in order to have the opportunity for the season. If there are questions, I would be happy to field them, unless you guys -- If you want me to go through an overview again -- I am seeing no.

DR. DUVAL: I recognize that there might have been some additional questions from council members that really get into, I think, discussion of what-ifs or whatnot, and, Dr. Crabtree, I didn't know if you had anything else that you wanted to add as we move into this part of the discussion at all.

DR. CRABTREE: One of the issues that has come up was the monitoring of the catches and the states participation with us, and I know that I had talked with Dr. Barbieri about that, but I think it would be good if we could hear from the state directors, just to get on the record their willingness to help us, as has happened in past years with the data collection program.

DR. DUVAL: I will go ahead and start, being the state representative from North Carolina, but we are certainly fully prepared and geared up to conduct all the data collection that we have done in the past for previous mini-seasons. This included canvassing our dealers more frequently than the once per week that they are required to report to provide a daily or every-other-day type of census of purchases of red snapper that they are making.

This also includes a carcass collection program. The 2012 mini-season was actually the catalyst for a carcass collection program in North Carolina, and so that is statewide now. It covers many other species besides red snapper, when we have had red snapper mini-seasons. We are fully prepared to deploy additional freezers, should that come about.

We also worked with the headboat staff out of the Beaufort Lab, to make sure that we were not duplicating any of our sampling efforts or efforts to obtain red snapper carcasses, and so I would expect that, should there be a limited reopening in 2017, that we would engage in exactly those same types of activities, and so we had staff down on the docks, where our dockside intercepts were occurring, and we were working with anglers to help them fill out catch cards and the

information that we were collecting from those and bag the fish and get them into the freezers. Those are all the same things that North Carolina was doing during previous mini-seasons, and so Mr. Haymans.

MR. HAYMANS: We are doing likewise, although we're having to totally reestablish every single carcass freezer, because they were all lost in Irma. I mean, anytime they're out of power that long for all of them, but that's no big deal. Those freezers are being reestablished. Staff started planning a month ago, when we first started talking about this, to do the same level of intercepts they have done at the boat ramps and at the for-hire guides and things of that nature, and so the same level of effort from us.

MS. MCCAWLEY: We'll be doing the same type of things that we did the last time there was an opening, and so we'll be collecting tissue samples and otoliths. We're going to evaluate sizes and ages and reproductive condition. We are doing dockside intercepts, and we're doing boat counts, and so there's a number of things that we're doing, and it's very similar to what we did during the last openings.

MR. BELL: The same for us. Basically, we would propose to do what we were able to do before in the mini-seasons, which is a combination of freezer or rack drop-off locations. We even set up some additional coolers before, and we can kind of adjust to try to get the most -- What we're trying to get is the most biological samples we can, with catch cards and with data elements on them that are standardized and worked out.

Ultimately, we would turn the samples, as we did last time, over to MARMAP, and so there's a MARMAP piece to this for us. Even though they're MARMAP, they're housed within the context of the DNR, but I would envision that we would just do the same stuff we did during the previous mini-seasons, and it shouldn't be a problem.

DR. DUVAL: Does that help, Roy?

DR. CRABTREE: Yes, that's very helpful, and that's consistent with our previous discussions, and so there will be a monitoring effort put forward with the collection of tissues and otoliths and all of that. There will be some data collection come out of it. The other thing that came up in the public comment had to do with a payback, and, while there isn't a direct payback in Amendment 43 or the emergency rule at this time -- Of course, the emergency rule would be expired by the time the next year's season comes up, but there is a self-correction built into it, in that we would take into account -- If we went over, for example, this year, we would use those high catch rates and then apply those to the season calculation next year, which would result in the shortening of the season next year, in order to prevent going over again, and so there is a sort of self-correcting built in the way we do this.

MR. BREWER: This is for all the states. Is there the potential to include, in some of the dockside surveys that are done, some questions with regard to the use or how effective the use has been with regard to descending devices and then also some -- I don't know whether it would be considered anecdotal or not, but information from the standpoint of bycatch mortality and how many fish did you release and how many of those seemed to be in good shape when you released them and seemed to swim off just fine and how many of them were floating on top of the water flapping.

DR. DUVAL: The intercept survey includes a standardized list of questions, and it includes information about how many fish you discarded, and I believe the reason for discarding, and so the disposition of the fish, and so you're talking about adding additional questions to try to account for fish condition?

MR. BREWER: One of the things that we have been discussing, and have been discussing for a long time, is the bycatch mortality, and not just bycatch, but bycatch mortality. While it may not be able to get perfect -- We may not have a perfect system in place for 2017, but I was thinking almost more in terms of trying out different things, and kind of almost like a pilot program, to try to start getting better information on mortality.

There are a couple of components to that. One is the condition of the fish when it was released, and number two would be the use of descending devices. Did you use them? How many fish did you put back down? At least in your opinion, how many seemed to survive using it? I know you can't do that with any real precision, because you're not able to go swimming down with the descending device and watch that fish when it gets released, but I was just thinking that maybe -- Maybe I am putting too much stuff on the different surveyors, but maybe start getting that information on an almost like pilot program.

DR. COLLIER: If you guys choose to go forward with an emergency action, we are going to have a presentation about some ideas that the council staff have put together to hopefully be ready for the 2017 season, in order to potentially gather some information like that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Chester, what I am kind of hearing you say is you want to know if they're using descending devices and, if you know when they started using descending devices, then you can kind of tease out the answers to the standardized questions of how many they threw away and how many swam back down and things like that, and so, basically, you really just want to know if and when they started using descending devices, so that then you can kind of crunch the numbers to see what kind of differences people are seeing, if I heard you correctly.

MR. BREWER: Charlie, what I am interested in is we've heard repeatedly that we don't think -- Again, it's anecdotal, but that's beginning to be sometimes about what we've got. I want to see us get at discard mortality, and, in any way that we can do that, in conjunction with both the emergency of 2017 and Amendment 43, I would really like to see it, and really see it encouraged, along with -- We have already had several organizations get up and pledge that they are going to have outreach with their membership, from the standpoint of the efficacy of descending devices and encouraging their use.

DR. PONWITH: We are keenly interested in discard numbers and discard mortality as well, because, if you think about it, that is the big issue with the last stock assessment, and that is that, even with the closure, we're exceeding the ACL by discard mortality alone, and anything that we can do to reduce discard mortality is something that would be in the best interest of the stock. If it's good for the stock, it's good for the people that rely on that stock, and so that's sort of the chain of logic on this.

The MRIP data collection is what it is. There will be no changing that, and they guard their questions jealously, because they are careful about trying to ask too much in the interviews and,

by asking too much, have it influence the quality of the data that they get, and so it takes a lot to convince them to change.

What I am hearing is the states are willing to come and help us, in the event that this fishery goes, are willing to help collect information to supplement the data that are available, and, if there is flexibility to ask additional questions and make some agreements on what those questions would be, there could be some power to that, and so what that does is begs the question of what would we ask, what would we get the best information by asking, because they have the same situation. The more they ask, there is sort of a tipping point, where, if you ask too much, it hampers the interview.

To me, just off the top of my head, and I could think about it more over the course of this week, but, off the top of my head, probably the best question to ask would be did you or did you not use a descender device, and that would be a really good starting point. When you get into the discard mortality, it's a reasonable question to ask of did you have fish floating behind the boat or not, but that is such a nuanced question, because of the latent mortality, and so you would want to be careful about how you asked that, and that might be the way to ask it, is what percentage of your discards are you certain were dead on release?

That is a little more black-and-white question. If you start asking questions like do you think that fish lived or died, then you're getting into some really gray territory, because it's a tough one to answer, and so what I would say is, if we were going to contemplate additional questions, that the states, should they have the flexibility to do it, could ask. We should think really carefully about what questions have the most power, so that, if you only get two questions or you only get three questions, you're asking the ones that really matter the most and bring the most quality to your knowledgebase.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think we might be a little late in the game to add it to MRIP for this year. It's not already one of the standard questions, but, if we're talking about having people self-report voluntarily on say the Snook & Gamefish Foundation app, then maybe we add it inside that particular application that we're going to ask people to voluntarily report on. That's just a thought.

DR. DUVAL: I was also thinking, on the catch cards that we were using for our carcass collection, we tried to keep that as brief as possible, just to facilitate the ease of filling those out, but, I mean, I could go back to our staff and see if a question like that is something that we could add, particularly as staff are helping to fill those out, and so Doug and then Mark and then Chester.

MR. HAYMANS: Along those same lines, understanding the issue with adding it to MRIP, MRIP does ask released dead or released alive, but we will commit to -- We do 100 percent call, at least during that time, on our for-hire guides, and so we'll ask our for-hire folks if they use it, and I'm in complete agreement with Jessica that, if it can be added to one of the voluntary electronic or voluntary reporting systems, I would go for it, particularly in lieu of the descending device study that's upcoming, and this might be another good pre-question before that survey goes out.

MR. BREWER: Just to backtrack a little bit, after listening to what Bonnie had to say, and you're right. I think back about the videos that we've seen of fish that I thought -- When they were testing the descending devices, they had a fish that I was absolutely convinced was a dead fish, and yet, as it went down, the eyes popped back in, and the air bladder came back in, and the fish survived,

and so, if I had been on that boat looking at that fish, and even though I was sending it down with a descending device, I would have answered that that fish is dead.

It might be a bad idea to ask opinions of whether or not that fish survived, but, to Charlie's point, you might get some valuable information by asking the very simple question of did you use a descending device and, if so, when did you start using those things? That might give you some better information and then maybe correlate it to some of the information that's coming out right now, and has been coming out, as to the percentage of fish that are surviving when a descending device is properly used.

MR. BELL: Just to be clear for us, when our creel clerks are interviewing, they are doing the MRIP survey, and so they're bound by that. When you start the interview, that's the interview, but, to the degree that we have some flexibility in other means, through like a catch card or an interview with folks like Mark or whatever, we can try to get some additional information, but we are bound by whatever MRIP says the survey is. That's the survey for us, and so we don't have additional creel clerks that are not doing that.

MR. HARTIG: Bonnie, does MRIP have an ability to go outside their sampling frame to take care of short openings, or everything is just the same over the period no matter what?

DR. PONWITH: They don't budget for doing pulse fisheries. They basically do all of their operational planning for what the standard surveys are. If, for some reason, they had a contract that failed or something like that, where they had additional financial scope, it never hurts to ask if they have the resources to drape, over the normal sampling framework, some additional intensity in the sampling, and so it never hurts to ask, but, in general, they don't do a holdback of resources to be able to allow that financially.

DR. COLLIER: Chester, just to get at your question a little bit, as far as timing of descending devices, that question was asked during SEDAR 41, and I believe it was in the first iteration of it, and it was suggested that very few fishermen were using descending devices at that time, and so, in 2014 and 2015, very few fishermen in the South Atlantic were using descending devices, and so that question was specifically asked in the stock assessment.

MR. BREWER: To that point, if we find that in 2017 that you've got 50 percent of the people saying, yes, we have got it onboard and we use it, that would be pretty valuable information, that the percentage has gone up. I didn't realize there was sort of a baseline percentage of use, and so more information probably would be a good thing.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Are there other questions or concerns or comments or discussion on the draft document? We have reviewed the options in here, and obviously there is a preferred alternative that has been selected, in the interest of time, and this is where the council, I think -- I am just trying to think if there were any other items that came up during public comment that we were considering in regards to timing.

If there were any other comments in regards to timing, and I think there were a couple of folks who had asked questions about if there was a different preferred alternative selected that that would -- If the council chose to move forward with an emergency action request, that would delay

implementation of that by some amount, and so are there any other questions that folks have about this document before we get into do you want to consider an emergency reopening for 2017?

MR. BELL: Just to be clear, when you made the presentation earlier, we were looking at dates and projected how many days there might be for recreational or whatever, based on when we thought we might start, but now that's all been shifted, perhaps, by a couple of weeks or so, but, basically, whenever this -- Just to make sure that I understand this, when it does open, it stays open until -- Is it just a weekend thing, or does it just stay open until we reach the number or -- I just want to make sure I'm clear on that, and this is for the EA.

DR. COLLIER: For the commercial, it would stay open until closed, or until the ACL is projected to be met, or December 31. For the recreational, it would be open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

MR. BROWN: I mentioned that to Mel, and I heard Timmy mention this in the comment, but we've had so many spells of bad weather, and it seems like it always falls on the weekends, and so it just seems to me like it might be better just to open it and have it stay open until we caught the recreational limit.

DR. DUVAL: Part of the issue there is that we are using catch rates to project when the recreational harvest might be caught, because we don't have the same type of real-time monitoring that we do on the commercial end of things, where we have dealer reports, and so we're not able to open something and then let the recreational harvest run until we think something is caught, because we don't have that same type of census-like monitoring.

DR. CRABTREE: The way this will go is we will announce that the fishery is going to open on this day, and, in the same announcement, we will say that it's going to close on this day, and we will tell you exactly what days it's going to be open and when it's going to close, and that will all happen in one announcement before the fishery even opens, because, as Michelle said, there is no ability to track it real-time like that.

MR. HAYMANS: Just to overstate the obvious, this is a National Marine Fisheries Service emergency action that the council is being asked to comment on, but not to move forward any preferreds. I mean, that's already been selected by National Marine Fisheries Service. However, if we do go forward with making comment, we can strongly urge either a predicted landing or a high landing selection, to try to encourage the RA to select four days or seven days or whatever the case may be, but it's purely a recommendation and not a vote by the council, right?

MR. WAUGH: Doug, I guess the best way to think about this forget about the emergency action document and forget about the preferred, because the question for you all is do you want to request an emergency action? If that vote is unanimous, then the Secretary has to implement what is requested. Now, Roy, procedurally, has been directed to make sure that doesn't happen, and so, if it's not unanimous, then it's a recommendation to the Secretary, and the Secretary has authority to implement what they think is best.

Given the timing, the only way that you would have the option to have a season, to request it and have it implemented this year, was for us to work up the document with a preferred, and so, if you want a 100 percent chance of having a season this year, then it's the emergency action with the

preferred. If you value some other ACL, then you're taking a risk on how long that's going to take to be implemented for 2017.

MR. HAYMANS: So to go -- I know you said forget about the document, and I find it hard to forget about the document, because I want to make sure that I understand. On page 1 of the document, who is proposing the action, NMFS is proposing this action, and so I wouldn't think that the council would need to ask for the action. It's already being proposed by the National Marine Fisheries Service, and we're simply asked to comment on it.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Just to be clear, Doug, any emergency request you ever make -- This is no different from that, except that it's coming to you differently, in the sense that any emergency request is always a National Marine Fisheries Service action that gets implemented. There have been times when the council has had information and has requested emergency action based on whatever, but then, once you approve that and it goes to the Fisheries Service, it's always the Fisheries Service and the Secretary that has the ability to decide whether to implement the action or not implement the action, unless it's a unanimous decision by the council, and, even in that case, I have seen where the Fisheries Service still has the ability to decide whether they're going to implement it or not, regardless of what the council wanted.

DR. CRABTREE: Just to add, it is very exceptional that the Fisheries Service would unilaterally implement an emergency rule. In my experience, they are almost always done at the request of the council, and so your decision as to whether you want to do this or not will carry great weight, I think, as to whether this happens or not, and all we've really tried to do is allow you to make that decision of do you want to do this or not, and, had we not done this work, there wouldn't be any way to do it, even if you did want to.

DR. DUVAL: Doug, I am just going to use like the example, and it's slightly different, but the action that we took at the council meeting in June to request an interim rule for golden tilefish to reduce the annual catch limit, and so we made that request, but then it goes to the Fisheries Service to actually prepare similar documentation to what you see in front of you here.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: That said, I think the council still has the flexibility on deciding whether you want to vote on it or not. I mean, I think that's a decision that you all make, right? It's been brought to you. The environmental analysis is done. All the NEPA work is done upfront, so you can see and analyze the alternatives and all that, but I still think that it's within the council's prerogative to decide whether you want to vote on it even.

MR. CONKLIN: I am just going to quit walking about this elephant in the room. **I will make the motion to request that the 2017 red snapper season be opened by emergency action, and let's vote on it, with Alternative 4 being the preferred.**

DR. DUVAL: Okay, and so there's a motion by Chris. There is a second by Chester. Let's let Chip get this on the board before we -- There is a motion that reads: To request emergency action for red snapper, with Alternative 4 as the preferred. The motion was made by Chris and seconded by Chester, and so is there discussion on the motion? We might want to add "for 2017", because, right now, this is an open-ended request for emergency action, and so it seems like this would be an emergency action specific to 2017.

MR. HAYMANS: I guess I would ask of Roy, assuming this motion passes, you have -- I am sort of muddling 43 and the EA, because I don't see the projected number of days in the EA or the -- Is there a projected number of days in there? I missed them. I am sorry. Six and twelve. I guess I would ask Roy what latitude you have in selecting either the predicted landings or the high landings level for Alternative 4.

DR. CRABTREE: What will happen is we will have a discussion when we get back to the office regarding those analyses and then make a determination, because this will go in the emergency rule when it's published, as to how many days they are, and the choice I make then will be reviewed by Monica and the attorneys and everyone else, and presumably, if I justify the choice of days and make a convincing argument that that choice of days is likely to stay underneath the ACL, then that will stand.

If I make a choice of days that seems too many and I am told that the rationale for that choice of days is not sufficient, then I imagine that I would be asked to reconsider that, but I can't have a choice of season that would be arbitrary or anything like that, and so it will have to be backed up by our arguments. Now, I think, if you want to give me some suggestions as to you should be conservative or don't be conservative, that's fine, but I really don't have an answer beyond that, Doug. If I could, before we come to a vote on this, as you all know and Michelle touched on it, my instructions are to vote no on emergency rules, but it doesn't reflect lack of support by me or the agency, but that's just my procedural instructions.

MR. HAYMANS: I think we're already being extremely conservative by going with Preferred Alternative 4, rather than 5, and so, if I had anything to suggest, I would suggest the predicted landings versus the high landings and at least try to get a couple or three or four weekends out of it, rather than two weekends.

DR. DUVAL: Well, I will go ahead and just jump in here and say that I think, from North Carolina's perspective, the agency is somewhat concerned, because, as we've heard through public testimony today, anything like this would certainly change angler behavior, and so I think, from our agency's perspective, we would encourage a more conservative approach to this move forward, and I think the other question that I would throw out there -- It doesn't necessarily need to be answered right now, but we did consider an emergency rule request at our previous meeting in June, and that was for cobia, and so I think there are probably going to be some constituents out there who are wondering what is the difference between this particular emergency rule request and the one that we considered previously.

DR. CRABTREE: If I could, to me, the big difference here is that, here, we have new information, which was presented to us by Dr. Reichert, which was the index of abundance, but I am not aware of any new information on cobia since we did the stock assessment, and so that's, to me, the real difference here, in terms of the stock boundary for cobia.

MR. GRINER: When you're talking about a conservative approach, does that mean predicted landings, or does conservative mean the high landings?

DR. DUVAL: When I think about conservative, I think about the high landings. That is a conservative approach. Do other council members have any direction or thoughts that they would

like to provide to the Fisheries Service, should something like this move forward, in regards to the different analyses that have been done to try to predict a length of season?

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, I concur with Michelle's assessment. I think we should be fairly conservative when we move this forward as an emergency action. I would be happy with two weekends, and, where we can encourage the use of descending devices, as a state or as states, when we put out information on the predicted season, I would certainly encourage that.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Anna.

MR. BELL: I was just going to say that -- I want to make sure that I heard Roy correctly when we started. Whatever number we choose, if after the dust settles we find out that we've caught significantly more than that, or some number more than that, then that would be applied -- This is a separate action, but, if we go down the road with Amendment 43 and we're looking at 2018, that 2017 excess, or overage, would somehow be factored into 2018, and did I hear that right?

DR. CRABTREE: It wouldn't be deducted out or anything like that, but, certainly if we underestimate the amount of fish that are going to be caught, that would direct us towards using high landings next year and maybe even coming up with an even higher landings breakpoint, in terms of estimating the days, to ensure that we don't underestimate again. Exactly how that would work, I don't know, but something along those lines.

MR. BELL: To that, the way it's structured right now, I think those of us sort of in the Carolinas are not going to be the principal benefactors of 2017. To some degree, but obviously Florida, whether it's weather or accessibility, but that's where most of the landings, I'm sure, will come from.

We'll be a player, but then, sliding into next year, we'll kind of -- However it goes this year will be kind of used as a measure of sort of choosing our path, I guess, for next year, and so I just wanted to be clear about how that might work out, but I don't see us -- If something starts in late October or November, I don't see us being huge players, in terms of driving the landings. That's going to be primarily a Florida thing, and that's fine. That's where the bulk of the fishery is, and particularly the better weather perhaps. Of course, I know, if you're in north Florida, it's not necessarily that great all the time.

MR. HAYMANS: Mel, I agree that we're not huge players and Florida is driving the bus with the landings, but I don't know that it's -- It's not advantageous to states north of the Georgia/Florida line to have two weekends. We're not going to be catching the bulk of the fish, and we're not going to be killing them in bycatch. We don't really know what catch levels are in the fall, since we haven't had a season since 2010.

Maybe we could answer more questions if we had a longer opportunity, more weekends to fish than just two. You're not going to answer a whole lot of questions in two weekends, and we already are way over on the conservative side by harvesting slightly more than half of what we could, and it would just simply seem, to me, that we would give the fishermen who have suffered so much the maximum opportunity they could during a very poor season -- Two weekends in the fall, they might not fish at all, but four weekends in the fall, they might get one or two of those weekends, and, otherwise, it's all going to Florida, and Georgia north isn't going to get anything.

MR. BELL: I totally get that, and I agree that we could have two weekends or we could strike out both weekends, and that has happened in the past, sort of. I am just saying, if there are more than two weekends, keep in mind that there may be an awful lot of landings, and then that will affect all of us next year, and so, for the greater good, fine, more weekends, but I totally get that. Two weekends for us, it could be a total bust.

MR. WAUGH: This issue of the catch rate is very important, because that's the accountability going from 2017 into 2018, and this is a point we intend to work with the public, so that they understand this. Yes, it's been closed for a number of years. If you catch excessively in this year, it's going to shorten your season next year, and so it's in everybody's best interest to moderate your catches of red snapper in 2017, because that catch rate is going to be used to determine the length of the 2018 season.

MR. HARTIG: Gregg got to part of what I was going to say, but I have circled around the drain on this. I mean, I have gone over it and over it, and certainly I would like to have the largest catches we could, but what do we know? We know that the catches in 2014 that we had that the stock continued to rebuild. We don't know, if we choose the highest value, that the stock will continue to rebuild at that level. We do know what happened in 2014. That's a known. The stock continued to rebuild at that level, and I think that's what finally sold me, at least, on the more conservative estimate to use.

I am pretty sold on this, but the only heartburn that I had was the commercial fishery is not projected to reach their allocation. They should have been able to get the benefit out of this, but, in the interest of time, it's not that big of a deal for this one year, but maybe in 43 we make some assurances that they have an ability to catch the entire allocation, but, to me, the timing of this -- I sent a letter to staff and SERO thanking them for doing this.

I mean, this was out of the box. It's not something we've ever done before that I can ever remember, where staff and SERO worked hand-in-hand to come up with a way to benefit our fishermen, and the bottom line, and I've said this time and time again, is the bottom line is we're going to get some information from the fishery that gives you a better, a more robust, age structure, than anything we've seen to date.

To me, that is one of the most important things. We're going to get some information on the age data. Yes, we may not get as many days in this season as you would like, but, if we stay within that catch level in 2018, we'll be able to allow the harvest that we deem reasonable in 2018, and so, to me, I am all onboard, and I'm ready to go ahead with the motion.

MR. PHILLIPS: I guess there is one other consideration, and it was brought up in public comment, the safety factor. If we had three weekends, then you can kind of -- The public can kind of pick their weekend maybe a little bit better and get a weather window, instead of saying we've got two weekends, and the weather is bad both of them, but we're going fishing no matter what, and it might help the safety factor if they had a little more leeway for a third weekend or whatever that might be.

DR. DUVAL: I think, if there is one weekend or three weekends, should this move forward and be approved, I think behavior is such that people are going to be out there no matter what, and so

I am not sure that -- I think our concern is that we err on the side of caution. Again, I appreciate all the efforts of SERO staff and council staff to try to provide projections with regard to both commercial and recreational harvest that tried to take that into account, and we share the concerns that Mel expressed with regard to impacts down the road, and so I will just leave our agency comments at that.

DR. PONWITH: I think it's important, in grappling with this question, to remember that the alternative is what sets the catch level and that, within that catch level, there, right now, are a lot of unknowns about what the burn rate is going to be to achieve that catch level, and so it's not a question of do you want this many days or that many days.

It's, if you were given an amount of time to fish, how fast will the catch level that was selected via the alternative be achieved, if the goal is to achieve that catch level without going over it. I think it might help the discussion to think about it in terms of burn rate as opposed to how many days you're going to get, because that's the real goal, is, if you choose to support this, think about how long could it be open without going over.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Anybody else? Anything that has not been said? Are people ready to vote on this motion? I think this is a roll call vote, because it is a request for emergency action, and so I will turn things over to Gregg to call the roll.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Hartig.

MR. HARTIG: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Phillips.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Ms. Beckwith.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Bowen.

MR. BOWEN: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Brewer.

MR. BREWER: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Brown.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Conklin.

MR. CONKLIN: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Griner.

MR. GRINER: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Dr. Crabtree.

DR. CRABTREE: No.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Haymans.

MR. HAYMANS: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Ms. McCawley.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Dr. Duval.

DR. DUVAL: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: **The motion passes with one no vote.**

DR. DUVAL: All right. I thank you all for the discussion on this. I think Chip has a few slides that he is going to show. There were a number of things raised around the table with regard to best fishing practices and use of descending devices. We heard about this in public testimony prior to taking action on this, and so I'm going to turn things over to Chip to walk us through some possibilities here.

DR. COLLIER: Thank you, Michelle. Knowing that this was an option for you guys, to potentially have an open season, and we wanted better data for the recreational sector, staff has been thinking about how we can get better data from the recreational sector, and so you guys are all aware of the data reporting requirements.

Commercial guys are required to report through federal logbooks, and there is also state requirements. The headboats are required to report weekly through their federal logbooks, but charter boat is sampled through MRIP in most states. South Carolina is the exception, where they do require logbooks in their state. Then, also, we have private recreational, where that is sampled through MRIP as well, and that's a lot of the questions that come up for red snapper, is MRIP adequate for sampling red snapper? Is MRIP adequate for sampling a short season?

This is going to be a short season. There are only two weekends in a wave, and so it's very difficult for that program to be able to pick up the needed resolution, and so there have been past efforts, and you guys went through those earlier today, and so I'm not going to go back through them, but,

essentially, they all incorporate a dockside component, a carcass collection sampling program, and some kind of -- At least in some states, there is an online recreational survey that they can fill out.

In order to supplement this, we have been talking with the Snook & Gamefish Foundation and potentially establishing an iAngler type of program, through the tournament app that they have, in order to report recreational catches of red snapper during these weekends, and so the fishermen would be required to sign up. They would be able to report the number of fish caught and released, or they could also report no catch, if they're in the tournament.

They can provide a picture of the red snapper that they catch. They can actually provide information on the treatment for release, and so that could be a descending, descending and venting, venting only, or just a surface release, and they can also provide information on the area that they fished, whether or not it was depth related or actually spatially-specific areas.

Then staff can develop a webpage to inform fishermen of the app and also get with other groups, in order to inform as many people as possible about this tournament that would be going on. We would also provide information on the fishing season, as well as regulations. Then, in the webpage, we would develop some best fishing practices.

Some of those best fishing practices, we've been talking about these quite a bit. They are in the emergency action, and they're also in Amendment 43. One is to avoid areas likely to have red snapper if you've already met your bag limit. Another is to use single-hook rigs, since the bag limit for red snapper is only one per person. Both of these are directed at reducing the number of discarded fish.

These next two are actually looking at reducing discard mortality for the released fish. Fish that will be released, keep them in the water as much as possible, and return the fish back to the water as quickly as possible. Use a dehooking device to remove the hook. Finally, use descending devices if releasing fish with signs of barotrauma. Not all fish need to be descended. There is information there that, if you're keeping them out of the water to descend them, they might be better off just de-hooking and going right over the side of the vessel. Generally, this happens in shallow water, and so less than eighty feet. If you're in deeper water, you are more likely to need to use a descending device, and so, a hundred foot and greater, it's probably a good idea to use a descending device.

Here is an example of what the app would look like. There is different phases in this app. There is the log-in phase, where you would be able to set up a user name and email password and a bunch of different information, including your address and phone number. Then there is a second screen, where you would start your trip, and you could provide information on the location where you left, the county, the state, the number of anglers on the vessel, and trip type. This would help the report if you're a private recreational angler or a charter boat angler on a charter boat or on a headboat. You would also be able to report your target species. Finally, you would be able to log your catch. Once again, we're looking at logging just red snapper for this, and this is a similar mock-up to what it would potentially look like.

What could we get from this reporting app? Hopefully, we can provide, in between one weekend and the next, or the final weekend, however many weekends are out there, we can determine the number of fishermen that are reporting in the app. We can calculate the percent of fishermen with

catches and releases of red snapper and also calculate the number of red snapper released, or percent of red snapper released.

We can estimate the length of the fish that were caught by these fishermen that are reporting as well as the release size. Finally, we might be able to map relative fishing effort, if sufficient data are supplied. When we're looking at this data, much like everything else we have, if there is less than three people, the data is going to be confidential, but, once you get into a larger sampling pool, you could potentially get some information on effort by area. With that, that's all I had for our voluntary reporting.

DR. DUVAL: Do we have questions for Chip about the voluntary reporting app? I think some of the other things that we heard were offers from other organizations to help get out the word on the use of descending devices and best fishing practices, as a mechanism to try to reduce dead discards as much as possible, and so, Gregg, is there the possibility of -- I think there are a number of organizations that have developed videos that are available online for how to use a descending device, different types of descending devices that are available out there, how to make your own descending device, if you don't want to spend the money on a Seaqualizer or one of the other ones.

I think one of the questions I had, if the motion that just passed passed, was the ability of the council to include links to those sites on the website and sort of publicize some of that somehow. Obviously this has to move forward through the agency to determine whether or not the emergency rule will actually be granted and whether that opening occurs, but are there things that we could be prepared to do, things that we could be prepared to put on the website? Could we have an outreach webinar that we could use to try to educate folks on this?

DR. COLLIER: As part of that webpage, we have been working -- Cameron Rhodes and Kelsey Dick have been putting together a bunch of information on descending devices, best fishing practices, and also this reporting app. It's going to be a very interactive webpage that we have already begun putting together, in hopes that there would be a season in 2017. If it wasn't going to be available for that, we were going to use it for our recreational reporting app in the future, and so the webpage is being developed right now.

Everything that you said is actually going to be there, including links to several different websites, where it gives information on best fishing practices, it gives examples of different descending devices that are being used and how to use them, different venting techniques, and so it's going to have a bunch of information.

MR. WAUGH: Basically, we, again, didn't want to presuppose what you all were going to do, but we have done some prep, looking into options, if you were to request this emergency, for things that we could do to promote the fishing practices, descender devices, and collect some data, and so we would be looking for some guidance from you all as to whether you want us to pursue these for the 2017 season.

DR. DUVAL: I would say yes, from my perspective certainly, and I think we heard council members' concerns and support of continuing to move forward with the items that are now in Amendment 46, which includes all of these best fishing practices, as expeditiously as possible, and so I would hope that there would be support around the table for moving forward with building a webpage like that, but that's just my opinion.

MR. HAYMANS: I was going to suggest, if we had some indication from Roy of the time lag between approval of the document and whenever a season may go into place, rather than a webpage, at least from my state's perspective, I will send out a blast to all of my Saltwater Information Program permit holders. That would get them directly to iAngler or get them to the council, but a direct link to that app, because I think putting the app in their hands, on their phones or whatever, is the most important thing, and, from there, they can get a tutorial on what they need to do, but, if we had some indication of how long it would be, that would be great.

DR. DUVAL: I don't think Dr. Crabtree can give much of an indication right now as to when there might be an announcement and what that announcement might be. I think, in the past, when we have had mini-seasons, there's been an announcement at least -- I'm going to say a month or more ahead of time, and I don't know if that would be possible at this point, but, anyhow, yes, certainly the more notice that folks could receive, if there was to be a reopening in 2017, the greater the opportunity for outreach efforts.

Are there any other similar types of comments or questions in regards to the action that we've just taken and the use of best practices and that sort of thing? Okay. If not, we will go ahead and jump into Amendment 43. I think Chip had another presentation that he was going to walk us through, in terms of this amendment, as well.

DR. COLLIER: You're not going to hear me much more. All right. This is a staff presentation that we put together in order to kind of give you an idea of what the staff are looking for at this meeting and where we were in the past. This is kind of a new presentation that we haven't done before, and it follows along pretty well with the decision document. It does deviate here and there, so let me give you guys an idea of how we're going to propose this, or how this is going to happen.

What we did at the last meeting is we revised the alternatives and actions in Amendment 43. We moved several of the actions into a new amendment yet to be developed, and that's going to be Amendment 46, and you guys also approved Amendment 43 for public hearings.

Since your June meeting, we did have our public webinar hearings. Those were completed in August, and we had several changes to the document, and we provided additional analysis for Action 1 and developed the document from a ten-page document to a 186-page document, and so there are some slight changes there. We revised the purpose and need and also alternative language for Alternatives 3 and 5. We completed most chapters, but some will need to be completed after a preferred is selected, and we included public comments. You guys have seen this slide several times, but it does include some language up there that NMFS has indicated that there has been adequate management action taken to address overfishing and the stock continues to rebuild, through a harvest prohibition in 2015 and 2016.

There has been a lot of discussion of ABC and ACL, and this is just a reminder slide. ACLs cannot exceed the ABC. The Southeast Fisheries Science Center was unable to provide updated projections for red snapper based on SEDAR 41. The SSC stated, in April of 2017, that they could not provide an updated ABC. The ACL is a council decision. The ACL selected must prevent overfishing and continue to rebuild the stock. In addition to the ACL biological effects, the social and economic effects should also be considered.

We have gone through this slide a couple of times. The information used to develop some of the preferred alternatives use that 2012 to 2014 landings. 2008 and 2009 were abnormally high landings years, and these seem to be the more of the static time period, from 1990 to 2008.

Going through the historic landings for the recreational sector and comparing them to the different alternatives, Alternative 2 is 47 percent of that time period from 1980 to 2008. Alternative 3 is 87 percent. Alternative 4 is 84 percent, and Alternative 5 is 157 percent, and so we'll go right into the commercial. Looking at Alternative 2, it's 47 percent. Alternative 3 is 89 percent, Alternative 4 is 85 percent, and Alternative 5 is 160 percent of that average from 1990 to 2008.

I have already gone through these best fishing practices that we had talked about. Recreational reporting and permitting, this has been moved to Amendment 46. As you guys know, we're developing a pilot project in order to develop recreational permitting and reporting. This is in addition to that iAngler app that we were just talking about. This is an actual pilot project that should be available beginning in 2018.

Recreational permitting and reporting will take significant time to analyze the impact of the action. This action could take several years. We do have some recreational reporting language that's already on the books, and I believe it was on the books starting in 2007. It hasn't been approved by OMB yet, and that's mainly due to the difficulty in estimating the cost that it would cause on the recreational fishery. It could take a while to get this approved. While this is being approved, such as Amendment 46, we are going to be gathering data from the pilot project.

Actions needed in this amendment, one, we need to select a preferred, and, once that is selected, we need to approve the codified text, and then we need to approve for formal review, and there is an additional statement down there that any additional actions or alternatives added at this meeting may delay the amendment and the possibility and potentially reduce the chances for a season in 2018.

From there, we will go to the decision document, and that is Attachment 3b, entitled "Am 43 Decision Document". This too is structured differently than decision documents in the past. We have been working on trying to clean these up and make them a little bit more readable for you guys, and so you will notice slight differences from what you have seen in the past.

It starts off with a background about what we've been doing and how this amendment got to where it is. In this action, we include one simple action in it, which is revise the process to determine annual catch limits for red snapper, and then we also have the objectives for the meeting, and that is to review public comments, select preferred alternatives, approve codified text, approve amendment for secretarial review. Here is the expected timing. In 2017, you guys voted to send it to public hearings. In August, we had the public hearings. At this meeting, you guys will review the public comments and select a preferred and then take final action. In October, it will be submitted for secretarial review.

Here is the previous purpose and need. It's the top one. The purpose then was the purpose of the Snapper Grouper Amendment 43 is to revise annual catch limits for red snapper, and you can see, down below, highlighted in yellow and red, is some information was added to it, and that was just to provide fishing access.

The need was modified a little bit more. The way the IPT recommended the way need read now is the need for the Snapper Grouper Amendment 43 is to prevent overfishing, continue to rebuild the red snapper stock, and, to the extent practicable, reduce adverse social and economic effects, as per the MSA. Committee action here is do not make modifications to the purpose and need statement, approve the IPT's suggested purpose and need, or provide other modifications to the purpose and need.

DR. DUVAL: Chip, I assume you would be looking for a motion from the council to approve the purpose and need as modified, or something similar.

DR. COLLIER: That's correct.

MR. PHILLIPS: **Madam Chair, I move that we approve the purpose and need as modified.**

DR. DUVAL: There's a motion and a second by Jessica. Is there discussion on that motion?

MR. HARTIG: I mean, I'm not going to add it, in the interest of -- I do think that, and I just need to put it on the record, that I clearly see this as additional data that is critical. The ages coming from the fishery is actually critical to rebuilding this stock, to seeing the rebuilding progress, and so I will just put that in there. I am not going to try and add it to the purpose, to collect better data, but I'm just going to leave it as it is.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks, Ben. Other discussion on this motion? **The motion reads to approve the IPT-suggested edits to the purpose and need statement. Is there any objection to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

DR. COLLIER: All right. Action 1, what we're looking at is some of the discussion here for Action 1. Based on the results of SEDAR 41, red snapper are overfished and overfishing is occurring in the terminal year of 2014. Annual catch limits will need to prevent overfishing and allow the population to rebuild. We have information from Amendment 28, or the regulations from Amendment 28, which is one fish per person, seventy-five pounds gutted weight for the commercial sector, and no size limit.

The recreational season would start the second Friday in July, and the commercial season would start the second Monday, and we have those dates listed for 2018. In 2018, the recreational sector would start on July 13, and the commercial sector would start on July 9. Annual catch limits in Alternatives 2 through 5 included in Action 1 were developed to enable a season beginning in 2018, and these ACLs would remain in place until modified, based on a new amendment. The alternative catch limits would not include an estimate of discards in determining an annual catch limit for the following year, and the ACLs would be a fixed value.

Total annual catch limits are specified in number of fish. The commercial annual catch limits would be specified in whole weight, and the recreational would be specified in numbers of fish. The metric to track each sector annual catch limit is based on the typical reporting method. The commercial guys report their weight, typically in gutted weight, but the ACL is specified in whole weight, and that's just a simple conversion, and the recreational sector is based on number of fish. When you're looking at MRIP, they do indicate that the number of fish is a more reliable estimate of harvest than the weight of fish.

Alternatives 2 through 5 were developed using landings data from 2012 to 2014, presented to the council each June. Alternative 2 is simply the average from 2012 to 2014. I don't need to go through this. You guys have already heard it all before. Allocation is based on the Comprehensive ACL Amendment, which was 28.07 percent commercial and 71.93 percent recreational. I do want to point that out, and Ben brought that up earlier, that there was a slight difference from what I presented to you guys in June, and that was my mistake. These were set in the Comprehensive ACL Amendment.

This is Table 1. It's the predicted closure dates for the recreational season in 2018, but, once again, I do want to point out that these ACLs would be in place until another amendment changes the ACL for red snapper. We have Alternative 1, which says "to be determined". Once again, that's calculated using the ABC. If the ABC is exceeded -- The ABC, in this version, which comes from Amendment 28, includes landings plus discards. As I indicated before, the current number of discards in the recreational fishery exceeds the ABC. Therefore, in 2018, the ACL would be zero.

Then we have Alternative 2 for the recreational sector, and that's 16,480 fish. Under the predicted landings scenario, that would be open for four days. Under the high landings scenario, that would be open for two days. Alternative 3 and Alternative 4 are very similar. Just a little over a thousand fish separate the two, but the number of days that they would remain open are the same. It's seven days for Alternative 3 under the predicted landings and four days under the high landings. For Alternative 5, it could be as few as eight days and as many as twenty-eight days.

For the commercial sector, once again, Alternative 1, in 2018, it would be zero. Under Alternative 2, it could close between August 23 and September 17. Then, under the predicted landings scenario, the commercial sector would not close under any of the other alternatives. However, under the high landings alternatives, it could close between October and November. One thing to remember is that the commercial sector would be closed when the ACL is projected to be met or is met. It's a little bit different than the recreational sector, which will be announced prior to the season opening.

This right here lists the actual alternatives from June, and then, if you follow down to under the IPT recommendations, it has the modified versions of the alternatives, and I won't read through all of those. You guys have been seeing this all day. We can go into some of the discussion, the SSC and the advisory panel recommendations, or I guess we should vote on the changes to the action.

DR. DUVAL: Yes, and so I think we would be looking for a motion from the council to approve the changes to the action, the wording of the action and alternatives. Is someone willing to make that motion?

MR. HARTIG: **I am willing to make that motion, Madam Chairman, to change the wording in the alternatives.**

DR. DUVAL: To accept the IPT's proposed --

MR. HARTIG: **To accept the IPT's edits or wording.**

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second? Second by Charlie. Any discussion on this motion? We will let Chip actually get the right motion on there. Okay. I didn't see any discussion. **The motion reads to accept the IPT-suggested edits to Action 1 and alternatives. Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

DR. COLLIER: All right. Recommendations from the SSC and the advisory panel, the SSC input is based on the April 2017 information. Based on the results of SEDAR 41, the stock is overfished and overfishing was occurring in 2014. The level of overfishing is unknown, and the SSC was not able to provide an ABC to monitor and manage red snapper. The SSC noted that there was significant uncertainty in the estimate of discards.

The Snapper Grouper AP, in April of 2017, regarding a possible commercial trip limit, the AP stated that specifying it in numbers of fish might lead to high-grading. If the allowable harvest results in a low trip limit, then don't consider a size limit. Because of the depths where the commercial harvest takes place, there shouldn't be a minimum size limit requirement. Consider full retention for the commercial sector. Red snapper should continue to be managed as a bycatch fishery in the commercial sector. Consider initially allowing a recreational harvest two days per week, to make it easier for fishermen to plan trips and for enforcement.

The Law Enforcement AP, in May of 2017, they said, for small trip limits, such as twenty-five pounds, it would be easier to specify trip limits in numbers of fish, and the reasons for that is that, if they're on the water, they would have to follow that fisherman all the way back to the dock, in order to get an accurate weight. They said, if you do go with numbers of fish, high-grading would be a concern and not easy to prevent. Using numbers instead of weight would be useful for enforcement.

For the public comments, as you know, we had the webinar hearings. There were seventy attendees on the webinar, and six commented verbally at the meeting. Of the comments, four identified themselves as commercial and two recreational, and the summary of comments is that three of the six commenters were in favor of Alternative 5. Most indicated that fishermen would like to have a season for red snapper. The ACL should be set to prevent a decline in the population, and opening in July doesn't make much sense, because it's overlapping with the spawning season. The amendment is moving too fast and needs to have additional review by the SSC. There should be education for descending devices and venting tools, including how to use them and when to use them. There needs to be a requirement for descending devices. A tagging program should be started through the Citizen Science Program. There is concern about high-grading. A slot limit might be beneficial to consider. The fishery has been closed for essentially eight years, except for mini-seasons. This should have allowed for fish to get older. The fishery should not have been closed in the first place. There are larger, older red snapper in the stock than predicted in the stock assessment model. The red snapper population has expanded, and it can be found from Cape Hatteras to Key West.

Then I have a summary of written comments. There were 107 written comments that were received by August 15, including six additional written comments that were not included in the online comment form. I can read those out to you, or how would you like me to proceed with that?

DR. DUVAL: I think everybody has the decision document, and hopefully you can see the summary of written comments that have been received. Does anyone feel the need for Chip to go

through these in detail? I mean, this is all part of the record. It's freely available to anybody, and presumably folks have read through the public comment form that was received for Amendment 43, as well as the public comments that have been received online through the council meeting public comment form.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I think it's in the record, and I think it's fine. I do have one suggestion. Summary of written comments on Amendment 43, summary of verbal comments from the August public hearings on Amendment 43, I would urge us to maybe put that "on Amendment 43" language in there, because this action and amendment was developed quickly, and, when I looked at the SSC/advisory panel recommendations, those weren't panel recommendations on this specific amendment, because it didn't exist when those committees met, right?

So perhaps you could say "SSC/advisory panel recommendations regarding red snapper", just to make it clear for the public and the record that the SSC has not weighed in on Amendment 43, nor has your AP, nor has any APs, right, Law Enforcement or Snapper Grouper, and so just to make it real clear. I mean, I don't know. You may want to send this amendment to the SSC and then take final action in December. You're going to get into that discussion, but, at this point, for the record as it exists right now, it should just be clear that those bodies, advisory bodies, and they are just advisory to you, but -- Not just, but they are advisory to you, and so just to be clear that they haven't had the opportunity to comment on this document.

DR. DUVAL: Yes, when they saw Draft Amendment 43, it was a much different document. So, that's all Chip had. This is where we get into the discussion, as Monica said. What is the pleasure of the council? We have heard a lot of public testimony on this, support for certain alternatives, and we have also heard recommendations to delay approval of Amendment 43. This is where we get into the discussion of what would the council like to do at this point.

MR. GRINER: One quick question for Chip. What is the conversion factor, Chip, for the gutted versus whole weight?

DR. COLLIER: It's 1.1.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Just to that point, Chip, that's in the document, right? I think it's in the appendix or --

DR. COLLIER: Yes, that's correct.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Okay. Thank you.

MR. HARTIG: Chip, I am going to hearken back into the document, to that Figure 2.1.1, which has the relative catch per unit effort, and I think it's on page 16 of the amendment. I don't know if it's in the decision document or not, but it pertains to the question I had earlier relative to catch per unit effort standardized for the ratio of annual spawning stock biomass compared to stock biomass at F 30 percent.

When I asked you the question initially, you said it is really just with the numbers, based on numbers, and I just don't know how you get to spawning stock biomass with numbers if you don't know how big the fish are to get your spawning stock biomass. Am I missing something here? I

mean, because I am looking at the spawning stock ratio based on 30 percent, and I am looking at where we are right now in this comparison, and it looks like close to between 21 and 22 percent.

We know the other thing is that that's probably biased low, based on the sampling that MARMAP conducts, because their sampling is conducted -- On average, and not totally, but, on average, they catch smaller animals and younger animals, and so, to me, you look at this graph and it would be a higher SPR, and, although we don't use SPR as a relative measure of the fishery is rebuilt or not, we used to, and we do use 30 percent as a proxy in the assessment, and we've been talking about lowering that as well, because I think the Gulf uses 26, but, based on this, if you were looking at where the stock actually is and SPR, is this graph telling you that information?

DR. COLLIER: It is not, and so the black line is actually referring to the survey numbers, and the red line is referring to the SSB for red snapper, and red snapper are fairly difficult for this to create the estimate. When you're looking at this -- For most fish, we use a proxy of weight of the fish as an estimate of fecundity. For red snapper, they used a relationship of number of eggs that they produce, and it's a non-linear relationship that deals with age, size, and several different factors that are in it, and so it's a really complicated way to do it, and, to calculate the estimate of spawning stock biomass, it would have to come from a stock assessment.

MR. HARTIG: Okay. Thank you.

DR. DUVAL: Does everybody need a cookie break? I am seeing some tired faces around the table. Okay. Let's go ahead and just take a fifteen-minute break, and then we'll come back and finish this up. Thanks.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

DR. DUVAL: I would like to go ahead and start back up. Before we dive back into Amendment 43, there are just a couple of announcements. I want to turn things over to Dr. McGovern for one quick announcement.

DR. MCGOVERN: I have an announcement about a snapper that's not red. It's kind of vermilion colored, and, today, the trip limit -- We'll send out a Fishery Bulletin about the trip limit reduction, but the Science Center indicates that we're at 75 percent of the ACL, and that triggers the trip limit reduction to 500 pounds. That will file today. It will publish on the 28th, which I think is Thursday, and then the effective date will be October 2 for the trip limit reduction.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks for that, Jack. Then the other thing that I was going to do was ask Gregg if he wanted to introduce the newest member of staff.

MR. WAUGH: Yes, and thank you, Madam Chair. Christina Wiegand has joined us. She is sitting next to Kari. Kari has decided to move up to the upcountry, the Greenville area, and so, at hospitality tonight, we will be roasting Kari a little bit. Just some interesting background, but Christina is finishing up her PhD at ECU, East Carolina University, and the council's first foray into social science was working with John Maiolo at ECU, and so you probably haven't ever heard of him, not surprisingly, but, yes, Christina will be there tonight, and so make sure you introduce yourself. Thank you.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Gregg. Gregg, would you mind introducing our other two staff members, who are working on --

MR. WAUGH: I will let Chip do that.

DR. DUVAL: Yes, or somebody.

DR. COLLIER: I thought they got introduced at the last meeting. Sorry. We have Kathleen Howington and Kelsey Dick, and they are both working on outreach. One is working on outreach for the electronic reporting in the charter boat fishery, and that's Kathleen, and Kelsey is working on electronic reporting for the private recreational fishery.

DR. DUVAL: So stop on over and say hello, if folks have ideas to share with those guys. Okay. We are going to jump back into Amendment 43, and so I wanted to see if there were any other technical questions or anything that folks had with regard to anything in the amendment. I know we've gone through this, between this and the emergency request document, and I didn't know if folks had any additional questions on that. If not, then what really remains is for the council to select a preferred alternative and approve this amendment for formal review.

I feel like I would be a little bit remiss if I didn't bring up some of the public comment which we have received that has asked the council to delay approving this document for formal review until after the SSC has seen this, and then we have also received some public comments that have pointed out that, if this document moves forward and is approved, then consideration of the fact that fishing would start in July, because that's what our current regulations say, in terms of the commercial season opening and the recreational season opening, and I guess folks have cited that this is in the middle of red snapper spawning season.

I didn't know, Roy, if either you or Monica could speak to a potential delayed effective date of a rule, and I know that's been done before for other things, like the dealer reporting amendment, where it requires a little bit more notice for the public to be able to come through and meet the new regulations, and I didn't know if the Fisheries Service had ever considered a delay in an effective date of a proposed rule to address something like concerns over spawning. We're not changing -
- There is no proposal to change the start date of the season in this particular amendment, but that has been brought up, that it does start in the middle of spawning.

DR. CRABTREE: I don't think we could delay the effective date just because we didn't like the start date the council chose. When we have delayed effective dates, it's normally been because we needed more time to implement the program, to develop the software, or because fishermen needed more time to come into compliance with it, like buy some piece of equipment, but I think it would be improper for us to delay an effective date just to alter the choice that the council had made.

To your other point about holding off until December and voting on this, if you did that, we probably would miss the -- We potentially would miss the July start date, but it would just then open once we got something in place, and so that's really your decision to make, and it would likely shift things back, but, if that's what you want to do, you can do it. Now -- Well, I will just leave it at that.

MR. BOWEN: Dr. Crabtree, maybe you could elaborate on that a little bit, because we have just went through this EA, and it appears that that's going to have a great chance of opening within two or three or four weeks, but yet, if we delay Amendment 43 until December, and then the season wouldn't potentially open until July, that's seven months, and so maybe you could elaborate on why that would be a delay.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, what we just did was an emergency rule request, and so it doesn't go through all of the comment periods and process that a normal would. It normally takes us about six months to process a plan amendment, which Amendment 43 is, and go through the required sixty-day comment period and the other things that we do.

Now, if everything went smoothly, and if the council approved it in December and if the council staff submitted it to us right away, we could potentially make the July start date, but if there had to be a lot of revisions to the document or some other delays happened, then we might miss it by a little bit, but, generally speaking, it takes us around six months to process a plan amendment and get a rule in place.

DR. DUVAL: As I said, one of the things that's come up has been consideration of National Standard 2 and consideration of receiving the advice of our science advisors, and this topic did come up under Other Business on the SSC webinar, and there were just -- I have been spending some time with the National Standard Guidelines, and there are a couple of things that I wanted to note.

I think this has been a difficult topic for the SSC to discuss. They have noted that there is a lot of uncertainty associated with the assessment, and I think they've struggled with how to provide the best advice possible for the council. We have heard some indication, I think, from the Science Center, and I don't know if Dr. Ponwith would want to elaborate on that, on a different approach for trying to provide catch level advice, using an index-based approach, or I have heard even something along the lines of projection analysis.

When I have looked at the National Standard 2 Guidelines, one of the things that is discussed is timeliness, and one of the pieces of the guidelines states that mandatory management actions should not be delayed due to limitations in the scientific information or the promise of future data collection or analysis. In some cases, due to time constraints, results of important studies or monitoring programs may be considered for use before they are fully complete. Uncertainties and risks that arise from an incomplete study should be acknowledged, but interim results may be better than no results to help inform a management decision.

I think one of the things that has come forward is that it is a management action to set an ACL or determine a method by which an ACL can be set. I think one of the other pieces of the National Standard Guidelines, which refers to peer review that also caught my eye, was routine updates based on previously-reviewed methods require less review than novel methods or data. If formal peer review is not practicable, due to time or resource constraints, the development and analysis of scientific information used in or in support of fishery management actions should be as transparent as possible, in accordance with Paragraph A(6)(4) of this section.

I just throw that out there for the council to consider as you all conduct your deliberations on this particular amendment. I think the analysis that is contained within Amendment 43 uses

information from a fishery-independent index that has been seen in the past. It has been reviewed in the past. It's not the projection-based method that I think has been discussed at the SSC, or by the SSC before, that we also discussed at our meeting in June, but were informed that that would simply not be available in time for use and that that was meant to be a much more comprehensive approach that could be used for other species than just red snapper. I will stop talking now and let you all have the opportunity to speak, but I just wanted to raise those points.

MR. HAYMANS: Roy, I understand the emergency rule is 180 days, but you can extend for 180 days. Does that mean that you could hold until July and extend the emergency rule that was just requested during that time period?

DR. CRABTREE: I don't think so. I think, when this emergency rules goes into effect, and let's just say that it goes into effect November 1 and that's when the fishery opens, then it would run for six months and then could be extended another six months, and you're asking could it then open the fishery again in the summer?

MR. HAYMANS: Six months would take it to May, I think. Could you extend another 180, which would take it through another season in 2018, and allow us to flesh Amendment 43 out a little more, because it's basically the same thing, the emergency rule and 43.

DR. CRABTREE: I would have to sit with Monica and think that through. I think the better course of action is, if you want to go to the SSC with Amendment 43, then just do it. They meet in October, and then come back in and vote up this amendment at the December meeting. Then we will get it in place as quickly as we can and do it that way. I would be afraid, if we tried to modify the emergency rule to include yet another season, that that would become complicated.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I agree with Roy, and I think the emergency action was really specific to 2017, and so it would expire at midnight or 11:59, whatever it is, on December 31. You could somehow tweak it, possibly, if you wanted to, to figure out whether you could extend it into 2018. I think that wasn't the analysis you had, but we could look at that again.

The one thing too on the speed or the timing of getting an amendment in place, Roy was right, in terms of the length of time it usually takes. However, remember this is a single-action amendment, and so the development of the rule and all those things is not quite as onerous or lengthy or it wouldn't require as much time as just this single action, because there is not multiple actions like you usually have, but he is right as far as public comment periods go. Those are set in stone, and we can't change those.

MR. HAYMANS: The reason I asked that is there has been -- Short of state-by-state allocations, there been some discussion, at least in my home state, as to whether or not you could divide the Georgia/Florida north and have an extended season, seeing as those three states are having less than 6 percent of the total catch and Florida having the maximum catch, and so it can't really be done in 43 the way it is now, if we have to move it forward now.

While I have your attention then, in past amendments, we have looked at different start dates for seasons. If we wanted to do something other than a July 1 start date here, could we go back to some of those comments that were made and use a different start date, or does it have to be re-commented on?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: If I am understanding you correctly, you would want to think about a different start date for the recreational sector, or maybe both?

MR. HAYMANS: Recreational, yes, but it could be both, but I think recreational mainly. We have heard talking about moving it out of the spawning season, and yes.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I think, if you want a different start date, I think you ought to put that into this document. I will look at Amendment 28, because Amendment 28 I think had the timing. I don't know that it was actually in the action. I think it was in the discussion, but it might have been in the action. I'm not sure it was in the regulations, and so there might be a little flexibility here that I would be happy to look at, but the way that everything is set up now, something would have to change to get us a different start date, and I think the intent of you all, or I thought the intent of you all, was the only thing that's going to change is really the annual catch limit and that process to establish an annual catch limit. Other than that, everything else stays the same, the trip limit, size limit, no size limit, that sort of thing. If you wanted something different, I think we would need to talk about it right now.

DR. DUVAL: One thing I was going to suggest is we have Amendment 46, which is what all the other actions were put into, and so, if you wanted to consider a different start date of the season, it would seem to me that that would be an appropriate place to do it, and I'm pretty sure that the regulations state that the season start date will open as described in the fishery management plan, is what it says in the regulations, and so it's not specifically stated in the regulations. It just references the fishery management plan.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I believe that's correct.

DR. DUVAL: So, in terms of the actions in Amendment 46, we are slated to pick those up again in December.

MR. BELL: Since you brought 46 up, so the EA kind of technically covers 2017, and 43 covers 2018, and 46 could be in effect by 2019? Is that right, time-wise?

MR. WAUGH: Yes, if you all finish it by June of 2018. Then, yes, it could be in effect.

DR. COLLIER: But, with recreational reporting and some of those management measures, that is going to take a long time to develop.

DR. DUVAL: 46 Part A and 46 Part B and 46 Part C.

MR. PHILLIPS: If you were going to be playing with the start date, and I would have to defer to Chris and some of the others, but they may want a commercial start date in January, when the rest of the groupers or closed or something, or a split season. There is a good bit of conversation that could be had concerning that.

MR. BOWEN: To Charlie's point, I think the reason we've set it up as a seventy-five-pound trip limit is so it's not a directed fishery.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: You could, however, do a regulatory amendment specific to just that thing, to change the fishing year. I think that you have the flexibility to do that.

DR. PONWITH: Just with respect to the time sensitivities for the amount of time that it takes to get that action finalized, not germane to the actual change of the start date, any opportunity to give your science advisory panel an opportunity to look this over I think is to the benefit of the process, and, all things being equal, if that's technically feasible, it seems like that is a -- The process benefits from that.

DR. DUVAL: What is your pleasure? What do you guys want to do?

MR. BOWEN: **I make a motion that we delay this Amendment 43 until December.**

DR. DUVAL: There is a motion by Zack to delay consideration of Amendment 43 until December. Is there a second to that motion? **I do not see a second, and so the motion would die for the lack of a second.**

MR. BROWN: If we make a motion for an alternative here, can that change before -- I mean, this is going to have to go through a review, through the SSC or anything, or is that going to be final?

DR. DUVAL: What we were slated to do here today was to select a preferred alternative. The direction that we provided in June was that we directed staff to go back and move all the remaining actions from Amendment 43 into Amendment 46 and just leave this one action of setting an annual catch limit for red snapper, and this was meant to be an interim approach for 2018. The only item in this amendment is setting an ACL for red snapper, and so what we were slated to do here at this meeting was to select a preferred alternative and then approve this for formal and final review and send it forward.

MR. BROWN: **Can I make a motion to select Alternative 5?**

DR. DUVAL: You may. There is a motion by Mark to select Alternative 5 as a preferred. There is a second by Doug. Is there discussion on the motion?

MS. BECKWITH: I hadn't originally seconded Zack's motion because I didn't want to delay complete consideration of this until December, but, before Mark made his motion, I was going to suggest that we pick an alternative, although I will vote against this one. My support is for Alternative 4, but to work our way through the document, but still allow our SSC to review this and then take final action on it in December, and so that is my preference.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks for that, Anna.

MR. HAYMANS: I had wanted to do this in the emergency action, but I understand that we couldn't move forward with it if we had, but we've been ultraconservative for the last seven years with red snapper, including seventeen days over seven years. By all accounts, the fishery is recovering. Roy's argument this morning, or discussion this morning, with Dr. Barbieri was that the fishery looks as though it's not being overfished right now, or that overfishing is not occurring.

I just can't see how we can look our angling public in the face and tell them that we are considering anything less than the maximum that we can possibly give them right now, and it's going to be hard enough with the emergency action, but to tell them that we sat here and debated Amendment 43 and we agreed that we're going to just give them four days in 2018, I don't know how we could conceivably do that, and I don't have the right argument, scientific argument, to back up what I hear from the anglers and others, but I am going to stand behind Alternative 5 until the rest of the council votes it down, but I really think that we need to give our anglers something back, and, to me, we don't know where overfishing is, and we don't know what the ABC or the ACL is, and how we can -- I understand it's a little more risky and that we possibly are overfishing it, but I just think we need to give them something back, and now is an opportunity to do that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, and I agree with Doug. I think Alternative 5, even though that's the highest number, is still a conservative number, because even if -- You're still going to look at 330 days, at least, of no fishing on these fish, and this is with the highest number we've got, and so, to me, it's still conservative. Then we're going to be putting all this other stuff that we need in Amendment 46, and so I'm inclined to go along with Doug's recommendation.

MR. BELL: Just so I'm clear, so this would be Alternative 5, which assumes the most risk, but, in this process, there would be -- We would take this for science advisement. I mean, that's part of it, which might delay it process-wise, and is that what we were getting with?

DR. DUVAL: I don't think that was the intent of Doug's motion or, excuse me, Mark's motion.

MR. BELL: It wasn't exactly the motion, but in terms of where he thought we were going with this, and so there isn't necessarily that built into this. It's just Alternative 5 as is.

DR. DUVAL: You would have to make a motion to do that. You just heard Anna express that she would have supported Alternative 4 and then delaying approval until December.

DR. CRABTREE: I have to speak against this motion. I mean, I think we can make a good case that overfishing is not occurring. I think we can make a good case that the stock is rebuilding, and I think we can make a good case that the levels of harvest we have had over the past several years are consistent with rebuilding the stock.

This one though goes beyond that. It takes the highest level of harvest and then scales it up, and that, I think, becomes much more difficult to justify, and what's the old quote? Our mistake was we went a bridge too far. My fear here is that we try to go too far with this and we end up with nothing. I just think that, given all the uncertainties and all the concerns that have been raised, this goes too far. **I would make a substitute motion to adopt Alternative 4 as our preferred alternative.**

MS. BECKWITH: I would second that.

DR. DUVAL: There is a substitute motion by Roy to adopt Alternative 4 as the preferred. It's seconded by Anna. Discussion on the substitute?

DR. CRABTREE: There have been a lot of issues raised about the scalar and how appropriate it might be, and I think you're just opening up a whole other level of uncertainties if you go down

this path, and I think the chance of this getting through the system then become reduced quite a bit. In fact, I don't know that I could support the amendment if Alternative 5 was the preferred, and so I would urge you to take a more moderate course.

I think, in the long term with this fishery, we need the Science Center to deliver the index-based approach that they're working on that allows us to get to a new catch level and take it through our regular process with the SSC and then deal with that next year and get that in place, and hopefully that will give us more fish, but I don't know, but I think, for right now, for next year, Alternative 4 is a much, much wiser course of action and much more -- It gives me much assurance that we're going to be able to pull it off and get it done.

DR. DUVAL: I think Alternative 4 is something that is defensible with regards to the fact that this is a level of harvest that we had in 2014 and under which the stock continued to rebuild, and I think that's the assurance that Roy is trying to provide here.

MR. BROWN: I would just ask for us to do a roll call when we do vote on this.

DR. DUVAL: A roll call on this motion right here, the substitute?

MR. BROWN: On the original.

DR. DUVAL: The way this works is that, if the substitute motion carries, then it becomes the main motion and we vote on it again.

MR. BROWN: Okay. On the substitute then.

MR. HARTIG: I am torn on this one. It's tough. Every one of my constituents wants Alternative 5, and I think you could make an argument for 5, based on a number of things in this document, but I can't help but hearken back to what Roy has pointed out and what I pointed out previously in the emergency action and what you just stated.

What we know is that the stock continued to rebuild under Alternative 4. What we don't know is will it continue to rebuild under Alternative 5, and, if it doesn't continue to rebuild, it puts us in a much worse position in the long term on managing red snapper, and so, as much as I would like to support my constituency, I also have to support the long-term impacts on them as well, which I think could be worse if we have continued overfishing with a higher ACL, and so I am going to support the Alternative 4 as the preferred alternative.

MR. BREWER: I agree with Ben. My constituency, and I have read the comments. Everybody wants Alternative 5, but we took an oath. Mark and I took an oath this morning, and that was to protect these fisheries for the greater good of all, and I think that we're getting a lot closer to that with 4 than we are with 5. I would love to support 5. I would just love it, but I can't.

MR. BELL: Just keeping in mind that this is just an interim solution to try to open things up a little bit. This is not the final solution. I had convinced myself, prior to discussions of an emergency action, that, since this is about risk in my mind, that Alternative 4 was an acceptable level of risk, for the reasons we have stated already, and so now adding the actions from the emergency action on top of going to perhaps a higher risk option, I am just not real comfortable

with that level of risk, and I do get the fact that people want more fish, and they will get more fish. This fishery is rebuilding. It's doing good things, but I'm just not really comfortable with the level of risk provided, I think, in Alternative 5. I would tend to stick to 4, I think, as my preferred.

MR. PHILLIPS: I am just going to throw this out into the universe, considering the discussion. We would like to be able to do what the stakeholders are asking and give them more fish, and yet we hear, around the table, there is a good bit of heartburn and concern about going from 125,000 pounds of fish to 235,000 pounds of fish. Is there a possibility that we could just split the difference and we could get the public as much fish as we could and still have a little bit -- Split the risk. Since we haven't gone anywhere, and it's within the ranges, would that be a possibility that could suit people, to split the difference and add 50,000 pounds to it or split it in the middle? That's just a thought.

DR. DUVAL: I think, in terms of adding an alternative to this action, and so I'm just talking procedural things right now, I am looking to Monica. We have added alternatives to an action when those alternatives have fallen within the range of what has been taken to public comment, and so, procedurally, I'm just looking to you, Monica, for input on could the council do it, and, whether or not we can or should do it, we don't have any analysis in front of us in terms of what that means with regard to projected season length or anything like that.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Right, you don't, but you're right that it does fall within the range that's already been analyzed. I don't know if your fantastic analysts who are attending this meeting would be able to get you something by Full Council again on Thursday, but I would think that you would have a hard time taking final action today anyway on that alternative. You might be able to do it later in the week, if they could pull things together, because you already have what -- You would know what would happen at the highest amount, and then they could give you, maybe, some idea, but, again, I don't mean to be volunteering these people, because it wouldn't be me who would be doing the work, but, yes, you wouldn't be able to do it today, but maybe later this week.

MS. MCCAWLEY: To continue down this procedural road here, would we either vote up or down the substitute motion, but also ask staff to do this additional analysis, or are you looking for an additional substitute motion that would ask staff to do this analysis and then we would vote at Full Council? I am trying to figure out --

DR. DUVAL: Yes, I think that's kind of the stickiness. I mean, my preference would be to simply vote the substitute motion up or down. I think, at this point, adding yet another alternative that -- I think I would come back to the same rationale that we have been discussing here for why Alternative 4 and why not Alternative 5. It's that we know that Alternative 4 is a level of harvest under which the stock has continued to rebuild, and I think going beyond that, in any capacity, for an additional alternative raises the risk of not being able to do that. It would be my preference that we simply vote this motion up or down.

DR. CRABTREE: I agree with Michelle, and my worry, if we start trying to come up with some contrived split-the-difference alternative -- I don't like rationales that we need to get as many fish as we can get. I worry that I think these alternatives in here all have some sound rationale behind them, but, when you start trying to split them down or whittle them around, it starts, to me, to get more difficult to justify.

DR. DUVAL: Any other comments on the substitute?

MR. BROWN: Alternative 5, why was it even put in this document if we can't consider it? I am just concerned that the numbers are a little bit low anyway for what should be allowed, and so, if this is something we can't even consider, or we're not going to be able to -- Why was it even put in this document?

DR. DUVAL: I think there are many times where we put alternatives within an action within a document that we then, upon further analysis and reflection, decide that it really is not necessarily the wisest course of action to choose one of those alternatives. They do bound a range of possibilities.

DR. COLLIER: If you remember, when we were coming up with these alternatives, we came up with them at the meeting in June. After we had more time to think about it and come up with rationale, we came up with the document that you see in front of you today, and it includes all of the alternatives that you guys recommended back in June, but it just includes a lot more analysis, a lot more information, and a lot more thought than we had during that week in June.

MR. GRINER: If we were to go with some lower or middle, as Charlie suggested, instead of the 1.88 and say you did a 1.58, what further analysis, Chip, would you guys need to do this week?

DR. COLLIER: We would need to see what the number of days would be for the recreational and commercial, and we would need to develop the ACLs for the recreational and commercial. You need to look at the bycatch reduction, and you need to look at all the documents that are in there. I mean, every table that's in there, we would have to look at, and we would have to look at the economic effects for every single one and potential social effects, and so it's -- There is a reason that it takes so long to develop these FMPs and amendments, and it's because of all the information that's included in there.

MR. GRINER: But would it be just a simple -- I don't mean to oversimplify it, but would it just be changing that analysis based on the difference between 1.58 and 1.88?

DR. COLLIER: I mean, that's going to be part of it, but you also have to write up every single thing that comes out of those models. It's not just that the computer is going to write it and come up with the answers. It's staff time that has to come up with all the answers and make sure that it's accurate and represents everything that you guys want in it.

DR. DUVAL: Tim, I think one thing that I just want to emphasize is that the 1.88 comes from an analysis of looking at the index, the fishery-independent index, and the ratio of the last two years to the previous three years, and so that's where the 1.88 comes from. I would not advise you to just pick a number out of thin air, such as 1.58 or whatever, to try to do something like that.

MR. GRINER: No, and I wasn't -- I was simply thinking that, if that 1.88 is representative of that increase in abundance and we're worried about a risk factor, then, if that is what we're saying the increase in abundance is, then you build in some buffer. If you took 75 percent of that increase in abundance, then you would down around 1.58 or something like that, and that would leave you a 25 or 30 percent buffer to mitigate some of that risk.

MR. HARTIG: The other thing about this fishery is it's a fragile recovery. Remember that we're trying to rebuild a stock back to much older ages, and, if you look at the information that Luiz presented and that has been presented in the assessment, you see the age structure building, but you see those older ages at really, really small numbers, and so, if you look at the catches that have occurred in the fishery back when it was open, you see people with all these great big fish, and so I have always -- I have tried to convince the recreational fishery to catch smaller fish, but that's not how the recreational fishery works. They want to catch the biggest fish they can.

Obviously, the more fish we allow to be harvested, the more those potentially older fish will be harvested, which delays our rebuilding, to some extent, and, by abundance standard, there is lots and lots and lots of red snapper, more than there's been since 1970 in the ocean. That's what the assessment says, and now, prior to that, we've got probably three times the amount of red snapper we had since the assessment. Still, the age structure is what it is. It's not progressing in leaps and bounds in those older age classes. Yes, it is, and it's showing rebuilding, but that's a pretty fragile thing.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. I think everybody, almost everybody, around the table has had the opportunity to weigh in with a comment. I think the only person that I haven't heard from is Mr. Conklin. I didn't know if you wanted to offer any comments. If not, is everybody ready for the vote? There has been a roll call requested on the substitute motion, and so I'm going to turn things over to Gregg.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Hartig.

MR. HARTIG: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Phillips.

MR. PHILLIPS: No.

MR. WAUGH: Ms. Beckwith.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Bowen.

MR. BOWEN: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Brewer.

MR. BREWER: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Brown.

MR. BROWN: No.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Conklin.

MR. CONKLIN: No.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Griner.

MR. GRINER: No.

MR. WAUGH: Dr. Crabtree.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Haymans.

MR. HAYMANS: No.

MR. WAUGH: Ms. McCawley.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Dr. Duval.

DR. DUVAL: This isn't final action, and so I don't vote.

MR. WAUGH: It's seven to five.

DR. DUVAL: **The motion carries seven to five.** The substitute now becomes the main motion, and so everybody has to vote again. Does this need to be a roll call vote? No. **Could I please see a show of hands in favor of the main motion, seven in favor; those opposed, like sign, five opposed. The motion carries.**

Okay. So you all have selected a preferred alternative. Would you like to move this amendment forward for final approval?

MS. BECKWITH: I would like to give our SSC an opportunity to review this, since we'll be able to take final action in December, and any delay would push us slightly out of the peak of the spawning season for red snapper.

DR. DUVAL: Anna, is that a motion, or is that just comment?

MS. BECKWITH: Really, it's just comments. If you would like it to be a motion, I'm happy to make it one.

DR. DUVAL: That was the motion that Zack made that died for lack of a second.

MR. BOWEN: I would be willing to make that motion or second it, if Anna makes it.

MS. BECKWITH: **I didn't second Zack's motion originally because he wanted to stop all work on it, and I wanted to get to a preferred, and so I'm happy to make a motion to delay final action on Amendment 43 until December, so that our SSC can give us appropriate feedback.**

MR. BOWEN: Second.

DR. DUVAL: Procedurally, I don't know if we can do that. I mean, that was a previous motion that was already made, and it died for lack of a second. Can that --

DR. CRABTREE: Can we see Zack's motion? I think it was slightly different, because it just, I think, said delay until December, whereas Anna's motion says send it to the SSC and then come back in December.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Anna, you are making a motion to send Amendment 43 to the SSC for review?

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

DR. DUVAL: Okay, and that's being seconded by Zack.

MR. BOWEN: Yes, ma'am.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Is there discussion on the motion?

MR. HARTIG: We heard from at least some of our public that we should do this. I don't know how you can argue against it. It's something we do commonly for everything. We send them things before we act on them. I will leave it there.

MR. BREWER: A point and then a question. Anna, would you be willing to modify that to send the amendment to the SSC for review for approval or not approval at the December meeting, because, right now, there is no time limit on when they need to get back to us. Then, if this is delayed, or if it is put over to the December meeting, what does that do to our timeline and our ability to have a season in 2018? I put that to Dr. Crabtree.

DR. CRABTREE: Staff tells me that, if things go well, and if it's submitted to us shortly after the December meeting, we could get to a final rule by June 1, effective July 1, and, so it, in theory, could happen on schedule.

DR. DUVAL: Anna, back to you. I think Chester is just looking for some additional clarification in the motion that might indicate to send Amendment 43 to the SSC for review with the --

MS. BECKWITH: At their October meeting?

DR. DUVAL: I think it's really with the intent that the amendment would come back to the council for final approval in December. I think that's really what he's getting to.

MR. BREWER: Yes.

MS. BECKWITH: **Yes, I would be fine with that.**

DR. DUVAL: Okay.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I just have some concerns about taking it back to the SSC, because I feel like they were the ones that couldn't give us these concrete numbers in the first place. I don't want to send it back to the SSC.

MR. BELL: I had two questions. One was time table, and that was answered, I think, and my second point, I guess, is that, related to the SSC, we need to be -- If we're going to do that, we need to be very specific on exactly what we ask them, and the question has to be very clear, so the answer can be clear, and, if it's just simply yes or no, what are they going to base that on that we haven't sort of maybe already heard? That is my only concern. If we can phrase the question in a way that allows them to give us an answer, that would be good.

MR. CONKLIN: I want to echo what Jessica's concerns are. If anybody was on the SSC webinar, we have taken this to them, and we've asked them to provide us numbers, and they could not. The reason why we're doing this is to get fish to the public. In the after thoughts of the SSC webinar last week, there were some members on there that had some real heartburn with this and would put the brakes, I am thinking, on this whole thing. If we want to live up to our expectations and what we've been working so hard on, this doesn't need to go back before them. We need to get it on through and keep it on schedule.

MR. BOWEN: I just feel like, if we don't send this to our scientific advisors, it, in some way, in my mind, circumvents the process, and so I am going to keep seconding that motion.

MR. PHILLIPS: I really -- We sent it to them, and they've gone over it and gone over it and gone over it, and I don't see how they're going to slice-and-dice the information and get a different answer. This is really only going to be for a year, and then we're going to go back to -- We're going to do 46, and then we're going to do a lot more, and hopefully have some information to do better.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I would like to make a substitute motion. It's the one that's in the document to approve this amendment for secretarial review.**

DR. DUVAL: There is a substitute motion by Jessica to approve Snapper Grouper Amendment 43 for secretarial review. This is the motion that is in the decision document, and that's seconded by Chris.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I believe that we're taking action here, and, to me, this is another interim measure. I feel like the SSC has indicated that they need more time to figure out what their next steps are, and I don't think that just one more meeting of the SSC between now and the December council meeting is enough for them to come up with an answer that is different than what they've already told us, and so, to me, this is another interim measure, like the one that we took earlier today.

DR. CRABTREE: Just to come back, I agree with Mel's comment that if we send this to the SSC that we need to be very clear with the questions we're asking, and there were some comments, I think by Chris and Charlie, that said the SSC had seen this before, when in fact the SSC, to my knowledge, has not had this document on their agenda at least. They may have seen it prior to their webinar, but I don't think it's ever been in their briefing book. Has it, Gregg?

MR. WAUGH: No, because the council developed these options at the June meeting, and so, at their April meeting, what we took to them was a request that they provide some updated ABC guidance based on the catch index that Chip put together for them.

DR. CRABTREE: Right, and, given the discussion that we've had, I sort of feel like, at this point, I'm going to vote against this motion and support the motion to send it back to the SSC and come back in December.

MR. HARTIG: I mean, it's a real tough one, because the SSC isn't going to do very well without quantitative things to sink their teeth into. Yes, we have seen some qualitative changes in all of Luiz's work, and then we have the MARMAP and SEFIS increase. I don't know. This one is a really tough one. I won't know until we vote.

MR. GRINER: I agree with Jessica and Chris. I think this is an interim measure, and we just need to go ahead and move it forward.

MR. BELL: I agree with the intent of, if it's a matter of trying to ensure that we're being true to the process and maintain the process and involve and get science advice, but what are we going to give the SSC that they haven't already -- Sure, they haven't seen, officially seen, what we're doing, but they know what we're doing, and they have discussed what we're doing, and so, again, what exactly would we be asking them? Would we be asking them to review our rationale and our process and comment on is that -- Do they deem that as a reasonable process and a reasonable level of risk, but then the risk is really kind of a management risk, and they don't comment on management risk. They deal with science and facts, and so what are the new facts, or what's the new science you would be presenting them for them to kind of deliberate on?

I mean, we could ask them to comment on the process and risk, but that's kind of not -- They may say, well, there is no new science and we don't know and we have nothing to work with. That's why I'm getting back to that being very clear of, if we're going to go to them, what exactly are we asking of them? What are we presenting them for review?

DR. DUVAL: I think we would have to be very clear on that. If we did go back to them, it would have to be what exactly would we be asking them to provide input on? Would it be to evaluate the method used to establish the alternatives for ACLs? What would that question be?

MR. WAUGH: Just to mention that, at the April meeting, when we came out of that April SSC meeting, the expectation that I came away with, and certainly other people that I have talked with, was that the Center was going to work on this CPUE index and bring that information back to the SSC, and the SSC was then going to work on providing us an updated ABC recommendation.

We were moving forward with interim values until we get that ABC, and they could not give us any timeframe with that, and so our thought was that we would pick that up in Amendment 46,

but, on that SSC call, we were informed by the Center that they stopped work on that CPUE index, due to our request for some update to the golden tilefish assessment and because the council was considering opening the fishery. I think you need to be aware of this. If we go back to them, the Center has not been working on that CPUE index, and so I don't know what the SSC is going to be able to provide us in terms of an updated ABC recommendation.

DR. PONWITH: To that point, the Center does not have a projection-based index completed that can be used to help make this decision at this point. We talked about developing this, and the approach that we would take -- When we discussed that with the council in the spring, the council's reaction, if I remember correctly, was that won't be done in time to be informative for 2018, and so we need a Plan B.

Essentially, at that point, a decision was made, and, again, this is my recollection of the sequence of events, but a decision was made that, whether this approach exists or not, it won't come into being early enough to be peer reviewed by the SSC and usable for the 2018 season, and so that stopped the discussion on this being used for 2018. It doesn't stop the fact that this is still an approach that's under investigation by the Center. It's been slowed, because of some other things that jumped in line, and so there's a pause button, but it certainly is still an approach that we have a keen interest in exploring.

DR. CRABTREE: I also recall, on the webinar, that the Center said that the approach was not intended to produce a catch level recommendation, and that surprised me, because clearly what we are looking for and what we need is a catch level recommendation that we can actually implement and use, and so I'm confused about that statement that was made.

MR. PHILLIPS: To me, the substitute motion is -- Because of all the uncertainty, this is a management risk, and this is something that we feel comfortable with, and we have backed off of Alternative 5, and we're going back to 4, and this is a risk that I think -- It's a level of risk that we're choosing, because we haven't been able to get any numbers, any good numbers, because of all the uncertainty. This is, to me, risk, and I think this is council, and I wish we could send it back and they could tell us something different, but I just don't want to drag this out any longer. Let's move.

DR. DUVAL: Okay. Any other comments on the substitute motion? Is everyone ready to vote on the substitute motion? **Could I please see a show of hands of those in favor of the substitute motion, which is to approve Snapper Grouper Amendment 43 for secretarial review and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate and give staff editorial license to make any necessary editorial changes to the document and codified text and give the Council Chair authority to approve the revisions and re-deem the codified text, ten in favor; those opposed, two opposed. The substitute motion carries ten to two, and that becomes the main motion.**

We need to vote again, and that's a roll call vote. This is now the main motion, and so I am going to turn things over to Gregg.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Hartig.

MR. HARTIG: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Phillips.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Ms. Beckwith.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Bowen.

MR. BOWEN: No.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Brewer.

MR. BREWER: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Brown.

MR. BROWN: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Conklin.

MR. CONKLIN: Sure.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Griner.

MR. GRINER: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Dr. Crabtree.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Mr. Haymans.

MR. HAYMANS: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Ms. McCawley.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: Dr. Duval.

DR. DUVAL: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: **The motion passes with one no vote.**

DR. DUVAL: Okay. That takes us through all of our business today. Unless anybody has any other business to come before us today, we're going to recess the Full Council session until Thursday. I appreciate everybody's hard work and all of the discussion around the table today. I know this was a lot on a fish that is red, and so I very much appreciate that, and we will recess until tomorrow morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed on September 25, 2017.)

Certified By: _____ Date: _____

Transcribed By:
Amanda Thomas
October 11, 2017

Full Council Day 1 - 9/25/17

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL 2017 COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

COUNCIL CHAIR

✓ Dr. Michelle Duval
NC Division of Marine Fisheries
3441 Arendell Street
(PO Box 769)
Morehead City, NC 28557
252/808-8011 (ph);
252/726-0254 (f)
michelle.duval@ncdenr.gov

VICE-CHAIR

✓ Charlie Phillips
Phillips Seafood/Sapelo Sea Farms
1418 Sapelo Avenue, N.E.
Townsend, GA 31331
912/832-4423 (ph); 912/832-6228 (f)
Ga_capt@yahoo.com

Robert E. Beal
Executive Director
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries
Commission
1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N
Arlington, VA 20001
703/842-0740 (ph); 703/842-0741 (f)
rbeal@asmfc.org

✓ Anna Beckwith *via webinar*
1907 Paulette Road
Morehead City, NC 28557
252/671-3474 (ph)
AnnaBarriosBeckwith@gmail.com

✓ Mel Bell
S.C. Dept. of Natural Resources
Marine Resources Division
P.O. Box 12559
(217 Ft. Johnson Road)
Charleston, SC 29422-2559
843/953-9007 (ph)
843/953-9159 (fax)
bellm@dnr.sc.gov

✓ Zack Bowen
P.O. Box 30825
Savannah, GA 31410
912/398-3733 (ph)
zackbowensafmc@gmail.com

✓ W. Chester Brewer
250 Australian Ave. South
Suite 1400
West Palm Beach, FL 33408
561/655-4777 (ph)
wcbsafmc@gmail.com

✓ Mark Brown
3642 Pandora Drive
Mt. Pleasant, SC 29466
843/881-9735 (ph); 843/881-4446 (f)
capt.markbrown101@gmail.com

✓ Chris Conklin
P.O. Box 972
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576
843/543-3833
conklinsafmc@gmail.com

✓ Dr. Roy Crabtree
Regional Administrator
NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Region
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
727/824-5301 (ph); 727/824-5320 (f)
roy.crabtree@noaa.gov

✓ Tim Griner
4446 Woodlark Lane
Charlotte, NC 28211
980/722-0918 (ph)
timgrinersafmc@gmail.com

✓ Ben Hartig
9277 Sharon Street
Hobe Sound, FL 33455
772/546-1541 (ph)
mackattackben@att.net

(Continued)

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
2017 COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP (continued)

✓ Doug Haymans
Coastal Resources Division
GA Dept. of Natural Resources
One Conservation Way, Suite 300
Brunswick, GA 31520-8687
912/264-7218 (ph); 912/262-2318 (f)
haymanssafmc@gmail.com

✓ Dr. Wilson Laney
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
South Atlantic Fisheries Coordinator
P.O. Box 33683
Raleigh, NC 27695-7617
(110 Brooks Ave
237 David Clark Laboratories,
NCSU Campus
Raleigh, NC 27695-7617)
919/515-5019 (ph)
919/515-4415 (f)
Wilson.Laney@fws.gov

✓ Jessica McCawley
Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
2590 Executive Center Circle E.,
Suite 201
Tallahassee, FL 32301
850/487-0554 (ph); 850/487-4847(f)
jessica.mccawley@myfwc.com

✓ LCDR Jeremy Montes
U.S. Coast Guard
Seventh Coast Guard District
Enforcement Branch (DRE)
305/415-6788(ph); 305/710-4569(c)
Jeremy.J.Montes@uscg.mil

Deirdre Warner-Kramer
Office of Marine Conservation
OES/OMC
2201 C Street, N.W.
Department of State, Room 5806
Washington, DC 20520
202/647-3228 (ph); 202/736-7350 (f)
Warner-KramerDM@state.gov

✓ Lt. Amy Hockinberry

[Go to Top](#)

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
COUNCIL STAFF

Executive Director

✓ Gregg T. Waugh
gregg.waugh@safmc.net

Deputy Director – Science & Statistics

✓ John Carmichael
john.carmichael@safmc.net

Deputy Director - Management

✓ Dr. Brian Cheuvront
brian.cheuvront@safmc.net

Fishery Scientist

✓ Myra Brouwer
myra.brouwer@safmc.net

Admin. Secretary /Travel Coordinator

Cindy Chaya
cindy.chaya@safmc.net

Purchasing & Grants

✓ Kimberly Cole
kimberly.cole@safmc.net

Fishery Scientist

✓ Dr. Chip Collier
chip.collier@safmc.net

Administrative Officer

✓ Mike Collins
mike.collins@safmc.net

Outreach Specialist

✓ Kelsey Dick
kelsey.dick@safmc.net

Fishery Biologist

✓ Dr. Mike Errigo
mike.errigo@safmc.net

Fishery Economist

✓ John Hadley
john.hadley@safmc.net

Outreach Specialist

✓ Kathleen Howington
Kathleen.howington@safmc.net

Public Information Officer

✓ Kim Iverson
kim.iverson@safmc.net

Fisheries Social Scientist

✓ Dr. Kari MacLauchlin
kari.maclauchlin@safmc.net

Senior Fishery Biologist

✓ Roger Pugliese
roger.pugliese@safmc.net

Outreach Specialist

✓ Cameron Rhodes
Cameron.rhodes@safmc.net

Financial Secretary

Suzanna Thomas
suzanna.thomas@safmc.net

Fishery Citizen Science Program Manager

✓ Amber Von Harten
amber.vonharten@safmc.net

SEDAR Coordinators

✓ Dr. Julie Neer - julie.neer@safmc.net
✓ Julia Byrd - julia.byrd@safmc.net

christina wiegand

[Go to Top](#)

Leann Bosarge

Dr. Jack McGovern

Monica Smit-Brunello

Dr. Bonnie Ponwith

Rick DeVictor

Dr. Marcel Reichert

Erika Burgess

Dr. Luiz Barbieri

FULL COUNCIL - ROLL CALL VOTE

Date: September ²⁵~~11~~, 2017

Meeting Location: Charleston, SC

Issue: RED SNAPPER EMERGENCY ACTION REQUEST

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. HARTIG	✓		
MR. PHILLIPS	✓		
MS. BECKWITH	✓		
MR. BELL	✓		
MR. BOWEN	✓		
MR. BREWER	✓		
MR. BROWN	✓		
MR. CONKLIN	✓		
MR. GRINER	✓		
DR. CRABTREE		✓	
MR. HAYMANS	✓		
MS. MCCAWLEY	✓		
DR. DUVAL	✓		

FULL COUNCIL - ROLL CALL VOTE

Date: September ²⁵11, 2017

Meeting Location: Charleston, SC

Issue: SG Amendment 43 (RED SNAPPER)

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. HARTIG	✓		
MR. PHILLIPS	✓		
MS. BECKWITH	✓		
MR. BELL	✓		
MR. BOWEN		✓	
MR. BREWER	✓		
MR. BROWN	✓		
MR. CONKLIN	✓		
MR. GRINER	✓		
DR. CRABTREE	✓		
MR. HAYMANS	✓		
MS. MCCAWLEY	✓		
DR. DUVAL	✓		

FULL COUNCIL - ROLL CALL VOTE

Date: September ²⁵11, 2017

Meeting Location: Charleston, SC

Issue: SG Amy 3 SUBSTITUTE motion TO ADOPT ALT. 4

	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. HARTIG	✓		
MR. PHILLIPS		✓	
MS. BECKWITH	✓		
MR. BELL	✓		
MR. BOWEN	✓		
MR. BREWER	✓		
MR. BROWN		✓	
MR. CONKLIN		✓	
MR. GRINER		✓	
DR. CRABTREE	✓		
MR. HAYMANS		✓	
MS. MCCAWLEY	✓		
DR. DUVAL (DID NOT VOTE)			

7

5

DAY 1 SEPT 25, 2017

Last Name	First Name	Email Address
Allen	Charles	allenchuck123@gmail.com
Bailey	Adam	adam.bailey@noaa.gov
Ballenger	Joseph	ballengerj@dnr.sc.gov
Barbieri	Luiz	Luiz.Barbieri@Myfwc.com
Batsavage	Chris	Chris.Batsavage@ncdenr.gov
Bianchi	Alan	Alan.Bianchi@ncdenr.gov
Bogdan	Jennifer	sheepish79@aol.com
Bonura	Vincent	SailRaiser25C@aol.com
Bowen	Zack	fishzack@comcast.net
Brame	Richen	dbrame55@gmail.com
Brooker	J.P.	jbrooker@oceanconservancy.org
Bryan	Lon	southboundfishing@gmail.com
Cheshire	Rob	rob.cheshire@noaa.gov
Clarke	Lora	lclarke@pewtrusts.org
Conklin	Chris	conklincc@gmail.com
Cunningham	Leda	lcunningham@pewtrusts.org
DeVictor	Rick	rick.devictor@noaa.gov
Dingle	Julie	dinglej@dnr.sc.gov
Dufour	Jacques	merrymarlin@gmail.com
Erwin	Gwen	gwen.erwin@myfwc.com
Evans	Joe	jevans3022@gmail.com
Exley	Gary	river92@bellsouth.net
Fitzpatrick	Eric	eric.fitzpatrick@noaa.gov
Fletcher	Brad	bradleyscuba888@yahoo.com
Foss	Kristin	kristin.foss@myfwc.com
Foster	Dean	dfoster@pewtrusts.org
Franco	Dawn	dawn.franco@dnr.ga.gov
Godwin	Joelle	joelle.godwin@noaa.gov
Gore	Karla	karla.gore@noaa.gov
Guyas	Martha	martha.guyas@myfwc.com
Hartig	Ben	mackattackben@att.net
Hockenberry	Amy	amy.n.hockenberry@uscg.mil
Holland	Cris	cptcrisholland@aol.com
Holland-Camp	Rebecca	rebecca2258@yahoo.com
Hong	Christopher	christopher.hong@jacksonville.com
Horton	Chris	chris@sportsmenslink.org
Hudson	Rusty	DSF2009@aol.com
Jennings	Gary	gjennings@asafishing.org
Johnson	Eric	eric.johnson@unf.edu
Killer	Ed	ed.killer@tcpalm.com
Knowlton	Kathy	kathy.knowlton@dnr.ga.gov

Laks	Ira	captainira@att.net
Larkin	Michael	Michael.Larkin@noaa.gov
Levy	Mara	mara.levy@noaa.gov
Lloyd	Vic	vic_lloyd@bellsouth.net
Logan	Stanley	logan301_99@yahoo.com
MacLauchlin	Kari	kari.maclauchlin@safmc.net
Mahood	Bob	rmahood@mindspring.com
Malinowski	Rich	rich.malinowski@noaa.gov
Markwith	Anne	anne.markwith@ncdenr.gov
Mehta	Nikhil	nikhil.mehta@noaa.gov
Mizo	Dylan	dylanburkmizo@live.com
Morton	Ted	wmorton@pewtrusts.org
Neahr	Todd	todd.neahr@myfwc.com
Prince	Chris	chrisprince35@gmail.com
Pulver	Jeff	Jeff.Pulver@noaa.gov
Raine	Karen	karen.raine@noaa.gov
Records	David	david.records@noaa.gov
Rodenburg	John	johnrodenburg@msn.com
Runde	B	bjrunde@ncsu.edu
Salley	Mike	sandbar3@att.net
Sauls	Beverly	Beverly.Sauls@myfwc.com
Semedo	Barbara	bsemedo@pewtrusts.org
Seward	McLean	mclean.seward@ncdenr.gov
Shore	Patrick	prshore1125@gmail.com
Siegfried	Katie	kate.siegfried@noaa.gov
Sinclair	Fred	fsinclair55@aol.com
Skipper	Allen	saltynole@gmail.com
Stafford	Pete	spstafford@gmail.com
Surrency	Ron	captronacc@gmail.com
Takade-Heumacher	Helen	htakade@edf.org
Waters	James	jwaters8@gmail.com
Watson	Haley	hmwatson@basspro.com
Williams	Jeff	jeffwilliams2007@gmail.com
Williams	Erik	erik.williams@noaa.gov
Wyanski	David	wyanskid@dnr.sc.gov
Yates	Mitch	searat366@live.com
Young	Erik	fivesharks@gmail.com
Young	Ryan	sencfishing@yahoo.com
aukeman	trip	taukeman@ccaflorida.org
beckwith	anna	anna@downeastguideservice.com
blough	heather	heather.blough@noaa.gov
brennan	ken	kenneth.brennan@noaa.gov

brewer	chester	wcbsafmc@gmail.com
collins	m	mec181@yahoo.com
dilernia	tony	tony@rocketcharters.com
hull	jimmy	hullsseafood@aol.com
prugar	larry	lprugar@live.com
riley	richard	richard.riley@myfwc.com
sandorf	scott	scott.sandorf@noaa.gov
steele	stanley	stan.steele51@gmail.com
vara	mary	mary.vara@noaa.gov

Monday 9/25/17 Public Sign-In

Name	Last	Email (if you selected New Contact in the dropdown above)	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply)	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply)	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply)	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply)
Rusty	Hudson		Private Recreational	Charter/Headboat/F or-Hire	Commercial Fisherman	Seafood Dealer/Wholesaler
Tom	Swatzel					
Amy	Dukes					
Tracey	Smart					
Dean	Foster					
Lora	Clarke					
Kellie	Ralston		Private Recreational			
David	Bush					
Robert	Johnson			Charter/Headboat/F or-Hire	Commercial Fisherman	
Jim	Moring	commonwealthjim@prodigy.net	Private Recreational			
Tim	Scalise	timothyscalise@gmail.com	Private	Charter/Headboat/F		
Leda	Cunningham		Private Recreational			
Walter	Bubley					
Susan	Shipman					
Ernest	Muhamm					
Graham	Gaines	graham.gaines@tnc.org				
Robert	Boyles					