

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL SESSION

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

September 28-29, 2017

SUMMARY MINUTES

Council Members

Dr. Michelle Duval
Mel Bell
Chester Brewer
Chris Conklin
Ben Hartig
Jessica McCawley

Charlie Phillips
Zack Bowen
Mark Brown
Tim Griner
Doug Haymans
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Dr. Chip Collier
Kelsey Dick
John Hadley
Dr. Kari MacLauchlin
Cameron Rhodes
Julia Byrd

Other Observers/Participants

Leann Bosarge
Monica Smit-Brunello
Rick DeVictor
Tony DeLernia
Jeff Randonski

Dr. Jack McGovern
Dr. Bonnie Ponwith
Erika Burgess
Lt. Bryan Lee

Other Observers and Participants attached.

The Full Council Session of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council reconvened at the Town & Country Inn, Charleston, South Carolina, Thursday afternoon, September 28, 2017, and was called to order by Chairman Michelle Duval.

DR. DUVAL: We are going to go ahead and reconvene the council session, and I think we went around the room and did introductions previously on Monday, when we convened, and so, at that point, we had adopted our agenda, and so are there any modifications to the agenda that folks want to bring up? We did approve that agenda on Monday. Okay.

Then that brings us to the moment that I have been waiting for for two years, and that is Council Elections. If people haven't read the column that I wrote for the newsletter this time, I think folks should, because that pretty much says it all. It has really been an honor and a privilege to serve as your Council Chair for the past two years. I do want to give a shout-out to Charlie for putting up with for two years and to Ben for putting up with me for two years as his Vice Chair. I know that I can be a lot to deal with at times, and I appreciate everybody else's forbearance with me.

I meant everything that I said in the column. I really think it's important to reflect in our council leadership on the different skillsets that everybody brings to the table, and so that's why I am so excited to be passing the baton to somebody else after two, I think, really long years of really tough stuff, and I think you are -- It's really important that you rotate in having the opportunity to be the face of the council and represent the council and be on the hook for having to explain the council's rationale.

This is a group process that we go through, and while we may all come from different positions and different opinions, we all have to work together to get things done, and so I think it's important for everybody to kind of be in the sticky position sometimes of having to explain the council's rationale, and so, with that --

MR. WAUGH: If I might, just one interjection here. We normally do something for our outgoing Chair at this meeting, but, given that Michelle is from North Carolina, we thought it would be better if her husband could be there and more friends, and so we're going to do that at the December council meeting, and so I don't want you to think that you're getting off easy, but Mark has a gift to present.

MR. BROWN: Michelle, on behalf of the council, I would like to present you with something so you can go out and harvest some blueline tilefish and some snowy grouper, and we just thank you so much for all of your leadership and everything you've done for the council. I can't even explain how much I appreciate everything you've done.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any nominations for Chair of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council? Mr. Haymans.

MR. HAYMANS: Thank you, Madam Chair, but, before I do offer this nomination, while I have the mic, I would like to say that although sometimes I get disgruntled because you give me the evil eye, you run one hell of a meeting, and I appreciate the level of work, attention, and detail that you have put into this council for the last two years. It has been very much appreciated. **With that, it is my distinct honor and pleasure to nominate the rabbit hunter himself, our current Vice**

Chair, Mr. Charlie Phillips, to serve as the upcoming Chair of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

DR. DUVAL: Are there any other nominations for Chair? Excuse me. I guess we need a second for that nomination.

MR. BOWEN: **I would second that nomination, and I also would like to move that the floor be closed for any other nominations.**

DR. DUVAL: **Would you like that Mr. Phillips be appointed by acclamation?**

MR. BOWEN: **Yes, I would.**

DR. DUVAL: **Is there any objection to that motion? Seeing none, Mr. Charlie Phillips, you are now elected as Chair.** (Applause)

MR. PHILLIPS: I appreciate it, and I appreciate Michelle putting up with for the last year.

DR. DUVAL: Who else would run my rabbits, Charlie?

MR. PHILLIPS: That being said, we need to elect a Vice Chair. Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. **It would be my honor and pleasure to nominate Captain Mark Brown to serve as our Vice Chair.**

MR. PHILLIPS: Do I have a second?

MR. CONKLIN: Mr. Chairman, I will second the nomination. **I also move that the floor be closed to nominations and that Captain Mark Brown be appointed by acclamation.**

MR. PHILLIPS: **Is there any objection to that motion? Seeing none, welcome, Mark Brown.** (Applause)

Now we will get back to business, and we need to recognize our 2017 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Winner, and so I guess it's Lieutenant Lee. Come on up. (Applause)

(Whereupon, Lieutenant Bryan Lee was awarded the 2017 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award.)

MR. PHILLIPS: I am going to turn it over to Gregg.

MR. WAUGH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My report is in the briefing book, and I'm not going to go through it. There is some recognition for our staff, in terms of how long they have been here, and you have met Christina. I would be glad to answer any questions, if they are any, but, for the sake of time, I would say that we just move right on. We've got a series of staff presentations here this afternoon, and so we'll run through those as quickly possible.

MS. VON HARTEN: I just wanted to give you a quick update of our Citizen Science Program and kind of how we have been rolling along since June, when we appointed all of our Citizen Science AP Pool members, as well as the A-Teams, and so we have been webinaring and webinaring some more. We had some introductory webinars in July to talk about the evolution of the program and also to make sure that all the AP members understand their role and the purpose of the A-Teams and how we were going to be functioning.

Then we had our first round of webinars with the A-Teams, which, if you remember, we're going to have monthly webinars in between council meetings and also an all-hands A-Team plenary meeting a couple of weeks before the council meeting, so that the A-Teams can share what they've been working on and whatever recommendations that they have been coming up with for the program.

In August, we reviewed and prioritized those terms of reference that you all reviewed back in June, and we kind of started setting some goals and tasks for starting to work on accomplishing some of those terms of reference. September was kind of a wash, because of Hurricane Irma. We had to reschedule most of the A-Team webinars, and so we are actually going to be starting those back tomorrow. Our Data A-Team is going to be meeting, and then, next week, the rest of the four A-Teams will be meeting to start to gather the information on the different recommendations.

Just to give you a sense of what each A-Team has kind of been working on, for the Data Team, they have started out kind of looking at developing the inventory of existing data management resources, and they have developed a form for folks to fill out from different agencies that have data management policies in place, so that maybe we can learn what might work for our program and what we might need.

The Communication A-Team is looking at different outreach approaches of working with volunteers, from both a program and project standpoint and doing an inventory of examples of different approaches and types of things that we want to consider. The Volunteers A-Team is considering the need to create volunteer profiles, and so profiles of potential citizen science participants that want to participate in projects, to understand what skills they might have to bring to the table, what interests they may have, and that will help us also to determine what projects actually might be feasible for us to complete under the program, given the skillsets that we have with fishermen, and what training might be needed.

The Project Team is looking at ways to develop program priorities that would use stakeholder input, beyond just the research and monitoring plan and the SEDAR research recommendations, but also a way to incorporate fishermen into that process to develop priorities for the program. Then the Finance Team, we have changed the name of that A-Team to Finance and Infrastructure A-Team, and they're looking at different budgetary needs for the program, both from an operational standpoint of the program, but also a budgetary standpoint for supporting projects.

It's kind of moving along, and hopefully we will have some initial recommendations ready for you guys to look at at our December council meeting, and I'm also happy to report that we have also been working closely with some partners to get our first starter pilot project off the ground, and that's that scamp discard project that we've been telling you about for a few months, and we're hoping that that will get kicked off in January, and so we're super excited to get that going, and let

me know if you have any questions, and please turn into the A-Teams meetings if you have any interest.

DR. DUVAL: I don't know if it's possible for us to have a list of people to send the webinar information to, because I know it's on the calendar, but, if I forget to check, and I don't have very many brain cells these days, then I won't remember to register. Would that be okay?

MS. VON HARTEN: Yes, and, if you all would like for me to send it to all the council members, I am happy to do that as well, and I will just shoot you email with the links to all of those next week.

MR. PHILLIPS: Do we have any other questions for Amber?

MR. HARTIG: I am going to give a shout-out. Thank you so much. I mean, this is progressing really, really well, from what I've seen so far, and thank you for all the hard work that you've been doing on this. Thanks.

MS. VON HARTEN: I thank you, Mr. Hartig, because you're the one that started this whole train going.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Amber. Next up, we've got John Hadley with our Draft Report on Economic Impacts of South Atlantic Fisheries.

MR. WAUGH: While John is getting that up, let me just say that we're putting this together because we're in MSA reauthorization time, and we get requests and letters, and we want to have a document that we can include, a short document, that shows how valuable the fisheries are, and so the intent is to give your input here, and then we'll finalize it. Then we'll have that to use when necessary.

MR. HADLEY: Thank you, Gregg. I will add to that this is a draft report, and so the results are preliminary, and the outline of the report is preliminary, and so the point here is to just get feedback, and we want you to take a look at this. This is Attachment 2 in Tab 9 of your briefing book, and the idea was each of our FMPs have bits and pieces of information on the economic impacts of the fisheries that the council manages as well as the landings of the individual fisheries that the council manages, and so the idea here was to kind of bring it all together in one place, as sort of a comprehensive overview of what the council is responsible for.

The introduction, for the most part, lays out the jurisdiction of the council, depending on the species groupings, and so for snapper grouper, coastal migratory pelagics, and dolphin wahoo. Then the methods section goes over some of the data sources and the logic behind the fishing activity that was included or excluded, as well as a brief description as to why.

I will move on down here. Like I said, I'm just going to provide a general overview, but the report goes into a little bit of the commercial fisheries initially, and so there are tables in there looking at landings, and there is three years of landings used, an average of those three years of 2014 through 2016. The idea is that this will be updated each year, initially, to keep this report relevant and up-to-date.

Then it goes into the economic impacts, and so there is a series of tables here, one that shows the finfish landings and crustacean landings for the commercial sector, looking at it by pounds as well as by ex-vessel value. There has been a series, a set of tables, that sort of provide a top-ten for species managed by the council. There are two tables, one that has crustaceans and finfish as well, and then there's another table that looks at only finfish species. There again, it's looking at these by kind of a top-ten list by ex-vessel value and a top-ten list by weight.

Finally, there is a table in there looking at the economic impacts, and this is broken down by species category, and it also looks specifically at the harvesting sector, as well as the other sectors combined, and the economic impacts provided are jobs, income impacts, value added, and then some other impacts, which you can kind of think of as business sales for these different species groupings.

Moving into the recreational sector, there is a similar set of tables, looking at fishing effort in this case and recreational landings and then moving into the economic impacts. I will go over kind of the tables that are provided. The first table looks at the recreational effort and landings by mode and by region, and so lumping New England and the Mid-Atlantic together and then the South Atlantic and then the total kind of Atlantic effort. Here again, we're looking at species that range beyond your typical South Atlantic region. We're looking at CMP and dolphin wahoo, and that's why the other regions were included in this.

Then, again, there's kind of a top-ten list of species by directed trips and by harvest-only trips, and so those are two metrics of effort. Then there's a table looking at the top-ten species by landings weight for the recreational sector. The final table looks at some of the economic impacts, here again by region and by mode. It's looking at some of the jobs supported, income impacts, value added, and sales impacts. Then again, I don't want to get too much into the details of the results. You will see this again, once we have a little bit more finalized, but the idea is just to kind of get some input on the overall format and what should be included.

That's about it. The take-home here is that the council manages fisheries that support an incredible amount of economic activity, and kind of continued long-term stewardship of these resources will help sustain these impacts well into the future. I would be happy to answer any questions.

MR. BREWER: John, I think those numbers are really, really low, for both commercial and recreational. If you were telling me Palm Beach County, they might seem about right, but those numbers are low. I've got to tell you. I mean, I don't know exactly where they came from, but I do know that -- I think the most recent state of American fisheries or whatnot that was put out by NOAA did have data in there about economic impacts that I don't know -- I can't remember whether it was broken out by region or not, but you might want to take a look at it, because I truly, truly believe those numbers are very low.

MR. HADLEY: I will take a closer look at those. These are based on Fisheries Economics of the U.S., and so it's the NMFS model, as provided by the Science Center and SERO, and so I guess the questionable input there is what goes in, as far as ex-vessel value of the commercial side and the recreational fishery, and so what we were trying to do here is look at effort just for those species. If you look at the Fisheries Economics of the U.S. Report, kind of the bigger picture, a lot of that includes inshore species, and so that's why there is a fairly large differential, differences, in those two numbers, but I will definitely take a look at that.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks, John. This is awesome, and so my question has to do with the shrimp species, and so is that just harvest from federal waters, or is that state waters harvest as well?

MR. HADLEY: That includes state harvest as well. The idea there was it's kind of an -- Whether to totally include them or not include them, the idea was, if it is a council-managed species, then to put them in there, but obviously the shrimp side is going to occur largely in state waters.

MR. HAYMANS: Thank you, John, and I appreciate the level of work, but I tend to agree with Chester. There has been a lot of criticism thrown at that survey, and, at least in my state, we have estimated the impact of recreational fishing at \$350 million itself, and so, for the entire region here, the impact of \$167.9 million does seem low, and I would ask that perhaps you address a couple of those values there.

MR. HAYMANS: On that note, one key part of this that's left out in it is -- A large key part, as mentioned in the report, is these are trip expenditures, and so, when you're looking at assigning economic impacts to a species, you tend to look at trips, and the other side is the durable goods impacts, and so boats and trucks and -- Something that can be used in several different fisheries is used kind of over a longer term, and that is left out of the -- Your typical economic impacts is looking at a group of species, but, just because it's part of the larger picture of recreational fishing -- I think what you are both getting at, and that's certainly there, is the methodology, as far as assigning it to a species or group of species, is not necessarily there. The information doesn't necessarily exist for a specific species, and so that's why it's left out. It is mentioned in there, but it's left out of the tables.

MR. PHILLIPS: Any other questions?

MS. BOSARGE: I just wanted to say how excited I am that shrimping is at the top of the list. I just wanted to point it out, because, if you add all the shrimp up together, it's bigger than spiny lobster. It's the same way in the Gulf. In the Gulf, I think that dollar sign is something like a-hundred-and-something-million dollars, when it comes to the economic impacts. I just wanted to throw that out there. Very rarely do we get to say positive things about shrimpers.

MR. PHILLIPS: Anything else? All right. Thank you, John. You're going to do something else, too?

MR. HADLEY: With that, I will just briefly go into the next item on the agenda, and it will be a very brief one, and we kind of touched on it earlier, was the HMS pelagic longline EFP in the East Florida Closed Area. In a nutshell, the EFP was issued. There is an EFP to go along with that to address dolphin wahoo catches as well, looking at the council comments and the letter that we submitted, and then, as of yesterday, I saw a news release that Nova Southeastern, who is in charge of the research, is no longer going to pursue that research, and so I believe that now it's sort of a moot point. That's kind of, in a nutshell, where that is.

MR. PHILLIPS: All right. Thank you. I think our next thing is our Electronic Private Recreational Permit/Reporting and Kelsey Dick.

MS. DICK: Hello, everyone. My name is Kelsey Dick. I have tried to meet most of you, but, if I haven't, please come introduce yourself afterwards. I am going to be giving you an update on the snapper grouper permit and recreational reporting app project that I've been working on, and this is an updated version of this PowerPoint, and so you can find it in the updated materials under Tab 9.

First, I kind of wanted to give you a background of this project. Originally, Amendment 43 included twelve actions, and those have now been split, and so Amendment 43 includes the revision of the ACL for 2018, and Amendment 46 includes all the other previous actions, one of which is to improve recreational reporting. In order to improve recreational reporting, which is included in Amendment 46, we are developing an electronic permitting and reporting app. The goal of this project is to develop an electronic permitting and reporting app for the private recreational snapper grouper anglers. The intention of this project is that the app will allow anglers to record and report their catches and ultimately improve landings estimates.

I wanted to share with you some of the features of the app, and I am excited to announce that we have officially named the app, My Fish Count. I also thought you would find it funny that we had considered the name Catch, but, actually, that's the name of a popular app, and so we decided to not go in that direction, for fear of confusion.

Some of these features, these are some of the mock-ups that we have. We include things like data on catch and effort. They're able to store pictures of caught-and-released fish and to obtain size and identification of species. There is a geofence feature, which will notify anglers when they're fishing in a prohibited area. It also allows anglers to record and access past trips. For those anglers that do not have a smartphone, there is also a web portal access, where they can file a report by computer.

Some of the partners on this project are the Snook & Gamefish Foundation, in partnership with Elemental Methods, which, if you're familiar with the app iAngler, they have worked together and been very successful on this app, and so they have a lot of experience in this arena. We're also working with the ACCSP, and one of our most important partners in this project will be recreational anglers in the South Atlantic, especially for our pilot project, and so I am recruiting anglers right now to participate in the pilot project, and so, if you have any recommendations or any anglers that you think would be good for this project, please come to me, so we can exchange contacts. I would really appreciate it.

This is an update of our project timeline. What has been checked on this list are completed, and we have also been working very hard and gone through several rounds of edits and mock-ups of the app, and, right now, it is being coded. It will be ready for testing in the pilot project starting January 1, and, right now, we're on schedule for that to still occur, and so, as I just mentioned, right now I am recruiting anglers, so we can be ready and on schedule. After our pilot project, we will modify the application, and we will take the feedback and have it ready for use. With that, I would be happy to take any questions or comments.

MR. BOWEN: It will notify you if you're in a closed area?

MS. DICK: Yes.

MR. BOWEN: What if you're offshore and you don't have cell service?

MS. DICK: It will still work.

DR. COLLIER: It will be based on your GPS, and so, if your location function is turned on, it will work, based on that, but, if you turn it off -- A lot of people turn off the location function, and that's what we're truly testing, is how much drain on your battery life -- Having the GPS turned on, how much drain that will cause.

MR. BOWEN: Just will you take into consideration when you're working on it that, personally, I put my phone in airplane mode when I'm offshore.

DR. COLLIER: Well, that doesn't do us any good. Turn it on, and we'll tell you if you're in a closed area.

MR. PHILLIPS: Zack, if you're in airplane mode, you can't keep up with Facebook.

MR. BELL: Kelsey, how many anglers are you looking for? Did you have a number in mind that you were shooting for?

MS. DICK: I think we're shooting for around 200.

MR. BELL: Okay, and throughout the whole region?

MS. DICK: Yes, but we would primarily like snapper grouper private recreational anglers.

MR. HAYMANS: (Mr. Haymans' comment is not audible on the recording.)

MS. DICK: We did talk about that. We had a couple of discussions as council staff, and we decided to move forward and that that program was phasing out, and we did a -- It should be fine. If not, it's something that we can address after the pilot study, because it won't be available for public use during the pilot study.

DR. COLLIER: With that, that wasn't necessarily an app. This is going to be an app that you can download.

MR. HAYMANS: I understand that, but it's just, Count My Fish versus My Fish Count, that's pretty similar.

DR. DUVAL: Since I have this hot new gear, can I get the app?

MS. DICK: Yes, you can sign up to be one of my participants.

MR. BREWER: Maybe it will lighten your workload a little bit, as far as trying to find potential people to participate in the pilot, but we've got the West Palm Beach Fishing Club who could probably give you four or five names. They are focused on snapper grouper, and I think there are recreational fishing organizations, like CCA, that could provide you with names of people that would be good candidates, as opposed to you having to search out every one. You might want to

touch base with them. If you need any help with contacting them, please let me know, and I will be happy to help.

MS. DICK: Thank you, and, just to follow up on that, I am starting a library, or a database, of all sportfishing clubs in the South Atlantic and all of the contact information, and so I'm just kind of waiting on the time to send those recruiting emails, but I would really appreciate speaking with you.

MR. BREWER: Okay.

MR. HARTIG: I had a similar question. I was wondering if you had contacted outdoor groups and things like that, people who usually do press on South Atlantic issues, if that's something you're going to do.

MS. DICK: Yes, that is definitely an avenue that we would like to go, and I've been speaking with Kim about this as well. We would really love it to be kind of a transparent process between us and the anglers and making sure that it's an app that they can really get behind and have them spread the word.

MR. PHILLIPS: Anybody else?

MS. BOSARGE: I am pretty interested in this. I am just wondering if you quickly, briefly, summarize how you all got to this point. Did you have like a council amendment and you decided on all the different details of this, or how did it happen?

DR. COLLIER: It started off with Amendment 43, where we were discussing recreational reporting, and so it has been from there, but we needed to develop a pilot project, and we filled out an application with the National Marine Fisheries Service, particularly SERO, and looked at their electronic reporting, electronic reporting and electronic information, and we teamed up with them, in order to develop a pilot project to test this.

Some of the information that we're looking at collecting we have kind of developed on our own over time, as we've put this together. We looked at the charter boat amendment, some of the details that are in there, and then tried to focus more on the recreational and also looked at what they developed and some of the information that they included.

MR. PHILLIPS: Anything else? We appreciate the report, and it is very good to have you onboard. Now we've got our For-Hire Electronic Reporting App Project.

DR. ERRIGO: This is a different version of the presentation that was originally on the website, and so this is in the updated Tab 9, Attachment 5. I am just going to give a brief update of where we are with the pilot project. We have some preliminary things that we need to share with you guys about lessons learned and what we're still having problems with.

Real quick, this project had four major components. It was the eTRIPS mobile app, which is the reporting for the captains, the dockside intercepts app, which was what the dockside interviewers would have when the charter boats came back and they interviewed them and put all the information into a tablet application for later validation.

Electronic measuring boards are used with the dockside intercepts to measure the fish, to make it go faster. Also, we were hoping to get them linked up to the captains' tablets, to see if we can get them to use them to measure some of the discards. Then the final portion was the law enforcement phone application, which would allow law enforcement to look up somebody's permit and see if they're up to date on their logs.

Field testing for the dockside intercepts is ongoing now. We had some trouble getting it running. We did build it from scratch, and so it did take quite a bit longer than it did to get the eTRIPS app running. It's being run on several tablets, from North Carolina to Georgia. All that is being tested, and, actually, we've already been through a couple of weeks of testing. We had some problems in Florida, because of Irma. They, unfortunately, haven't gone out yet, because of that, but we're intercepting mostly charter trips. Those are mostly the participating captains, but some of the states are also doing shore mode, to see how it's working, if this might be useful in a broader application than just for the charter vessels.

We did get some preliminary feedback on these. It's mostly positive, and they are very optimistic about the future use of this tool. It still has a little ways to go. The time requirement for filling out this intercept of the tablet can be -- It's similar to paper. It's a little bit slower if you're just starting to use it, but the real benefit is that it drastically reduces post-processing time. That means, when you fill out the paper form, then you have to go back, and you have to check over everything, to make sure it's right, and then you send it to ACCSP. They scan it.

They have to scan each individual form into the system, and then it goes through, and it guesses at the numbers and things that you wrote down, and so handwriting issues can be a problem. Then they go through and check again, and so it takes quite a long time. This kind of removes all of that, but work is still ongoing for that.

The measuring boards, we got them linked to the dockside tablets, but that just happened last week, and so hopefully the measuring boards got into the field this week. Unfortunately, it took us a while to get those hooked together. The software was tricky, and so we're not going to be able to look at those onboard the vessels.

The work on the law enforcement phone application has begun, and they're writing the app as well as designing it for ACCSP to be able to -- So the app will access all the permit information, so we'll be able to see if they're up-to-date on their logs or not. Unfortunately, we did have a setback with the dockside intercept app, and so work started on this a little later, and so we're not going to be able to fully test it, but we are going to have a working app that will be able to show people, and then we'll get some preliminary feedback, but that's about all we're going to get for this particular project.

For eTRIPS, data collection is going very well. We've got already got 260 submitted trips by the captains, by eighteen participating captains. Participation varies widely though, from one trip submitted over the entire time period to over sixty trips submitted, and people really came onboard in chunks. North Carolina really didn't start to get going until the spring, and Georgia had more ongoing, but they didn't have many participants. I had one guy come on just a couple of months ago, and so it's very sporadic.

Overall, the feedback was very positive. The captains were happy with the app, and we had ongoing communication between them, the state reps, Fran from Harbor Lights, and they were glad to see all of their suggestions being implemented into the app, and so that was great. There were two main areas that the captains had problems with and that we actually noticed and we're trying to work on, besides small issues with the interface or bugs to work out.

There were two main areas, and that was with catch disposition and the economic questions. For the disposition, eTRIPS was originally developed for use as a commercial trip log, and so their dispositions are very commercially-based, and a lot of them don't quite fit with the for-hire trip. There are some dispositions missing that we would really like to see, and so we are working with ACCSP to get that all worked out, and that will happen. It will take a little bit of time, but that is an ongoing process.

The economic questions, there are three economic questions that are asked in the eTRIPS. It's how much fuel did you use on your trip, what was the price per gallon that you paid, and then what was the fee for the charter trip that was charged? Captains were very reluctant to answer these questions. They are more willing to give us how much fuel they used, but they really didn't want to give us what the charter fee was. These were optional, I guess you could say, meaning that, if they didn't fill them out, they could still submit a trip. Approximately 15 percent of the reports actually have the charter fee filled out, but 40 percent or so had the gallons of fuel used, and so they are very reluctant about these economic questions.

They suggested that we may be able to find price of gas per gallon without them having to give it to us, but they also said that can't we just get the charter fees online, from their websites, and they didn't need to provide that information, and so this was a recurring theme during the time we got feedback from the captains that someone mentioned something about economic questions.

We got all the feedback we need for the actual eTRIPS logbook, and we're working with ACCSP to address the dispositions as well as some other things, like species target, species names, to get that worked out, and how to activate the --. Dockside interceptor, we still need to get some intercepts with the measuring board working of the participating captains, so that we can match the lengths to the intercepts. That one actually has gotten a lot of interest from a lot of people, including MRIP, and so there may be funding to move that forward in the future for more widespread application, which is really nice to think.

The measuring boards, like I said, they only work with the dockside intercept app, but, in the future, we may be able to link them with the eTRIPS app. In addition, there's been a lot of buzz about microphones to record the data, voice to text, into the dockside intercept app. It currently has that ability. If you hit the microphone, you can speak into it, and it can store like notes and things, but there is a lot of interest in this, and so that might be something that might happen as we move forward.

The law enforcement app, like I said, is behind in its development, and so I think we're only going to have time to make the app and show it to people and get feedback on it before this project is over. Hopefully there might be interest in continuing that, and we can do the field testing later on, after the completion of this project. We will have a full project report for everyone to look at in December.

These are all the people that I wanted to say thank you to. The state partners, there is a lot of people from the states that are involved in this. I had to get Doug Mumford's name in there, because, actually, he's still on the email list, and I don't know how that happened, but he was originally in the project and helped quite a lot, but there were quite a lot of other folks, and I couldn't fit all their names in here, and all of the captains, of course. If you have any questions, I would be happy to try and answer them.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks a lot for that update, Mike. I really appreciate it, and I guess -- I talked to a couple of folks who have been involved in the pilot, and I understand they have concerns about reporting the charter fees and the pieces of economic information, and I try to explain that this helps us to determine what the impact of any regulatory changes are, if we can obtain that information. That said, I know that in the headboat logbook program, I think the only -- Mark is a good one to answer this question, but I know that they ask for the number of gallons of fuel used and the price per gallon. It is also the number of anglers onboard and the price per angler? Is that also requested?

MR. BROWN: They don't have the price per angler, but there is a lot of the stuff that's on there that was being mentioned. That has been incorporated into it. The only thing is there is nothing in regards to how much a trip costs or price per angler.

DR. DUVAL: I guess maybe that's something to consider. Our intent was to kind of bring these folks up to the same level of reporting that's required in the headboat program, and so, if we're asking for number of gallons of fuel and the price per gallon, I think we can justify that in the final version of the charter logbook. If the information on the charter fee or price per angler on the headboat is not being requested, we may need to consider not asking for that information if it's going to cause non-compliance, and I think that's really important, because that was our intent, was to bring these guys up to the same level, asking the same information as what is being reported through the headboat logbook program. That's one bit of feedback.

I think the other thing is that I get a little frustrated, because our commercial guys have been filling out a lot more information for a lot longer period of time, but I want to make sure that we bring folks up to this reporting in a manner that they are complying with it and that they find the tool useful.

DR. ERRIGO: Just real quick, in relation to this specifically, there has been some talk, and I thought a really good suggestion was -- Because this is new, and the charter guys are not filling out logbooks in most of the states, when you put this out there -- A lot of them are expecting that, if you're going to have a logbook, that you have to fill out how many fish you caught and how many fish you threw back and how many people are on there and what kind of trip took place, but you could make some of these questions so that they're not mandatory.

They could give you that information if they want, but they don't have to. We're looking at that, and some of the for-hire implementation calls have suggested that and said it was a good idea. This way, they get used to seeing it before we say that you have to give us that information, but that was just a suggestion that someone had made.

MR. BROWN: Mike, are the measuring boards you're talking about, are they different ones than what was issued to the dockside samplers just recently? Are they a different type of measuring board?

DR. ERRIGO: We were looking at the same measuring boards, but there are different sizes and things like that. Initially, we got just this certain sized measuring board, and we were going to try to see how it worked.

MR. BROWN: The only reason I'm bringing that up is, from my experience, and seeing what happened this year, our dockside sampler, his measuring board broke down about three times, and he said that he had been in touch with other areas and they were having the same problem. He said that it went back to the contractor, whoever the contractor was that built the measuring boards, and there was a struggle in trying to get those things to work correctly, and so I think that they finally got some of the bugs worked out if it, but it was a big issue.

Also, one of the things that I wanted to mention is that eTRIPS, I used eTRIPS some with this pilot project, and I had some issues with it. I was really struggling to try to get it to work correctly for me, and I have talked to other people that were part of the pilot program, and they were having problems, and I know that it was ongoing, but I also wanted Mike to clarify that the eTRIPS is not going to be just the only program specified for this amendment. You can use whatever program is okayed by NMFS, and so we'll have multiple -- Our state already has something in place, and so there may be other ones that can be used.

MR. BREWER: Thank you for the report, Mike. I am a little concerned that the participants are reluctant to give economic information. I don't know how many years there has been gross underestimation of the economic value in recreational fishing. Not just in the South Atlantic, but around the country, and, for that matter, I think there's been fairly gross underestimation of the value and impact, economic impact, of commercial fishing

The kind of stuff you're asking for really is important, I think, towards moving towards a more accurate number. Has there been any outreach to these operators and captains to try to explain to them how important it is for you to begin to get --

DR. ERRIGO: The captains that are participating in the program, we have been interacting with them on a regular basis. In fact, we actually had John Hadley help write up a blurb about why do we need these pieces of information and what do we do with them and how is it going to benefit you if you give us this information.

A lot of the guys actually said -- I have heard several guys say that they understand it and they're going to give us this information, but they know a lot of guys that would not give us this information, and so perhaps a larger-scale outreach would help, and we do plan on having a large-scale outreach when this rolls out, or before this rolls out, and so that might help a bit.

MR. BREWER: Okay, because, seriously, right now, we're getting -- What is it, maybe -- We're level-funded at \$30 million for the entire council system, and we, at some point in the future or now or whenever, but when you go to Congress and you're asking them -- If you're saying the amount of funding that's going into regulating this industry is ridiculously small, given the value,

and you want those values, those economic values, to be accurate, and I swear to goodness right now that I don't think they are.

MR. DELERNIA: I've got a lot to say about this one, but I'll try to keep it short. I participated, or I volunteered to participate, in the eTRIPS program up in the Northeast Region, and I found that -- My feelings were that they just ask for too much. There was just a request for just too much information. They wanted me -- Say I was drifting. Whenever I caught a fish, they wanted me to hit the button for that location where that fish was caught and then measure it and then record whether or not it was discarded or kept.

Well, if you catch a bunch of fish while you're drifting, and you've got four or five guys on the boat, or six people on the boat, and you're catching fish real good, you don't know whether to wind your watch or something else, but who knows? After a while, you're going in three different directions at once, and it gets to be too much.

What kind of resolution do we need that every time I catch a fish as I'm drifting that I have to mark that location? I mean, we measure things to statistical areas, and I don't think we need that type of a resolution, and so, after a while, I gave it up. I said that I'm not going to do this anymore, and I just got tired of doing it, and I gave them back the tablet, and I said to just leave it be.

Regarding the economic information, my rates are published, and so anybody can find it. If you go to rocketcharters.com right now, you can see what my rates are. How much fuel I burned, you can figure that out.

Again, I wish that everybody who bought a fifty-five-foot sportfishing boat, every private captain who bought a fifty-five or forty-five or sixty-five or fifty-foot sportfishing boat, I would like to see their personal income tax returns, to see how they were able to afford that boat. That's part of your application for your highly-migratory permit, to let me see your financial statements, and, after a while, it gets to be -- You're not going to get that information, and I know that, but you know what? You're asking it of us. You're asking it for for-hire captains.

I'm a big one for providing information for the purposes of management, but I think you get to the point where perhaps you ask for just a little bit too much, and so, when you ask for that, then people just say, no, I'm not. Like me, it's just, you know what? I don't want to do this anymore and let me be. I will fill out my electronic fish report at the end of the day and that's it. Thank you.

MR. BELL: I was just going to agree with Michelle. When we got into the for-hire amendment, remember the idea was that we already had the headboat reporting, and the idea was to just bring all the for-hire into the common reporting, and it wasn't necessarily to go back and lose things, and that's why certain things are in there. We have heard the pushback on the economic questions as well, but they're not -- (The remainder of Mr. Bell's comment is not audible on the recording.)

DR. PONWITH: That was a very good explanation of what it's like to be asked more information, as a person who is generous with information to be asked more than you have time and the willingness to do and you hit that spring point. I can tell you, as a data user, understanding where that sweet spot is really important, because, when they ask a Rockefeller how much money is

enough, the answer is just a little bit more. When you ask somebody who works in data how much data are enough, that's the same answer, just a little bit more.

When you're getting it from the industry, there is a sweet spot between asking how much you really, really want versus how much you think they will be willing to provide before they say that is enough. I am sensitive to that, and that's why collaborating so closely with the council and the industry is so important, so we get what we absolutely need without crossing that line. We don't want to abuse the right to ask for this information.

As that as the introduction, I will say there is no shred of additional information beyond the basic catch information that is more critical than some of that economic information, and the reason is because a commercial person sells their catch, and you know exactly the economics of that fishery when they sell that catch. There is more than you can get, like the fuel cost and the crew cost and all that, but that financial transaction gives you very concrete information about the value of that fishery that you just don't get from the recreational side.

The price of that trip is a crucial piece of information to help us understand, on the recreational side, the notion of willingness to pay to be able to go out and do this, and it's one of the metrics that is just essential for being able to understand the impact of those fisheries, and so I will commit to being able to work closely with the council in finding where that sweet spot is and where that tipping point is, but, boy, I really don't want to underestimate the importance of those data.

MR. CARMICHAEL: The situation that Tony described is something, the set-level information, that we've talked about. If we're going to get good CPUE, that's more about getting trip level, but the eTRIPS also has the option, the way most of these guys are doing it, is to just do the trip-level reports that we require, and so you would just use it as a tool for filing your electronic report at the end of the day and not have to push every button for every fish like you were describing.

MR. DELERNIA: I think that's great. I strongly -- When the Mid-Atlantic Council debated whether or not we should have mandatory electronic fish reporting, I pushed for it, very strongly. I thought it should be done. In New York, you have to complete your VTR before you hit the dock, and then I have to mail them in and everything, and I said, well, that's nonsense. Why do we have to have another level of data entry?

Let me bring the VTR, and I will fill out the paperwork before I hit the dock, and then, when I bring it home, at the end of my trip at the end of the night, I'll go on my computer and click, click, click. Number of anglers, number of fish caught, number of retained and discarded, approximate pounds, and species. Then I'm done. Then I don't have to -- That's fine. That's enough. They will ask me for a latitude and a longitude, and I will give them a general latitude and longitude.

Like I said, with the other stuff that they were asking me for, it just got to be too much. I don't carry a deckhand, and it was just -- I was running back and forth, and I said that I can't do this, and so, taking a paper trip report and converting it into electronic reporting, I am all for that. Do that, but I think Bonnie said it very well. After a while, you just ask for just too much information, and then what happens is we end up throwing out the baby with the bathwater, and then you don't get anything at all. Thank you. Thank you, John.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. Go ahead, Amber.

MS. VON HARTEN: I am giving this presentation, because Kathleen, who you were introduced to earlier this week, she -- Under this grant, she is working for us part-time, and she still also works for SC DNR, for the MARMAP program, and so she got to go out to sea this afternoon. They're going to make another quick trip while the seas are okay, and so I will be talking to you a little bit about some of the outreach that is going on and complementing Mike's pilot project.

The objectives of this project are kind of twofold. The first is to focus on working with the for-hire captains in the region, and the second is also the law enforcement officer compliance mobile app component. As we all know, this amendment was approved by the council at the December 2016 meeting, and so it's been quite some time since it was passed, and a lot of folks are kind of - - Maybe it's not been on their radar screen that this might be something that's coming up very soon, and so we felt that it was pretty important for us to get back out and talk with the captains about electronic reporting just in general, what it is, what it means, how the council got to passing the amendment and talking about that the amendment is still not implemented, but there will be other opportunities for them to comment, through the formal review process, before it's actually implemented.

We wanted to also give them an opportunity to start to test out this pilot app that's been developed, just so they can kind of get a feel for what electronic reporting might look like, recognizing that eTRIPS/mobile may not be the only app. It may not be the app that's approved, and also really working closely with the states, to make sure that we're tailoring our outreach based on their needs, working with their captains in each of the different states.

For the for-hire captains, we're going to be working on developing a training toolkit with online video training modules and fact sheets and user manuals and also doing some in-person, as well as webinar, training programs in each of the states on a quarterly basis. In the second year of the project, it's going to be focused on developing a 24/7 help desk for the captains using this app, if this is the one that's get implemented, so that they can troubleshoot at any time of the day before they go out on their trip if they are having any issues with the app.

Then the law enforcement component, as Mike told you, that compliance mobile app is being developed, and so just working with law enforcement officers on how that app works and also just informing them about the electronic reporting requirements that may be coming up.

The training toolkit, as Mike already talked about, the pilot mobile app has been tested and reviewed, and participating captains have given us some testimonials about what they like and what they don't like about it, and so it's a work in progress. This grant is in partnership with Harbor Lights, who is the developer for the app, and so we've been working closely with them on developing some outreach materials and the video training modules, and all of that is in process now.

Another thing that we have been working the states as well that have been involved in the pilot project and talking to them about is maybe some obstacles of why captains may not be comfortable taking a tablet out on the boat with them, and so we're trying to figure out other tools that we can make available to them to help them record their catch even when they're out at sea if they don't take a tablet with them, and so we've developed some tally sheets, small laminated tally sheets, that we're going to be showing captains at these training sessions that they can actually help record

their catch while they're on the boat. A lot of folks, a lot of captains I've seen, are just making tallies on their dashboard or whatever as they are fishing, and so this might be another tool that they can use.

Our approach is we're going to start working in these states with these trainings, and we have an identified universe of captains, and so we sent out an initial mailing, I guess about two weeks ago now, to all South Atlantic federal permit holders, whether or not they had any other federal for-hire permits as well, and so GARFO permits, Gulf permits, HMS or whatever, just to let them know that, hey, we're going to be out and about in your region and talking with you and here's your opportunity to learn more.

Then our secondary mailing that we'll be sending out will happen one month prior to when in-person trainings are being offered in each state, and so those secondary mailings will just go to those permit holders that have South Atlantic permits, and we also have a webpage on our website that kind of has some of the training information, information about the training sessions.

Our first training sessions are happening in about a month here in South Carolina, October 24 through 26, and, like I said, we're working closely with the states. We've been working closely with Amy Dukes at SC DNR, because they're developing their own web-based reporting tool called Vessel, and so we're partnering with them to also deliver some information about Vessel at these trainings as well.

In Georgia, we have training scheduled on I think it's November 14 and 15, and we've been working with Kathy Knowlton and her team down there to develop and tailor those trainings. Then we'll start with North Carolina and Florida in 2018, recognizing that Hurricane Irma may have shifted some of that effort down in Florida. Then we're going to be offering webinars twice a month, and so we do have upcoming webinars on October 8 and 30 and then November 7 and 13, and so you can find all of that information on our website.

At the trainings, we'll focus on some hands-on work. We'll have tablets there and a computer, and there is a web-based eTRIPS/mobile through the SEFIS system that people can use too, and our partner, Fran with Harbor Lights, will be there as well as all of our state partners.

Mike already mentioned the law enforcement app, the validation app, and then, of course, in year two, as I mentioned, we'll be working on a 24/7 help desk, and so, again, this is just primarily focusing on outreach, on trying to prepare them on what might be to come and ways for people to get involved and up to speed on electronic reporting, and that's it.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. Do we have any questions?

MR. HARTIG: Mike mentioned the audio recording, and, to me, that was really attractive. I mean, it's something you don't have to -- You could have it in your pocket, and have a little microphone, and that's all you would need, and you could record just about anything you wanted. Have the captains mentioned that?

MS. VON HARTEN: Mike E., I'm going to ask you to respond to that one.

DR. ERRIGO: I haven't heard any of the captains talk about that, and, actually, we were looking at it in terms of the dockside intercept portion, to collect just data as you were coming off the boats, but I don't -- There is no reason why a captain couldn't use it. It would take a little work, but I've actually seen things used in the field, and they work quite well. The new microphones don't have as much background noise, and I've seen people in Michigan that do research to collect data for their independent study on the vessel while the engines are running, and it's really loud, and it doesn't pick up the background noise, and it still hears the voices and records the data. It's possible, but we hadn't gone down that path yet.

DR. DUVAL: I attended the webinar that was held last week that Kathleen did, and I thought it was really informative. I'm sure there might have been a couple of other council members on there as well. I wish there had been more questions that were asked, but I'm sure we'll get to that, but, I mean, I just thought -- I just wanted to be sure that, if we feel like we need more in-person training sessions in our states, hopefully we can make that happen, whether it's -- Keeping costs in mind, whether it's something that like I'm going somewhere to meet with a bunch of captains and council staff is attending remotely, but I just want to make sure that we can have additional opportunities, because I saw that, in North Carolina, there is sort of like three meetings kind of allocated for North Carolina, but there might be some additional assistance that might be needed, and so I guess I hope you guys are thinking about creative ways that we could meet that need.

MS. VON HARTEN: I forgot to mention that these are in-person meetings that are going to be offered on a quarterly basis, and so we'll be in all four states every quarter, and so we can rotate meetings around no problem. We have the online video training modules, and so, if somebody missed something or they went to a training and they weren't really sure how to do that again, they can get on the website and watch that, and there's management things to watch, and so, yes, we definitely will rotate around in all the states.

MR. BELL: I was just going to point out that it was mentioned that we've kind of got our own system that we've been working on, and we've been doing the charter boat thing for a while, but Andrew Peterson is here from Bluefin Data. If you haven't met Andrew or talked to him, he is just trying to help where he can, and he's worked with us a lot, but, in terms of where we go with all of this in the future, the idea was that people would come up and there would be different technologies and applications and ways to do this, and it's all about making data flow in, but, if you get a chance, let him pick your brain a little bit.

MR. PHILLIPS: Anybody else? I think that takes us through all of our presentations and all of our business for the day, and so I suppose we can -- Unless there is something else, we will recess until 8:30 in the morning.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed on September 28, 2017.)

SEPTEMBER 29, 2017

FRIDAY MORNING SESSION

The Full Council Session of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council reconvened at the Town & Country Inn, Charleston, South Carolina, Friday morning, September 29, 2017, and was called to order by Chairman Charlie Phillips.

MR. PHILLIPS: Rick, I guess we'll start with you. If you have commercial catches, good. Otherwise, we'll go to the for-hire amendment.

MR. DEVICTOR: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning. We'll talk about the for-hire electronic reporting amendment. Of course, we talked about this yesterday afternoon a bit. As you know, this was submitted by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and that was done on March 3. The Gulf Council submitted a similar amendment on May 23, and so we are currently working on what we call our approval package and proposed rule package for that, because it's a plan amendment, and so we need to do an NOA and have an approval process by the Secretary of Commerce.

The plan now is to process those packages separately, the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic, since they both would put in a very different program for each of those regions, and so, like I said, we're moving forward with drafting a proposed rule. Right now, we're discussing the level of detail that would go into that rule, such as questions such as who do you download the app from, what type of device do you download it to, do you need to be online when you input the data, and these are types of questions that we're looking at putting into the proposed rule so people can comment on.

We have a meeting on Monday with John and Mike and people with my staff to go over some of these things, and we're going to be looking to the council staff to help us as we draft this proposed rule, and so I know you're interested in timing. Again, it largely depends on how fast we can get the rule through the process, through the NMFS clearance process, but we are shooting to have these published later this year, certainly, and let's get that comment period started, and so hopefully we'll have good news when we meet again next that these comment periods have started, and that concludes my report on the for-hire electronic reporting.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Are there any questions?

DR. DUVAL: Rick, I don't know if this is a question more for you or for Jack, but I know there's -- It sounds like there is an effort, a coordination effort, between staff at the Science Center and the Regional Office, and I think MRIP and ACCSP, surrounding both the Gulf and South Atlantic reporting amendments and trying to hammer down details of who and where and when and why, and I know some council staff have been involved in that, and I am just a little concerned that there is no representation from the states on that group, because we have some -- I just think it would be helpful to have at least one representative from the states there to try to help troubleshoot in advance some situations that could come up.

We've got some constituents, certainly in North Carolina, that are not exactly supportive of this effort. I would think there's probably some in Florida that are of a similar mind, and it seems like -- I don't think we need to have a representative from each of the four states, but at least someone -- I am not volunteering North Carolina for this, just because I think everybody knows that there is a piece of state statutory language that went into place a few years ago, unfortunately, that

prohibits us from development of a state for-hire logbook, and I think, if we had North Carolina state agency staff participating, it might be misconstrued, but I think the other three states are more than adequately prepared to participate and I think represent some of the concerns from state partners, because we will certainly be the ones on the ground answering questions and things like that. I would just encourage you all to consider a representative from one of the states to communicate in this effort. Thanks.

MR. BELL: Along those same lines, it was my understanding the reason there wasn't was some sort of procedural thing with how this group is constructed and what it can and can't do and who can and can't be on it, but I think, given that South Carolina has pretty extensive experience in managing a program, and we are right here, we would be certainly willing to help with that, if that can happen, but, if it's something that is just a legal issue or something to how the committee or the group is constructed, that's fine, but we are certainly willing to help.

DR. MCGOVERN: Nick Farmer and Jessica Stephen are the leads on this for-hire implementation team, and I don't know, with like Mel's question, if there is a reason why states can't be on it, and certainly we'll look into that, and, if states can be on this implementation team, then we will look at that, but Monica might know the answer.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Well, I'm thinking this is kind of a different thing, right? This has been developed, and you're done developing your amendment, and this is the implementation, and so, in my mind -- I will look into it further, but I am thinking that absolutely we can involve some state partners. I think that would make sense. We would be silly not to get their expertise and talk with them about that, and so that makes sense to me. Right now, I don't see a legal impediment, but I will definitely look into it.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thanks, Monica.

DR. MCGOVERN: If that's the case, I will talk to Nick and Jessica, and we'll get that going.

DR. DUVAL: Just being sensitive to what Mel said, if there is some legal procedural hurdle that prevents that type of participation from just one person to represent the states, at least I think maybe consider how you can communicate out what the decisions are or the consensus of the group is, in terms of how to implement it, and that would be great.

MS. MCCAWLEY: We would love to be on there, to have somebody from Florida on there, if you're looking for just a single state, since we've brought up a number of challenges, especially with the Gulf permit versus the South Atlantic permit, and we've reached out to all the captains in Florida, and so, yes, we can certainly do that, if you just need a single individual or if you're taking somebody from all states, and we could help with that, too.

MR. BELL: From our perspective, having implemented and run a program since 1993, we would probably have some unique insight into where the bumps are and where the things are and some of the pushback and things that are in other states. We experienced that as well, and as we've also evolved and implemented electronic reporting into our system, and you see where the bumps are there, and so it just might be -- That's where I think we could help a little bit, is that we've seen where some of the issues can pop up, and we have some experience in dealing with our own fishermen and doing exactly that, and, if we can do that, that would be great.

MR. PHILLIPS: Great. Any other questions or thoughts? Then we will move on to the Science Center Presentations on the Status of Bycatch Collection Programs. Are you going to do that, Rick, or did you have a question?

MR. DEVICTOR: No, but just a quick note. For SBRMs, I think I'm on the agenda for that, and this will be brief. This is Standard Bycatch Reporting Methodologies. As reported on in the past, there was a final rule, and I think that was earlier this year, to provide guidance on the requirement to establish SBRMs. We have reported on this at the last couple of meetings. Basically, we have until February 21, 2022, and so my report is that I have nothing new to report, but we will work on this as time allows.

MR. PHILLIPS: Maybe that's why I missed the line. Anyway, Bonnie.

DR. PONWITH: For the bycatch monitoring, I apologize, but we're going to have to postpone that report until the next meeting. I was unable to pull that information together.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. Duly noted. Any other questions or thoughts? Then we're down to landings of mahi.

DR. PONWITH: There was a request for landings of mahi, and those data were supplied in a table, and they're in the briefing book. It's Tab 9, Number 11.

MR. PHILLIPS: All right. I am guessing that we don't need to go over those, or are there any questions about that?

DR. DUVAL: I think just noting that this was an outgrowth of some of our dolphin wahoo discussions and conversations we had when we were previously pursuing Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10, with regard to dolphin that have been harvested by HMS-only-permitted vessels versus vessels that only had dolphin wahoo permits, what people are sort of calling council boats, I guess, that don't have like the same type of gear requirements as others, and so this was a follow-up to that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Michelle. I just thought that people might want to take a quick look at it. Are there any thoughts about this table?

DR. DUVAL: I would just note that the bulk of the landings are coming from folks that have both a dolphin wahoo and an HMS permit, and I think, previously, staff had done an exercise looking at -- I think it might have been Brian who did this, but just looking at -- Because we couldn't go through the permits database, it was extremely difficult just looking at trips that had landings of dolphin plus other HMS species and kind of using that as a default to assume that those trips would have held HMS permits, and so the bulk of the harvest is coming from folks that do have an HMS permit.

MR. PHILLIPS: Any other thoughts?

MR. CONKLIN: There seems to be a lot of trips by people that don't even have the permit. Is that right, neither HMS nor the dolphin wahoo permits? Are those all illegal landings, technically?

DR. DUVAL: I just want to give a shout-out to Bonnie and her staff for being able to do this, because it's been something that's kind of been on the to-do list for a long time, and I know that it was not an easy task.

MR. GRINER: I am with Chris. How do you have landings if you don't have a permit? We are trying to figure out how you have landings if you have neither of these permits.

DR. PONWITH: I don't know the answer to that. I mean, one possibility is that they were fish that weren't landed legally. I don't know if that's true. I would have to actually look at the provenance of those landings.

DR. DUVAL: I am pretty sure that like north of a certain latitude that the regulations indicate that you can have up to 200 pounds of dolphin and wahoo, I think in aggregate, like north of a certain latitude, without a permit, and so that's probably where those landings are coming from.

MR. HADLEY: I will speak to this. I wasn't involved on this side of it, but we've been looking at this with SERO and Science Center staff for the next dolphin wahoo amendment and trying to use ACCSP data. It's a very large dataset, and I think one of the issues is there are certain vessels that -- They may not be input correctly, and so it's possible that they did have a permit, but that it wasn't -- The information is not there to link it up or there wasn't a vessel ID entered, and so you can't link it up with a permit, and so that's another possibility.

MR. PHILLIPS: That makes sense. All right. Any other thoughts on this before we move on to Commercial Electronic Logbook Reporting? Seeing none, Bonnie, are you going to do that? Thank you.

DR. PONWITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have made very good progress since the last time that we reported. The bottom line, the punchline, here is that we expect to be able to accept logbook data on a volunteer basis electronically early in the new year. We have a few steps that we need to iron out. Some of them are internal to us, and I have walked through those in the past. I can do it now, but just the summary is there's a few steps that are internal to us and a few steps that are internal to ACCSP and some that are connecting the two.

Of the steps that have to happen, the most critical step of all is the work that it takes the system that's collecting the data on paper and the part of the system that's collecting the data electronically to talk to one another so that, when a person submits their logbook one way or the other, it's recognized in the bridge between those two. That's the absolute most critical step, and it's one that we want to make sure that is properly tested before we switch the on-switch on this.

We are very, very close. We join Jack Cox, and we appreciate his enthusiasm in his public testimony regarding getting that going, and we agree with him that we're eager to start seeing these reports electronically, because we think it's going to be a better system, easier for the people submitting them and easier for us to manage those data once we receive them.

We have spent some time talking about the communications around this, and, right now, our intention is a twofold approach, which would be to put out a bulletin on this, and, at the same time, to send the full census of permit holders a letter and say that you now have a choice. You can

continue with the paper logs or you can submit it electronically. If the council has input on those as the mechanism for getting the notifications out, we are certainly willing to hear it, because those communications are going to be really important to the success of the launch when we're ready to do that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Are there questions?

MR. DELERNIA: I would just like to point out that, in the Mid-Atlantic, as of March 15 of 2018, all for-hire vessels will be required to use electronic submissions. The paper submissions will no longer be accepted, and so that final rule has been published, and it's going to be on or about March 15. For-hire vessels will have electronic reporting only.

DR. DUVAL: Not a question, but just a thank you. I mean, I know this has been a long effort, and I think a lot of our commercial guys are really excited to be able to have this choice, and I'm sure there will probably be some things to iron out, even as it's implemented, but I really appreciate the effort that you and your staff have undertaken to get this up and running and the coordination with ACCSP as well, and so thank you.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, I think that's pretty unanimous around the table, and so any other thoughts? All right. I don't think we have any exempted fishing permits.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Just to jump back to the dolphin issue, to Tim's question, Michelle is right. The regulations state that the trip limit for a vessel that does not have a dolphin wahoo permit, but has a federal commercial vessel permit in any other fishery, they can have 200 pounds of dolphin and wahoo combined, provided that all fishing and landing from that trip is north of 39 degrees latitude, and so that's probably how those catches ended up in there with no dolphin wahoo or HMS permit.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think that brings us back to our Snapper Grouper Report.

DR. DUVAL: I just want to make sure that folks have the draft committee report. You can go to the meeting materials webpage, and there is a folder there with committee reports. The Snapper Grouper Committee met in Charleston on September 26 and 27. We approved our minutes and the agenda, and we received updates on the status of commercial catches versus quotas for species under ACLs, and we received information on the status of amendments under formal review, including Amendment 37, Amendment 41, and a golden tilefish interim rule.

We then dove into Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26. We received an overview on an alternative approach, and so the committee approved restructuring the amendment with some modifications, and we provided the following guidance.

The first motion made was to adopt the alternative approach, as modified by the committee in September 2017, and direct staff to proceed with development of the amendment accordingly, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion was to approve the timing below for Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26, and you see the timing there, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion was to approve the following items to include in the purpose and need statement, and you see a list of those items on the screen, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion was to modify alternatives, as presented under Action 1, Alternative 3 and its sub-alternatives, in decision document to include wreckfish in the deepwater species aggregate and modify the composition of the deepwater complex to exclude sand tilefish and place it in an appropriate shallow-water complex. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there discussion?

Here, I just want to make sure that we're clear on the difference between modifying an aggregate, which is species that would be subject to a particular bag limit, versus modifying a complex, which is how we have tracked harvest against annual catch limits, and so we have a number of different complexes that are subsumed within our existing aggregate bag limits right now, and so I wanted to make sure -- What is the committee's intent? Is the intent to modify the composition of the aggregate and align that with the composition of the complex for tracking of annual catch limits, or is it just to modify the aggregate? I will let everybody think about that for a little bit.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think it's just the aggregate. Based on all of that discussion we had, I would say it's just modify the aggregate and not for the ACL tracking.

DR. DUVAL: Just to illustrate for folks that if we modified the aggregate and then also made that the complex for ACL tracking, that you would use those individual ACLs for those species that would be all summed together for tracking purposes for harvest. I mean, what Gregg and I have talked about a little bit is that there might be -- We might be able to get some information back at the next meeting that could illustrate how this would work.

Right now, we have these other smaller complexes that we use for ACL tracking. Our aggregate bag limits are a much bigger umbrella than those complexes, and so once a complex ACL or an individual species ACL is reached, then harvest for that species is closed. If the committee decides to move forward with modifying the species within the aggregate and then creating a complex out of that aggregate, there is -- You could take a different approach and, again, have a summed ACL for those species, which would then be shut down once that complex/aggregate ACL was met.

DR. MCGOVERN: One point I want to make is, right now, we have these complexes, and they're for the commercial and the recreational sector, and, in this case, we're just talking about changing the complex for the recreational sector, but I guess we would -- If you went down that kind of route, you would leave the complexes the way they are for the commercial sector.

DR. DUVAL: Good point.

MR. BROWN: The thing that came to my mind and the reason I was so adamant about this is I thought it would help some of the species that close early. Like we have the porgy complex and

the jack complex that closed early for recreational, and so I was just wondering if what you're talking about would cause a problem with tracking, as far as trying to understand -- I mean, will we have any problem with the tracking of them?

DR. DUVAL: Right now, even though we have species that are subject to an aggregate limit, we have individual annual catch limits for them, and so, right now, for our three-grouper aggregate, if we hit the gag ACL, you just can't keep gag as one of your three groupers, or, if we hit the red grouper ACL, you wouldn't be able to keep red grouper as one of your three groupers. That's how we currently track things.

I just wanted to make clear, before we move forward, that you're still interested or the intent of the committee was to kind of maintain tracking each individual species against its annual catch limit right now and not change the complex against which we track ACLs, and so my understanding is that changing the species complex would require a plan amendment, and so that's not to say that we can't take that approach if we want to, but it just requires a slightly different vehicle, and so I just wanted to be very, very clear about that.

Again, I had spoken to Gregg about at some point possibly we could see how that might look, if we wanted to walk down the road of making the complex match all the species that are in the aggregate and what that might look like, just as an illustration, so people can decide if that's something that they want to do later.

MR. BELL: That would be useful, I think, if we could just sort of have some examples of how this might work, the mechanics of both of them, because trying to envision this is sort of is a little hard, for me.

DR. DUVAL: Maybe something that the IPTs and the staffs can talk about is -- Jack made a really good point that, if you did want to make the bag limit aggregate align with the species complex against which you're tracking an ACL, would that create any difficulties, if you're doing it only for one sector and not the other? Would it create any confusion? I don't know. Minds greater than mine would have to tackle that question.

DR. MCGOVERN: Another thing that would come out in the analysis is that you have some species that are rebuilding plans, and so, if you have like a deepwater aggregate and one ACL for that whole aggregate, then you could have species like snowy grouper, where you could potentially be exceeding the ACL. Now, for the recreational sector, it probably wouldn't matter too much, since the ACL is 573 fish or something like that, and so it's kind of a small amount, but, anyway, that would be something that would come out with any kind of analysis.

DR. DUVAL: I think this approach is still worth exploring, but I just wanted to clarify that the committee's intent was that we weren't quite ready to go there yet. Okay. I am seeing nods around the table. Thank you all very much. Is there any additional discussion of this motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

Motion Number 5 is to include the following in alternatives for a deepwater species season: May 1 to August 31, which is the current season for snowy and blueline; May 1 to June 30; July 1 to August 31; July 1 to October 31. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

Motion Number 6 is to include the following in alternatives for a deepwater species aggregate bag limit, including sub-alternatives for each, to maintain existing restrictions for golden tilefish, snowy grouper, and wreckfish: one per person per day; two per person per day; three per person per day. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

We then provided guidance to retain alternatives in the decision document to consider changes to minimum size limits and gear requirements for deepwater species, and so you see those alternatives before you on the screen. We just have a note here that, based on committee guidance above, through Motion Number 4, appropriate modifications would be made to these to include wreckfish and snowy grouper, and so we just wanted to draw your attention to that. We also provided guidance to the IPT to suggest an appropriate range of alternatives to establish a shallow-water grouper aggregate.

The next motion was Motion Number 7 to include alternatives to consider the following seasons for the shallow-water grouper aggregate and include Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 from the decision document, and so you see those alternatives underneath there, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion is to include the following alternatives for aggregate bag limits for the shallow-water grouper aggregate, and you see those alternatives on the screen before you, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there discussion? Any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

We also provided guidance to remove consideration of minimum size limit modifications for the shallow-water grouper aggregate and discussed consideration of gear restrictions once Amendment 46 actions and alternatives have been further developed.

The next motion was to direct staff to add an action to establish a twenty-fish maximum daily recreational bag limit that would maintain all existing individual and aggregate bag limits with sub-alternatives to: 1)include deepwater species, and 2)exclude deepwater species. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion was to develop alternatives to establish an other shallow-water species aggregate that: 1)includes species outside the existing aggregates, in other words black sea bass, vermilion, et cetera, and include alternatives to retain existing bag limits for those species within the aggregate and include sub-alternatives from Action 2, Alternative 5 in the decision document; 2)exclude species outside the existing aggregates, such as black sea bass, vermilion snapper, red porgy, amberjack, et cetera, and include sub-alternatives from Action 2, Alternative 5 in the decision document. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The committee provided guidance to exclude consideration of a recreational season for the other shallow-water species aggregate and wait until the December meeting to consider any gear restriction alternatives.

The next motion was, Number 11, move action to reduce the black sea bass minimum size limit to the Considered but Rejected Appendix, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion was to remove the action on powerheads from Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 and move it to Amendment 46. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

I think one thing I that I just want to clarify is that, for some of these motions, we had motions that sort of approved the IPT's editorial changes, and, for others, we didn't, and so I just wanted to get direction from the committee, with regard to Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26, that the committee approves those editorial changes from the IPT, so that Myra can just include this as a note in the committee report and we have the consensus of the committee around the table on that. Is that okay? I am seeing nods on just the editorial changes to the language of the alternatives that had already been in the decision document. We never had specific motions to approve those, but I just want to make sure that people are okay with that. Okay.

Moving on to Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27, we received another presentation to orient the committee on the guidance and review timing and objectives, and we provided the following guidance through motions.

Motion Number 13 was to accept the IPT's suggested edits to the purpose and need and approve. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion is to change Action 1, Alternative 2, ACL percentages, to 40 percent/60 percent, and remove Sub-Alternative 2b. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there discussion?

MS. BROUWER: You also had -- **Part of that motion is to modify Sub-Alternative 2c.**

DR. DUVAL: Thank you very much. I am not seeing any discussion. **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

The next motion is to move Action 1, Alternative 3, to the Considered but Rejected Appendix. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion was to add a sub-alternative to Action 1, Alternative 4, to consider 100 pounds January through June and 300 pounds July through December. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion is to modify Action 2, Alternative 3, as follows, and you see that on the screen. It was really to allocate 70 percent to the quota January 1 through June 30 and 30 percent to the period July 1 through December 31. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion is to modify Action 3, Sub-Alternative 2c, to include a 1,000-pound trip limit in both seasons, with a step-down to 500 pounds when 75 percent of the commercial ACL has been met in each season. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

We provided guidance to include language in the appropriate sub-alternatives that would specify that a step-down would not occur if 75 percent of the ACL was harvested close to the end of the fishing season.

Motion Number 19 was to allocate the commercial ACL 50/50 to each season under Action 3, Alternative 2. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

Motion 20 was to add Alternative 3 to Action 3 to consider a 60/40 split of the commercial ACL between seasons with the same sub-alternatives as under Alternative 2, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

Motion 21 is to move Alternative 2 under Action 4 to the Considered but Rejected Appendix, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion was to modify Alternative 3 under Action 4 as follows, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion is to add an alternative to Action 4 to split the commercial ACL 50/50 January through April and May through December and add sub-alternatives of thirty, sixty, and 120 fish for January through April. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion, Number 24, was to accept the IPT's suggested edits to the alternatives under Action 5, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

Motion Number 25 is to accept the IPT's suggested edits to the alternatives under Action 6. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion, Number 26, is, under each sub-alternative of Alternative 2, Action 6, including a trip limit step-down to 50 percent of the trip limit once 75 percent of the ACL has been met, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion was to move Alternative 3 under Action 6 to the Considered but Rejected Appendix, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The next motion was to add an action to implement a minimum size limit for almaco jack and include a range of twenty to twenty-six inches fork length, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved, and I will just note the guidance to the IPT to assist with the range.

Motion Number 29 was to modify Alternative 3 under Action 7 as follows, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

The committee provided guidance to change the order of the alternatives to place what was Alternative 4 following Alternative 2, so that it flowed a little more easily, and to include a map to show the 28 degree North latitude boundary.

Motion Number 30 was to accept the IPT's suggested edits to the alternatives under Action 8, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

Motion Number 31 was to accept the IPT's suggested edits to Action 9 and its alternatives, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

Motion Number 31 is to remove Action 10 from the Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 and move it to Amendment 46, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

Motion Number 33 was to approve the same timing for Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 as for Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26, which is final approval in September of 2018. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

Next, we received an update on the progress of the socioeconomic characterization portfolio analysis of the commercial snapper grouper fishery, and we also discussed red grouper. We received a notification from the Fisheries Service advising us that the stock is overfished and undergoing overfishing and that we will need to put measures in place within two years to end overfishing.

We had voted in June to request additional projections, and we reviewed those projections, under both expected and low-recruitment scenarios. The SSC will see those at their upcoming meeting next month and provide a recommendation for red grouper at that time, and we directed staff to use the expedited framework procedure to implement adjustments to the red grouper ABC and ACL and express support for basing ACL on the low-recruitment scenario projections. Staff would then develop an amendment to implement a new rebuilding plan based on the SSC input and the stock productivity estimates from the base assessment run that we would see later.

Next, we discussed the ABC Control Rule Modifications Amendment, and we provided input to staff regarding the council's preferences on setting risk tolerance and incorporating added flexibility, per National Standard Guidelines, and so the SSC will see this, and then we decided

that we would continue our discussion on the topic at the December meeting and would consider holding a meeting by webinar between the October SSC and December meeting to discuss the control rule in further detail.

Next, we received an update on the wreckfish ITQ review from both Regional Office staff and council staff, and council staff recapped the guidance from the June meeting and summarized the discussions that took place among the wreckfish ITQ program shareholders during their August 2017 meeting, and we received input on a number of different items that you see there under those bullets. We are scheduled to discuss this topic again in December. We will review a rough draft of the document, and we're hoping to get both SSC and SEP input on that.

Next, we discussed Atlantic coast-wide planning to address climate change. We reviewed some dialogue that had occurred between both myself and Gregg Waugh and the Mid-Atlantic Council leadership on this issue, and we discussed both short-term and long-term steps that could be taken to address shifting distributions of species in response to climate change, and we received support from our Mid-Atlantic liaison on this.

We didn't have any items brought up for discussion under Other Business, and you see a draft timing and tasks motion before you, which involves continuing work on the visioning amendments, to prepare the expedited framework to adjust the red grouper ABC and ACL, to obtain SSC input on the red grouper ABC and as well as on the control rule modifications. Is there someone who is willing to make that timing and tasks motion?

MR. HARTIG: **Madam Chairman, I will make the timing and tasks motion as stated.**

DR. DUVAL: Motion by Ben and second by Chris. Is there any discussion? **Is there any opposition to this motion?** I think Myra has also added to consider holding a meeting via webinar between the October SSC meeting and December council meeting to discuss the control rule in detail, and so that's one thing that has been added.

MR. DEVICTOR: I just had a question on red grouper ABC and ACL, just for clarification for the IPT and staff. Of course, we're going to have to do an environmental assessment, and we'll have a range of alternatives in that document, and we'll base those some on the projections that we have gotten. Is that the intent of the committee?

DR. DUVAL: Yes, sir. Anything else? **Is there any opposition to the timing and tasks motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.** Is there any other business to come before the Snapper Grouper Committee?

MR. HAYMANS: Just a question. The reason we don't have a red snapper emergency rule report here is because we were in Full Council session then and that doesn't get included in this report?

DR. DUVAL: You got it. Sharp guy down there. Any other business to come before the Snapper Grouper Committee? Seeing none, Mr. Chairman, that concludes my report.

MR. PHILLIPS: Very well done. Thank you. Ben, are you ready for the Mackerel?

MR. HARTIG: Ready and raring to go, Chairman Phillips. The Mackerel Cobia Committee met yesterday morning, and, after we approved the minutes and the agenda, the first item of business was Status of Commercial Catches Versus the ACLs. Next, we reviewed the Status of Amendments Under Formal Review.

The next item of business was Update on the ASMFC Interstate Plan for Cobia, and, on that one, Bob Beal, Executive Director of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, briefed the committee on the status of the interstate management plan. Public comment on the draft plan will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on October 10, 2017. The South Atlantic State/Federal Fisheries Management Board will review and approve the final plan at the ASMFC meeting in October 2017.

The next item of business was State Reports on Atlantic Cobia, and each state gave their representative reports. The next item of business was a request for recalculation of 2015 and 2016 recreational landings for Atlantic cobia. Those calculations could not be completed by this meeting, but the committee directed staff to follow up with Dr. Van Voorhees to request an expected timeline for recalculated estimates.

The next item of business was Coastal Migratory Pelagic Amendment 31. At their June 2017 meeting, the committee directed staff to begin work on a plan amendment to address Atlantic cobia and evaluate options for a complementary plan with ASMFC as well as removal of Atlantic cobia from the management unit. Council staff provided a summary of scoping comments related to Amendment 31. Council staff also reviewed an options paper for Amendment 31. This was the first motion to come out of this discussion on Amendment 31.

The motion was to accept the IPT language for purpose and need. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any objection? The motion passes with one objection.

The next motion to come before us was approve Alternatives 1 through 5 in Draft Coastal Migratory Pelagic Amendment 31, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any objection? The motion passes with one objection.

The next item of discussion in the committee was Framework to Adjust Atlantic King Mackerel Trip Limits, and we had an extensive discussion on that as well. The committee approved the following motions under that item.

The first motion was to direct staff to start work on a framework amendment and approve Alternatives 1 through 3, with an option for seventy-five fish from March 1 through 31. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there discussion? Is there objection? Seeing none, that motion is approved.

That, I believe, brings us down the Timing and Tasks motion, if I'm not mistaken. **The timing and tasks motion was: 1)send a letter to MRIP requesting a timeline for recalculated 2015 and 2016 Atlantic cobia recreational landings and for evaluation of alternative estimation approaches for situations where MRIP data is not sufficient; 2)develop draft Amendment 31 with approved alternatives for management of Atlantic cobia to be approved for public hearings in January -- It says "December", but January of 2017, I believe. Am I wrong on**

that? We will approve it in December. I'm sorry. **I was thinking of when they would actually occur, and so we will approve it in December of 2017.** Would someone would like to make that motion?

DR. DUVAL: **So moved.**

MR. HARTIG: Motion by Michelle and second by Mel. Is there discussion? **Is there any objection? Seeing none, the timing and tasks motion is approved.**

Is there any other business to come before the Mackerel Cobia Committee? Seeing none, Chairman Phillips, that completes my report.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Chester, since we're rolling right along, we'll let you -- We'll go ahead and get set up, and I think you have a new plan for us.

MR. BREWER: Thank you, Chair. This will be the report on the Advisory Panel Selection Committee meeting. We met -- I guess we were the first committee meeting on Tuesday morning. We met in closed session. We approved the minutes and approved the agenda. We then had a report from Roger on the Habitat and Ecosystem-Based Management Advisory Panel. At the end of the day, the committee felt that there was no need, presently, for any changes, and so we did not take any action.

Next, we reviewed the online application process and briefing book materials. There was general, or unanimous, thought that the new system is much improved. It's easier to read, and then, once Amber explained to us dinosaurs what that little green cross up in the corner meant, we were good to go. We then began reviewing the applications for the different advisory panels, and, Mr. Chair, we have, I believe, fourteen motions, only two of which may really warrant a little discussion.

Our first motion was to appoint Brice Barr to the Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel. Is there any discussion on this motion? **Seeing none, is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.**

Our second motion was to appoint Jeff Soss to the Habitat Advisory Panel. On behalf of the committee, I so move. I forgot to say that last time. Is there any discussion on this motion? **Seeing none, is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, the motion passes.**

Next, reappoint Nickey Maxey to the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion with regard to this motion? **Seeing none, is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.**

This next motion needs a little bit of discussion. Bob Jones has put his name in I think two times, or maybe three times, for the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel. There was some issue or thought that maybe he would not be willing to serve, having put his name in a couple of times, but, after the committee decided to recommend his appointment, I spoke with Bob and explained to him that it really was not any kind of slight to him, but it was just that he was the single applicant and the committee wanted to have some choice there, and that we had gotten another couple of applications in. Then, with a choice, he was chosen, and so he was delighted, and he said that he would be honored to serve.

The next motion, Motion Number 4, is to appoint Bob Jones to the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel. Is there any discussion with regard to this motion? Is there any objection to this motion? The motion stands approved.

Motion Number 5 was to appoint Howard Ellis to the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion of this motion? Any objection to this motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.

Motion Number 6 is to appoint Patrick Link to the Cobia Sub-Panel seat on the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion of this motion? Seeing none, is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.

Motion Number 7 was to appoint Randy McKinnley to the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion on this motion? Seeing none, is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.

Next, our eighth motion was to appoint Dr. Chris Elkins to the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion on this motion?

DR. DUVAL: I think we just need to clarify that Mr. Elkins has been appointed to an NGO seat, or, at least in whatever communications that move forward in notifying him of his appointment, that he is representing an NGO seat. Thank you.

MR. BREWER: Very good, and so noted, and there will be further discussions with Mr. Elkins as well. Enough said. Motion Number 8 was to appoint Dr. Chris Elkins to the Mackerel Cobia Advisory Panel, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion on this motion? **Is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.**

Motion Number 9 was -- I am not going to do the hyphenated on this thing. Reappoint Kerry O'Malley to the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion on this motion? Seeing none, is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.

Motion Number 10 is appoint Jack Cox to the North Carolina seat on the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Any opposition to the motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.

Motion Number 11 is appoint Gary Manigault, Sr. to the South Carolina seat on the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.

The next one, we need to talk about a little bit. This is Motion Number 12. The committee made a recommendation or approved, whatever you want to call it, that Clay Bishop be appointed to the South Carolina seat on the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel. It was later learned that there had been a glitch and Mr. Bishop had, in essence, withdrawn his application, or had indicated that he

-- It was a very nice letter, but he indicated that he did not have the time to devote to properly do the job.

Procedurally, we do have a recommendation coming up from the committee to Full Council, and that approval or motion needs to be voted up or down, and so, with that being said, is there any opposition to the appointment of Clay Bishop to the South Carolina seat on the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel? I see seven, and that is enough. The motion fails.

Next, this is a South Carolina seat, and so the Chair would entertain a motion from our South Carolina contingent with regard to this now unfilled seat. The Chair recognizes Mel.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. **The South Carolina delegation, so to speak, would like to nominate Jim Moring, a recreational fisherman from Charleston, for that position.**

MR. BREWER: Thank you. We have a motion on the table from the South Carolina contingent. Is there a second? It's seconded by Chris. Next, is there any discussion on this motion?

MR. HARTIG: Wasn't Mr. Moring the restaurant fisherman person who gave us testimony the other day?

MR. BELL: Right. He was here the other day, and we were looking at kind of what he could bring to the overall group, in terms of experience as a recreational fisherman, but also a restaurant guy, which is useful to have.

MR. HARTIG: Thank you.

MR. BREWER: Any further discussion?

MR. HAYMANS: That would provide us two similar background folks, two restauranteurs, two fishing folks, and I think that would be great input from those two.

MR. BREWER: Any further discussion? **Seeing none, is there any opposition to the motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.**

Next is Motion 13, which is to appoint Vincent Bonura and Richard Gomez to the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Any discussion? Any opposition? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.

Motion Number 14 is to appoint Jynessa Dutka-Gianelli to the Citizen Science Pool. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Any discussion? Any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

We did have some timing and tasks that, for some reason, need to be approved by the council, and so it should be up there for everybody to read. **The motion is to adopt the following timing and tasks approved by the council: 1)have staff continue to provide summary tables in the meeting agenda/overview and include the Wufoo Summary table as part of the briefing book materials and include attendance records for re-applicants; 2)re-advertise the South Carolina open seat on the Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel; 3)advertise open seats on the**

advisory panels as needed for appointments at the March 2018 meeting. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there discussion?

MR. HARTIG: You need someone to make that motion, Chester, and so I will make that motion as stated.

MR. BREWER: Thank you very much. Is there a second? Second by Mr. Bell. Is there any discussion on this motion? **Seeing none, is there any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, the motion stands approved.**

Mr. Chair, that concludes my report.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, sir. Well done. I guess we can move on to the SEDAR Report, and we'll get set up for that.

DR. DUVAL: All right. Are we ready?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, ma'am.

DR. DUVAL: The SEDAR Committee met on September 26 in Charleston, and, first, we received a report on the research track process from our SSC Chair, Dr. Marcel Reichert, regarding the SSC's webinar meeting held on September 5 and their support of the research track process and concept, but some of the concerns regarding the details of implementation. They had recommended supporting a pilot application to scamp and supported the CIE review component of this.

Next, we discussed the joint South Atlantic Council/Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council workshop and the reasons why -- That workshop was to be focused on review and development of methods to accurately track some of our problem recreational species against our ACLs and why that was cancelled. We did note that the need for alternative estimation methods remains.

Next, we provided guidance on our assessment priorities for consideration at the next Steering Committee meeting, which occurred later that day, and we had one motion. **The motion is move to modify assessment priorities as follows: move red grouper to 2021 as a standard; add black sea bass in 2021 as an update; conduct Spanish mackerel as a standard in 2020; and move white grunt to 2022 as a benchmark. On behalf of the committee, I so move.** Is there any discussion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

Next, we have a timing and tasks motion, which includes a few items, and I think there has been one that's been added since the draft report, and so I'm going to let John address that.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I was talking with Charlie earlier, and he wanted to make sure that, on the wreckfish assessment question, that we don't just get an evaluation of updating that assessment, but, if for some reason there is issues with that, that the council is in position to get some information on the condition of the wreckfish stock and to enable the SSC to consider the ABC recommendations. The highlighted text is some additional language to add to that to clarify the request to the Science Center.

DR. DUVAL: I will just give everybody a couple of minutes to take a look at that and read through it. Is there someone willing to make that timing and tasks motion?

MR. HARTIG: **Madam Chair, I will make the timing and tasks motion as stated.**

DR. DUVAL: It's seconded by Chris. Is there any discussion of the timing and tasks motion? **Is there any opposition to the timing and tasks motion? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

Is there any other business to come before the SEDAR Committee? If not, Mr. Chairman, that concludes my report.

MR. PHILLIPS: Very well done again. I guess we will, since we're rocking along, we'll go on into Habitat and Doug.

MR. HAYMANS: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Habitat Protection and Ecosystem-Based Management Committee met on Tuesday, September 26. The committee approved the minutes and its agenda. There was an EFH Policy Statement on Artificial Reefs presented along with some healthy discussion regarding artificial reefs, fishing pressure, and other issues.

The committee made the following motion to move the policy statement to the council. It was approved. However, after consideration, it was determined that perhaps the wording of that motion wasn't the best that it could be. Rather, we need to restate and clarify that motion to read: To approve the EFH Policy Statement on Artificial Reefs. If I could get someone to make that motion, as stated there on the screen, and get a second.

MR. WAUGH: I think, procedurally, the way to do it would be to make the motion that the committee offered and then have someone make a substitute motion.

MR. HAYMANS: Okay. The motion to move the policy statement to the council was approved by committee. Is there any discussion? This would be the point where somebody would make a substitute motion.

DR. DUVAL: **I move to substitute to approve the EFP Policy Statement on Artificial Reefs.**

MR. HAYMANS: We have a substitute motion, and Chris has seconded. Is there any discussion on the substitute motion? **Seeing none, is there any opposition to the substitute motion? Seeing none, the substitute motion becomes the main motion.** Is there any discussion on the main motion? **Is there any opposition to the main motion? Seeing none, that motion is approved, and so we have move the Policy Statement on Artificial Reefs forward.** Thank you.

There was also discussion on the Fishery Ecosystem Plan II Implementation Plan. Council staff provided an overview of that plan, and council and committee members provided recommendations on actions and structures and directed the development of a two-year roadmap, based on the detailed plan highlighting accomplishable high-priority actions, and we should see that roadmap in December.

We also received a presentation, a short presentation, or, well, it was actually part of the discussion on Habitat and Ecosystem Tools and Model Development. The SSC will see a further presentation on that ecosystem tool and model development at its meeting in October. The FEP II Dashboard Development was presented by council staff. The page will be accessible through and eventually replace the Habitat/Ecosystem webpage. Staff also demonstrated some of the capabilities of the Dashboard and encouraged council members to explore the site and to use it.

Under Other Business, Dr. Wilson Laney presented a publication on the Atlantic sturgeon critical habitat, which became effective September 18. He stated that there were questions coming from stakeholders regarding U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NMFS and how they will work together on Section 7 and critical habitat consultations in cases where critical habitat for Atlantic sturgeon may overlap with species under U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service jurisdiction.

There was a timing and tasks presented there, and you see there is five items, including finalizing the artificial reef policy and revising the FEP II implementation, refining the dashboard, continuing ongoing work on the Ecosystem Modeling Workgroup and also continuing to work with the FWRI to further expand the detailed information presented in the EcoSpecies online system supporting FEP II. Is there a motion for the timing and tasks?

MR. BELL: **So moved.**

MR. HAYMANS: Is there a second? Second by Michelle. Any discussion on timing and tasks? **Any opposition to timing and tasks? Seeing none, the timing and tasks motion is approved.**

Mr. Chairman, that concludes the business of this committee.

MR. PHILLIPS: Very well done, Mr. Chairman. I guess we will now move into Executive Finance, and we will get that ready.

DR. DUVAL: The Executive Finance Committee met yesterday, September 28. We approved our minutes from the July 2017 webinar meeting and the agenda. Then Gregg and I presented an overview of the report from the Executive Finance Committee meeting on MSA reauthorization and a number of other items that we held in July. We discussed those items and developed a position and direction to staff.

We reiterated our appreciation for the services provided by the Fisheries Leadership & Sustainability Forum and agreed to explore fee-for-service projects in the future, once our own funding is a little bit more secure.

We approved the following motion, which was to approve the CCC document as modified, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.**

Next, we reviewed the council follow-up document and priorities, and Dr. Chevront led us through that. Then he presented some suggested changes to the staff tasking, and the committee discussed priorities and provided the following guidance to staff for the top four priorities, which were: Commercial Visioning, Recreational Visioning, Snapper Grouper Amendment 46, the Red

Grouper Abbreviated Framework, which, as we discussed, is not a major action; and then the CMP 31 cobia management transfer.

Additionally, the council is expecting to take final action on the Red Grouper Abbreviated Framework ACL Revision in December, and we are also expecting to discuss the for-hire permit moratorium options paper and the wreckfish ITQ. As time permits, staff will continue working on yellowtail snapper, considering how to evaluate combining ACLs, and this is a joint conversation with the Gulf Council, and our ABC control rule amendment.

Next, we received a presentation from Dr. Chip Collier regarding the structure of the System Management Plan Advisory Panel, and we provided the following input and motion, which was to select the regional workgroup as the format for advisory group for system management plans and change the other to an NGO seat, and, on behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

Next, we reviewed the council meeting materials changes that have been made, and Cameron Rhodes walked us through that, and we had a few additional suggestions with regard to late materials distribution and document titling and discussion of having a hyperlink within the agenda, in order to take folks directly to a particular document, and then also we discussed the projection screen for old people.

Next, we discussed the Council Year 2017 Budget, and Mike Collins and Gregg Waugh presented a status of that. We are currently in year three of a five-year grant, and the amount of money available to carry over is gradually decreasing, such that, in 2019, there will be none available to carry over, and so we're going to have to tighten our belts, and we discussed a few ways to begin adjusting council operations, including limiting attendance at AP and SSC meetings. We also provided direction to staff to prepare a plan with some alternatives that they have for addressing the budget issue and present this to the committee at each meeting, following through on conducting more scoping and public hearings via webinar and listening stations and just exploring all available options we have, and so we didn't have any other business.

We do have a timing and tasks motion that includes continuing work on the MSA issues at the CCC level, revising the priorities based on the guidance provided, exploring options for meetings of the System Management Plan AP, and exploring and implementing the suggestions for improvements to meeting materials as well as options for addressing the budget issue. Is there someone willing to make that timing and tasks motion?

MR. BELL: Madam Chair, I move that we adopt the timing and tasks motion as described in the report.

DR. DUVAL: Is there a second to that? Seconded by Ben. Is there any further discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion stands approved.

Is there any other business to come before the Executive Finance Committee? Seeing none, Mr. Chairman, that concludes my report.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Since we're rocking along, and I know that checkout, I think, is at 11:00, I think we have time to finish all of this and not take a break, to where we can get out of here before 11:00, so that people that need to checkout, if that meets you all's approval, in our new age of efficiency.

DR. DUVAL: Wow.

MR. BELL: So you notice we haven't had any breaks. I mean, he learned from the best.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you, Mel.

MR. PHILLIPS: Any questions or thoughts? I guess we will start with our Agency and Liaison Reports, and so we'll just start down there with you.

DR. MCGOVERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations. Congratulations to you, Mark, and thank you, Michelle, for your leadership the last couple of years. I also want to thank the South Carolina delegation for the social on Monday. That was very nice, and thanks to Gregg and his staff for all the help he has provided the Regional Office in getting everything done for this meeting.

A few things. Irma came and visited us at the Southeast Region, and she was a messy guest, but we did okay, and I think we did better than Bonnie did over on the east coast, actually, but, because we had major power outages and everything, we had to shut down all the systems at the Regional Office, including our computers, and we had to shut down Permits too, and we had some difficulties with shutting down and starting it back up again, and so it's up and running now, but we have a backlog of permits that we have to deal with, and we sent out a Fishery Bulletin that I think you all saw saying that the validation period for renewing those permits was extended, if they had sent something in requesting an extension. We were a lot more fortunate than our partners in the Caribbean from Maria. My understanding is all the Caribbean Council staff are doing okay and the council members are as well.

Some personnel things, Janet Miller, who I think many of you might know, and she's been with us since Eisenhower was President, and -- Just kidding. She has been with us for about thirty-five years, and she worked for Permits for a while, and now she's been working at the LAPPs Division. She's worked a lot with the wreckfish ITQ program. She knows the wreckfish fishermen very well, and she's retiring at the end of the month.

Also, Stephen Holliman retired earlier this year, and he's the Branch Chief for the Economics/Social Branch, and we still haven't filled his position. We're hoping that we'll be able to, depending on the budget situation, sometime this fall.

The last thing is, as Rick mentioned, we are expecting that greater amberjack and vermilion snapper will both be closing commercially, probably the middle of the month, and we're looking into the possibility of reopening blueline tilefish for a short period of time. Rick is in contact with Dr. Ponwith's folks at the Science Center to try to figure that out, and that concludes my report, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Jack. Leann.

MS. BOSARGE: Thank you. Just a couple of things to update you on that might be of interest to you over here. Before I came to the meeting, I wanted to get an update on how we were coming with continuing to focus on the issue that we have with the for-hire reporting between the Gulf program that we just implemented versus the South Atlantic, where I think you're going to go with the more weekly reporting, but we had that clause in the amendment that says you've got to abide by the stricter of the two, essentially.

I touched base with NMFS on that, and so, to give you a little update, it's probably going to be 2019 before we're even ready to try and put that in place in the Gulf, and even that is contingent upon funding. That's just when we'll actually have all the logistics worked out on what type of software we're going to use and what type of hardware we're going to use and things like that, how it's going to all talk to each other.

Now, in doing that and going forward, NMFS has a committee, and it's a fifty-person committee, guys, and so this is a big committee, and they meet two times a month, and then there's like six sub-groups on this committee, and one of the sub-groups is where that discuss will eventually fall into place, to see if we can work out some type of program for the South Atlantic guys, and so NMFS said please encourage them to have South Atlantic staff to continue to participate in that. It is kind of burdensome, I'm sure, with two meetings a month, but, eventually, we're going to come to the point where that's going to be on the table for, okay, how do we lay out some options for this, and so continue to participate there, if you can, and we haven't forgotten about it. We're working towards it.

Then the only other thing I would mention is that we do have that yellowtail snapper discussion on our agenda for our next meeting, which is next week, and so we will be taking a look at some of that data and starting that discussion on how we can possibly come up with some sort of joint management or some alternative that may help you out over here, and so that's about it for now, and thanks for having me.

MR. PHILLIPS: It's good to have you here. Mel, I guess you're next over there.

MR. BELL: All right. The first thing of interest is we did complete our Section 7 consultation regarding artificial reefs and protected resources, whales and turtles, and we really do appreciate Roy's help, and his staff's help, in kind of moving that along and helping to motivate the Army Corps and getting that done, but it's done, and we're up and running, and so that's super.

Also, just regarding interaction with the Regional Office, we get really good support. I mean, any time I need something, I call Jack or I call Rick or Roy, and there's a lot of good communication, and we really appreciate that. You guys are there, and we hear from them on a regular basis, as I'm sure all the states do, but it's just really appreciated. Sometimes we get some squirrely questions, or just questions from fishermen and all, and we just kind of go straight to them, and so that's been very helpful, and we do appreciate that.

We survived the storm, Irma, rather well here. Just unfortunately it had to shift somewhere, but we had minimal impact out at Marine Resources and in other locations. Some of our properties are a little messed up, but, really, we dodged a bullet on that one, and then, as far as infrastructure

for fisheries, a few docks are messed up, and some lost refrigeration systems and things, but, really, really a lot better than it could have been, and so we're very fortunate.

All of our research vessels are up and running, and that's going well, the Palmetto and the Lady Lisa, to support SEAMAP and MARMAP. Everything is going good, and they're still out in the field. I guess the Palmetto is underway today, and so we're real pleased with that. We did have some work done on the Palmetto recently to add a crane, which we needed to replace the crane on there, and so she went into the yard for a little bit, and that's done.

Something of interest is we are hopefully, in the next month or so, going to make another addition to the Charleston Deep MPA Artificial Reef, and we talked about this in the reef discussions earlier, but that's paid for primarily by fishermen who are interested in supporting that Type II MPA. The Charleston Deep Reef has become an extremely popular location for billfish fishermen and the blue water fishermen. In some of our tournaments, the majority of the fish caught are from that reef, and these are catch-and-release tournaments, primarily.

The fishermen are really happy with it, and the fishermen are very eager to provide significant funding, and so really all the majority of the funding for that reef, since we started with it, has come from the fishing community, and so we're real pleased to add some more material this year, which will be a rather large barge with a bridge, steel bridge, superstructure on it, and, again, it was paid for by memorial reef folks and fishermen, and so that's just a great partnership deal there.

Again, because the storm wasn't that big of a deal, I am hoping our shrimp will be fine this year. We've had two big rain events in two previous years, but the shrimp crop turned out fine, and, as you all have probably noticed, it's a little warmer than usual right now, and so we'll see what the winter does, and then we'll be able to kind of get an idea of how the shrimp crop may end up next year, but things are looking pretty good right now. Mr. Chairman, that's about all I've got to report.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Mel, and so I'm assuming the blackgill hasn't been excessive or anything?

MR. BELL: Not more than normal. I mean, it's been about the same. We hear the same kind of thing that you guys hear down there in Georgia.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Tony.

MR. DELERNIA: Hello, everyone. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Mid-Atlantic Council met in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on August 8, 9, and 10. It was an average meeting, agenda-wise. Our first item of discussion that we reviewed was on the surf clams and ocean quahogs, and there is a requirement that we review occasionally, and that's -- Just to remind you that surf clams and ocean quahogs is an ITQ fishery, and so we're required to review whether or not excessive shares are being held by any one particular individual, and we're working on an amendment right now to address what could be developing of excessive shares.

In the afternoon of the first day, our Demersal Committee met in conjunction with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Most actions that the Mid-Atlantic Council takes on the species of summer flounder, scup, black sea bass, and bluefish, those decisions are jointly made

with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and that's because many of those fisheries are divided 50/50, about, between state waters and federal waters. In order for federal fisheries management to be effective, we need complementary management from the states in the inshore waters, and so what we try to do is coordinate our decision-making process with the commission when it comes to those particular species.

We set our bluefish specifications for 2018, which is very similar to 2019. There was a slight decrease, but not a major decrease. Scup specifications, we made recommendations for 2018 and for 2019, and we also did some work on the summer flounder amendment. Amending the summer flounder plan is becoming a tedious chore, an intensive chore, and there are states that are wishing to have the plan amended.

The plan is almost thirty years old, and the state-by-state quota system also relies on data that's about thirty years old, and there are states that contend that, since that state-by-state quota system was first established almost thirty years ago, or data going back thirty years, climate change has resulted in a species shift and redistribution of the stock, and, as a result, there should be a reexamination of the summer flounder quota state-by-state. In any case where some states may gain some and some others may not gain some, it's becoming a very contentious issue, and there's been quite a bit of discussion and some progress. I wish I could say there was more progress, but it's slow going, and negotiations continue.

Also, we reexamined, or are beginning an examination, of the summer flounder recreational issues. As the summer flounder stock changes, in order to comply and keep within the TACs, it seems that we're increasing the minimum size on the recreational side for summer flounder, which results in a focusing on harvesting of females. Once they get to a larger size, it's predominantly females that get to be that size, and so, if you restrict it to that level, you're harvesting only females, and we're beginning to look at ways to where we could possibly redistribute the catch and increase the catch or the retention on males.

Black sea bass, our black sea bass, I must tell you that, whenever I speak about black sea bass at the Mid-Atlantic Council, I speak about your red snapper here and how you have been unable to reopen it, although, just most recently, on Monday, you recommended a reopening of the recreational fishery for a short period of time, but how, because there has been so many red snapper, and because the bycatch mortality is so high, you have been unable to reopen a directed fishery, and that's -- We're closing approaching that point with black sea bass in the Mid-Atlantic, in that there are so many fish that we catch them very quickly, and it's ironic that, as the stock builds, management measures become more and more restrictive. I believe it's inconsistent.

Having watched -- In my home library, I actually have hearing minutes from the original hearings that was going to establish the Magnuson Act in the 1970s. They were gifts from some of the other council members when I first went on the council, and, if you read those minutes and what was intended and I believe where we are now, it's a little bit different than what was intended in the 1970s, when we first passed the Magnuson Act.

I will also say that, in the 1970s, I was -- As a deckhand, I was responsible for running up and down the docks and picking up the petitions to pass a 200-mile limit law at that point, and so I have watched this process from its inception, and so, when we end up closing a fishery because

we have too many fish, that is inconsistent. Anyway, so we have looked at -- We are looking at some alternative measures with black sea bass, in order to keep it open.

We are also examining the winter fishery. The winter fishery was closed a few years ago, the recreational winter fishery, and, in the early 1980s, when the recreational winter black sea bass fishery was first developing, in response to a declining codfish population in the Mid-Atlantic region, many of the for-hire captains asked the agency to have MRFSS, at that point, data collection for the black sea bass in the months of January and February, and the response from the agency was that the fishery was so small and the take was so small that it really wasn't cost efficient to have MRFSS samplers collect data on the fishery at that point.

In 2013, the agency came back to us and said, you know what, we don't have any data on this fishery at all, and we think you all are catching a lot of fish, and we're going to keep you closed. That didn't sit too well with lots of folks, and so we've been trying to reopen that fishery since then, and there have been different attempts, and perhaps we'll eventually get there. There is going to be another action or consideration at our October meeting, which is in a couple of weeks, to open at least the fishery for the month of February.

Let's see what else. We had a review of our ecosystem approach to fisheries management. We're looking at a risk assessment and developing a risk assessment matrix so that we can apply that risk assessment in making decisions, and that's really about it at this point, and I will be happy to take any questions that folks may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Tony.

MR. HARTIG: Not to slight Tony, and I don't have a question for him, but I did have a question for Mel, if I can go back to Mel. Mel, on that deep reef you have out there, has that been highlighted in the *South Atlantic Update*, the story of how that was --

MR. BELL: You mean in the --

MR. HARTIG: Yes, in the council's publication. I mean, you would have been interviewed, I'm sure, over that.

MR. BELL: Not specifically, I don't think.

MR. HARTIG: I would suggest that we do that, because that model -- That's a widely-read periodical, and I would certainly move to Kim to do that, because the additional billfish information that you just provided is amazing, and then the additional monies that you're going to be able to sink another barge in that, and so that's -- Tell that story, and let other people see that model, and that's great.

MR. BELL: Yes, we're real proud of the concept, and this is really a -- Perhaps it's unique, in that the fishermen are taking this on, and Amy had to leave, but she just told me, before she left, that they were out there yesterday catching billfish out there, actually yesterday, and I think they're out today as well, and so it's a very, very popular site for the Charleston area as far as billfish fishing, which that's kind of my piece. The Type II MPA concept is that, yes, it's way offshore, and, yes,

law enforcement is not able to be there all the time, but we've got eyes and ears out there constantly, and so that's, in my opinion, one of the benefits of a Type II system.

MR. PHILLIPS: Any other questions? Before I leave the left side of the table, and I've been jumping around, I want to get back to Bonnie.

DR. PONWITH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like our SERO colleagues, we did have a shutdown. We were closed the Thursday before the storm and reopened the Thursday after the storm. Because, during that timeframe, we were in the crosshairs at a Category 5, our staff took the mandatory evacuation orders fairly seriously and ran varying distances to get out of there, and, for the same reasons, we also shut down our systems. The systems are back up, and everything is running.

I just want to remark, in closing, on that issue, that I find it to be nothing short of miraculous to see a council meeting postponed because of a storm and brought back online within two weeks, and I just would like to do a shout-out to council staff for making that happen and for the council to have the flexibility to actually be here. To me, it is a remarkable achievement.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Bonnie. Michelle.

DR. DUVAL: Let's see. We are still -- I have had a lot of questions about who is the North Carolina Fisheries Director, and so poor Braxton Davis is still the Director of both the Division of Coastal Management and the Division of Marine Fisheries right now.

I know that the department has been dealing with -- It's called GenX, but it's a compound that's been found in the water of the Cape Fear River. It is causing a lot of controversy and issues right now. It's a compound that's used in like nonstick coatings on pans, and so it has escaped the water filtration capacities in the Cape Fear Public Utility, and so that department has been a little bit preoccupied with that, and so I'm not quite sure where things stand with interviewing for another director. Suffice it to say that it's sort of in limbo right now.

We had a lot of legislation this year that dealt with fisheries issues, mostly related to aquaculture and oyster mariculture, and one of the things that was passed was a bill that requires us at the Division of Marine Fisheries to request both the South Atlantic and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils to move forward with an aquaculture fishery management plan.

I've had some discussion with folks at the Regional Office, Jack and others, about this, as this language was being put together, and so I expect that the council will probably be receiving a letter from our division at some point, but I had just asked if they could wait until after this meeting to send that letter, so that I would not be the recipient of the letter. It's a little bit awkward, but there is a big emphasis on marine aquaculture, particularly oyster mariculture, but folks are looking more offshore as well.

This is also the twentieth year of the Fisheries Reform Act in North Carolina. It was modeled somewhat after the 1996 Magnuson-Stevens Act. It had a big habitat component to it. Wednesday of this week, the North Carolina Catch Organization hosted a sort of twenty-year review of the Fisheries Reform Act. I know several of my coworkers were at that event, and I haven't quite

heard exactly how that went. I have seen a few resolutions that have come out of it, and so suffice it to say that there is a lot of activity going on in that arena.

Then, finally, I would just touch on I think some of the conversations that we've had before with regard to siting of artificial reefs and our -- I just wanted to give a shout-out to the Regional Office. Our staff had a very successful meeting with the Protected Resources staff in that regard, and I think a lot of great exchange and useful information with regard to how we can help streamline that process and the efforts of the Protected Resources staff to try to help streamline that process.

It seems like there is still some sticky issues with the Corps that we're going to have to deal with, but I just wanted to give a shout-out to those folks for being willing to come up to North Carolina. I think that meeting had to be postponed a bit, due to flight delays and weather from all of these offshore ladies that have been visiting us lately, and so that's about it, and I will take any questions, if anybody has any.

MR. BELL: The mariculture stuff, that would extend out into federal waters, potentially? There is interest out there, you think?

DR. DUVAL: There is. I mean, there is interest both inshore and offshore, and most of the interest -- There is different groups that are working on this issue, and some groups are very interested specifically in oyster mariculture, and so there's a big effort underway with -- It's called the North Carolina Policy Collaboratory, and so it's housed at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, and so they are developing a mariculture plan.

They're in the process of doing that, looking at the policy implications of that, and aquaculture in North Carolina has been a little bit of a disjointed effort. You have to come to us to get permits for certain species, and you have to go to the Wildlife Commission to get permits for other species, and then you also have to get permits from the Department of Agriculture, and so we supply permits for outfits in Charlotte that are growing shrimp, and so they have to get permits from us and Agriculture.

There is an effort underway to try to have a more comprehensive approach to that, but there is some pretty strong interest, I think from Cooke Aquaculture, to so some stuff offshore, and so that's why there is this language that directs us to come to the councils requesting that a fishery management plan for offshore aquaculture be developed, so that those opportunities are there.

In my conversations with Jack, the whole reason for development of the Gulf of Mexico Aquaculture FMP was to create a permitting infrastructure, so that there didn't have to be an exempted fishing permit every time somebody wanted to undertake an aquaculture operation, and so, in order to avoid that kind of repetitive do-loop, an FMP is what it would take.

MR. BELL: I didn't bring it up, but we have dealt with some things this year. Our legislation basically allowed, through both DHEC regulation and state law, with the summer harvest of oysters, but maricultured only, and so there's a growth in mariculture, for oysters in particular, in South Carolina, and we're working on a shellfish mariculture plan, but that's just state waters. I have heard no interest in anybody kind of wanting to go outside of inside state waters, but we've got the same, probably, interest.

DR. DUVAL: I will just say that it's become more controversial, because now -- Because you're using public trust waters for either a bottom lease or a water column lease, and we have always had public hearings every time there is an application for a new lease, but, where there used to be two or three people there, now there is fifty to a hundred people there, because you have folks over on the barrier islands who say not in my backyard and I didn't build my one-and-a-half-million-dollar house to sit and look at floating oyster bags, and so we're running into those types of issues as well.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Just as an aside too, we have litigation going on involving the Gulf Aquaculture FMP. It's taken quite a while from the time when the FMP first went into effect, and there's a final rule, finally, and, at some point, I can brief you all on that. It may be of interest, but the briefs are just getting filed. I think maybe the first brief just got filed, and so I would expect, perhaps, that maybe next year we would have some sort of decision on it.

MR. PHILLIPS: Personally, I would love to hear that, because, in some of my grant review stuff that I've been at, they talk about it, and so I -- We're going to end up there in some way or shape, but, yes, I would love to, and I think we should be updated on those things.

MR. BREWER: Just a question for Monica. I knew, or at least I heard, that litigation was coming with regard to aquaculture, the FMP in the Gulf. Who did the plaintiffs end up being on that litigation? Can you remember?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I will look and tell you.

MR. BREWER: Thank you, ma'am.

MS. BOSARGE: I attended a conference on aquaculture in Maine here maybe a month or two ago, and so there does seem to be a lot of interest in it, and I'm anxious to explore it further and learn more. I think there's pros and cons on both sides, but, on a slightly different note, I just thought that I would mention that, at one of the shrimp farms in Texas that we have over there, they just had the first recorded case of EMS, which is Early Mortality Syndrome, in the pond. That is the first time we've ever had a case of this that I know of in the U.S. It has been widespread overseas, in shrimp aquaculture over there. When it gets in there, it is devastating, but I asked around about it, and supposedly this -- Because I was worried with Harvey, right?

There was flooding in Texas, and I thought, oh my gosh, is this farm going to flood and we're going to have these shrimp with this disease get out into our wild population? Supposedly that was not the case, and, also, the particular species of shrimp that was being grown over there was a Pacific white shrimp, I believe, and so it's unknown if that would actually transfer into our wild population, if they would really be able to survive in our Gulf waters, but I just throw that out there as something to think about as we're permitting things and think that Mother Nature can come in and you can have water where you didn't expect to and just to take those extra precautions to make sure that all the I's are dotted and T's are crossed when we permit these things.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you. Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have two or three things that I want to cover. Yes, we were also closed down for Hurricane Irma, and so we closed down in advance of the storm

and then remained closed for a number of days after that in Tallahassee. Down in south Florida, there were some of our regional offices that were closed for much longer, but we're definitely back up and running at this point, and we're working on assessing the damage to the fishing communities.

I want to talk a little bit about yellowtail. I didn't bring this up under Snapper Grouper, but yellowtail snapper is going back to the Gulf Council next week, and so they will be discussing the combining of the ACL in the Gulf and the South Atlantic Council. The last time we met, I said that we were going to try to talk to the commercial fishermen about whether or not they would be interested in some type of trip limit, and so, at this point, we're still looking into who has a Gulf permit and who has a South Atlantic permit and who has both, and we're preparing a list of questions to talk to these folks about, but our efforts are stalled a little bit, I guess, because of Irma. Yellowtail is primarily in the Keys, and we're trying to get those folks back up and running, and so we're going to be talking to those people, but it's now a little bit more delayed, but this will come before the Gulf Council next week.

Goliath grouper, as you may or may not know, we have been having public workshops on goliath grouper, and so we had one series of workshops that were already completed in August, and we have another round in October. There will be sixteen total workshops. This is a statewide issue. Then we had to cancel our September commission meeting, and so we're not sure if it's definitely coming to the December meeting, but we think that it is coming to the December FWC meeting. They will review all the comments that we've gathered, and then they will make a decision whether or not they would like to proceed with some type of harvest in state waters. I will stop there and take any questions.

DR. DUVAL: The goliath harvest, would that be -- I apologize if you mentioned this and I missed it, but would that be -- Where would that occur? Are you looking throughout state waters or just in a few locations?

MS. MCCAWLEY: It would be -- There is a number of things on the table, and so we're still gathering information on this. We are suggesting a no harvest of goliath from known spawning sites, but we are looking at this as a statewide issue. Right now, we're suggesting that this be done by a permit system, or a tag system, where there would be a limited number issued each year. I believe for four years is what we're suggesting, and so we're suggesting 100 tags each year for four years.

They could be used -- We might delineate each coast, on the Gulf and the Atlantic, so many tags in this region and so many here and so many there. We haven't figured out all those specifics yet at this point. The commission directed us to go out kind of with this strawman proposal and get information on that and bring that back, but it would be a limited harvest in state waters, and, at this point, we're looking at statewide, with some closures around known spawning sites.

MR. HARTIG: Can you send me the meeting dates and locations for October?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I sure can. Also, if folks would like to see the PowerPoint that we're giving at the workshop, you can view that online. There is a video, actually, and so, when we hold these workshops, we have an expert panel that goes to every workshop, and so it's folks from our division and folks from our licensing and permitting office as well as the Research Institute, and

so there's actually a video on the Florida channel for the workshop that was conducted in Key Largo, and so these are lengthy workshops. You can watch the whole thing, and it has the PowerPoint and the back-and-forth discussions with the panel.

You can view the workshop presentation online, and so we're using a new format, these things we call the clickers, and so that's how we gather public comment at the workshop, and people are asked a series of questions, and then they respond with these clickers, and that particular clicker survey is also online, and so people can take that survey online, and there is an open-ended comment form that people could comment on that as well, and I can tell you that, at this point, there are several thousand comments that have come in on goliath grouper worldwide.

MR. DELERNIA: Jessica, also on the topic of goliath, are we -- Many species that are long-lived and slow-growing tend to be bioaccumulators or biomagnifiers. Has any work been done on the goliath groupers regarding their safety for consumption?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I'm so glad you asked. There has been a number of papers looking at mercury concentrations in goliath. There is actually some that I think are going to come online looking at specifically Florida. A lot of them had been done in the Caribbean, but, yes, after about four feet, the accumulation of mercury is in very high numbers. Some would suggest that the mercury is so high that it's actually lethal to the fish.

Now, that's not necessarily something that is in published literature right now, but that's definitely an issue. I can tell you that FWC, the Fish and Wildlife Commission, does not issue those consumption advisories in Florida. That is issued by the Department of Health. There are no consumption advisories on goliath right now, because it's been closed since the 1990s, and so we would be looking to the Department of Health to determine if they would want to issue some type of consumption advisories. We have made the public aware of what those mercury concentrations are in those large goliath grouper, and we are suggesting a slot limit for goliath. However, I would suggest, at the top-end of that slot, those fish could still be fairly high in mercury.

MR. CONKLIN: I would like to see the yellowtail catch constrained conversation carried forward. With the closure on June 3 of this year, during our last meeting, I think, or right before it, it really had some big impacts on our amberjack fishery up through the rest of the range. The prices really went to nothing, and the Florida Keys were cranking out truckloads of amberjack every day, and it really hurt the guys up throughout the range, and so I certainly would support constraining that catch.

MS. MCCAWLEY: On that note, what we're talking about is two different types of trip limits. One is just a straight-up trip limit throughout the year, or a certain portion of the year, that would slow down the catch. The other would be a trip limit that could be implemented once, say 75 percent or 80 percent of the harvest, and then the trip limit would be implemented.

I can tell you that the jury is definitely still out about what people think about that, and a lot of people seem to predicate their opinion on whether or not the quota is combined in the Gulf and the South Atlantic, and so that's why we're going to be asking these people and going to pretty much everybody that has a permit that we can reach, to try to get more information about this.

MR. PHILLIPS: Any other questions? Okay. Doug, are you ready?

MR. HAYMANS: Yes, Mr. Chairman. As I just got the final text for what I wanted, I am ready. I actually have a lot to talk about, for once, and I will start with our Irma updates, since everybody has pretty much covered Irma. Our office was closed for five days, from Friday through Thursday, mainly because of power outages through that last few days. That doesn't mean that two of your highly -- That doesn't mean that two of staff there didn't work the entire time, including through the hurricane, but, anyway, our office sustained very light damage, mainly to our seawall.

We did truck out fourteen tons of marsh rack off of our property, and that's one of the central problems throughout coastal Georgia, is there is so much marsh rack on so many pieces of private property that people just don't know what to do with it, and it is a significant issue.

In comparison, one of our responses to the hurricane is to shut down our normal permitting operations for private docks and commercial docks and just respond to those emergencies. After Matthew, in one month, we received 265 requests for emergency action, and that was after the one month the call center was open. After eight days of Irma, we have already received 200 calls, and we have responded to approximately sixty of those with written authorizations at this point.

We also proactively closed shellfish the day before the hurricane came through, and we're trying very hard to get that reopened by tomorrow. I had hoped to already have an email saying that it was, but, to this point, that email hasn't come in yet. Other than that, staff got back to work on the Friday following Irma, and things are progressing along there.

Some other items of interest are the summertime was pretty active for state records in the State of Georgia. We had a new shortfin mako record of 440 pounds, a new women's tripletail record of twenty-nine pounds and six ounces, and a new pinfish record of one pound and fifteen ounces. Don't ask me why we have pinfish.

Regarding the shrimp season, we have the Research Vessel Anna, which is a monthly series of data that's been collected for the last forty-some-odd years of uninterrupted data until this month, but Anna catches of white shrimp have been slightly above the long-term average during most of the year, until we hit August, where it fell just below the long-term average. In September, like I just said, it has not been sampled yet, and we will probably miss our first month in over forty years, one because of the hurricane and two because the Anna almost caught fire and burned up, and they're still working on it. We are trying to replace the Anna, by the way, and who knew the cost of aluminum was so high, but we're working on a long-term replacement for the Anna right now. Blackgill infection rates for white shrimp are slightly above last year's rate for the May through August period, and that will conclude shrimp.

Reef development, we put in a brand-new reef back in August, and that's BSF Reef, which is four nautical miles southeast of Little Tybee. It was funded completely through private monies, mainly the Savannah Sportfishing Club, which celebrated its fifty-first anniversary this year. Seventy-two reef balls, manufactured reef balls, were put down, and, because this is an all recreationally-funded reef, we may be coming back to the council in the near future to seek an SMZ designation for that reef. We have a series of inshore reefs as well, and we also put material on our High Point Reef, with twenty-two concrete culverts.

We are working on some commercial license issues right now. This past legislative season, the Georgia legislature finally created a commercial dealer license for us, a seafood dealer license, and that went into place in July. Along with it, it allowed our department to develop endorsements, and so we're in the middle of rulemaking right now for endorsements. We had a public hearing on those last week, and we're going to be taking those to final action next month, and that's a series of endorsements that folks will have to have to go along with their commercial license.

In case you haven't heard, our director is retiring at the end of the year. However, November 15 is his last day in the office. Actually, I guess he's going to go to the ASMFC meeting right now, and so the 16th will probably be his last day. He is not allowing us to have a retirement party for him, and so don't feel bad if you don't get an invitation, because there is not any going out, but, if you would like to send your best wishes, his email is spud.woodward@dnr.ga.gov. I think that's all I had, which is about ten times more than I usually have.

MR. PHILLIPS: I am going to ask you one other question, since you brought up artificial reefs. How are we doing on those Navy towers offshore?

MR. HAYMANS: They have been permitted, with one-by-one squares around each one of them. There has been a multitude of plans that the Navy has kicked around for how and when to put them on the bottom, but, to this point, they haven't given us a date nor a time, but we take ownership when they put them on the bottom.

MR. PHILLIPS: They're still going to be open for commercial fishing of amberjacks and things like that?

MR. HAYMANS: At this point, I don't see why not, because, again, those are -- There is no SFR dollars going in them, and there's no private recreational dollars going in them right now, and so I don't anticipate anything other than open.

MR. PHILLIPS: Good. All right. I guess that brings up Gregg with our Hurricane Irma.

MR. WAUGH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a brief introduction. I got an email from NMFS Headquarters saying that they were going to schedule a conference call to get an update on how we fared in Hurricane Irma, like they do on all previous hurricanes, and so I had to do a quick scramble. This is the first time I ever heard of this, and I don't know that Bob ever participated. They didn't contact us last year, and so, in preparation for that call, I got with Brian, and Brian worked with Cameron and Amber and the rest of the staff to come up with a way for us to gather some qualitative information.

I want to emphasize that this is just a vehicle for our fishermen to provide some qualitative information, because we had subsequent discussions with Jessica, and the State of Florida is in the process of coming up with a quantitative estimate, and so we wanted to make sure that we weren't getting in the way of any other activities, but our plans are to keep this active, and anyone is welcome to access the information and use it. Cameron is just going to give you a quick overview of what we've found so far. Thank you.

MS. RHODES: Good morning, everybody. Let's go ahead and get started. I know many of you have probably already seen the form that we sent out to constituents in the South Atlantic, but I

will go ahead and click on it and give you a quick review. Really, this was just a way for people to share their stories with us, and we created a form together, Brian and Amber and myself, and worked on coming up with some questions that might suit the needs of fishermen when they wanted to really showcase the damages that they have experienced.

They went ahead and told us what fisheries they participate in and what fishing equipment had been lost, if any, how the storm affected their access to fishing, how the storm might have affected their fishery, when they foresee again experiencing normalcy, which is a hard question to ask, but they did do their best to provide as much information as they could.

We asked them if any fish houses or marinas or supporting businesses in their area had been affected, and we asked them to tell us more, and most of this was conducted either through email or by phone, and this presentation is going to be available online. It's actually up there now, and so, if you would like to access the reports and see what exactly everybody wrote in here, you're more than welcome to do so. If you go to Tab 9 of the late materials, that's where you can actually find this presentation, and so it's available to you whenever you might need it.

We reached out to our AP members, council members, partners, and anyone that they suggested that we contact, and we ended up having over a hundred people contacted, and we had a pretty good response rate. Close to fifty participants actually gave us a response, whether it be through an email or through a phone call, and it was a really great way for us to connect to everybody, especially after the storm. It was hard to get in touch with some of the Florida folks, but, eventually, we did reach out and get ahold of them, and it made for a great opportunity for us to participate and help people feel like their voices were being heard.

I am just going to give you a very brief overview of some of what we learned from these stories. John Hadley actually provided a super helpful document for us and really consolidated all of this information. The for-hire sector, as you can imagine, it was mostly lost opportunity. There were some cases of damage in North Carolina through Florida. Florida, obviously, had the most damage, as you can imagine from what you have seen in media reports, but, for the for-hire sector up north, it was certainly more of a loss of opportunity.

There were also quite a number of instances of damage to shore-side recreational businesses, and the commercial harvesting fleet definitely took a severe hit, based on what we have seen in reports, and, up here, is the first line of loss of crew, and that doesn't just refer to people seeking other opportunities of employment. There actually were reports of crew members lost at sea with their vessels, and so there were some pretty significant reports that we received from fishermen, which were rather alarming.

As you can imagine, the shore-side commercial businesses also received quite an impact. Fortunately, in Florida, we have heard some reports, and I'm sure that Jessica can attest to this as well, that fish houses actually managed to do okay in the Florida Keys, and many of them seem to be up and running, but they are operating as facilities for people who actually live there. They're not operating as fish houses right now. They are providing ice, and so there's been a change of business plan, but they are moving forward and recovering.

Just to give you a quick breakdown of some of the folks we reached out to, North Carolina through Georgia, we did hear that there were some impacts of loss of business. North Carolina is not only

having impacts from Irma, but is also having some really severe swells, especially off of Manteo, and so that entire fleet is in lockdown right now. They haven't been able to leave the inlet, and so they haven't made money for about a month, and that does not extend all the way down through the region, in South Carolina and Georgia, but there certainly were losses of opportunity.

We spoke with Zack Bowen, and he put us in touch with Steve Amick, and Steve is actually working to get his vessel back up and running again, and so there are certainly instances where fishermen are still down and out, but they are moving forward and recovering.

Florida ended up being the highest response rate for us, and we ended up getting responses from all of the blue dots, and so we even had some people write in from Tallahassee, but most of the people who commented did comment from south Florida, and we spoke to a number of individuals, and marinas were heavily impacted in the Florida Keys. Bud N' Mary's experienced significant damage. They are moving forward and have been continually posting to their Facebook page. That's how we've been in touch with them and getting reports. They do not have phone service.

Hopefully they will get that up and running, and they are allowing vessels to tie up there, even though the marina is significantly damaged, which is something exciting, because a lot of for-hire fishermen actually operate out of Bud N' Mary's, and having that opportunity to tie up is something that many other marinas aren't offering at this time, and so Bud N' Mary's is turning into a cornerstone for that community.

Ray Rosher, our Chair of the Dolphin Wahoo AP, sent in this photo, just to let us know exactly what the marine looks like. He is a for-hire captain, and he has said that it's likely that he lost up to \$20,000 at that time, which was about two weeks ago when he reported, just in missed opportunities to go fish.

I have spent quite a bit of time speaking with Bill Kelly about the lobster fishery in south Florida, and he wanted me to let you guys know that there are a number of recovery efforts that are underway. They are currently in a rapid recovery assessment, and so they have been deploying aerial surveys with Florida Sea Grant, University of Florida, and the Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's Association, and those aerial surveys are providing GIS mapping of where exactly most of these lost traps are.

He reported some pretty alarming numbers of traps that may be missing at this time. There could be quite a few ghost traps in the Gulfstream, and so that will certainly be a concern for a lot of our boaters in Florida. Gary Nichols, who is the primary -- I believe he has the most traps in all the State of Florida, and forgive me if I'm incorrect on that, but he has reported having deployed 6,700 traps, and he expects to hopefully find 1,700. He is spending \$1,000 a day just searching for these traps, and so these aerial surveys to look for these lost traps will be hugely helpful, and those have been going out -- I believe they started going out earlier this week.

In Florida, which is an interesting little fact that Bill Kelly wanted me to share with you all, is that Florida has 465,000 traps, and 350,000 of those are all in Monroe County, and so the actual economic impact could be really significant when we look at the number of traps that have likely gone missing. They are expecting anywhere from 20 to 80 percent of losses, and so it's likely that 175,000 traps are estimated to be a total loss or destroyed.

There is a lot of work to be done in that area, but all of the folks in Florida and in south Florida are working really diligently to get this moving along. Bill Kelly seemed hopeful. Lobster fishermen definitely are a resilient group, and it's likely that they might need some help, but it sounds like everything is moving in the right direction so far, with a lot of agency support.

Here are some photos that Bill shared with me from Gary Nichols, and, if you have any questions about specific stories that might have come in -- We spoke to quite a range of people, and there were some really nice stories, where everyone managed to get by on the skin of their teeth and had no problems, but there is certainly a large community effort underway in south Florida to team up and help everybody out.

MR. HARTIG: I think one of the critical things in our area wasn't just Irma. Jose created a strong swell for about ten or twelve days, and that swell was still going on when the swell from Maria hit, and so the inshore fishery was pretty much toast, because of the turbidity in the water. There was some fishermen that did get out and did catch some fish, but that long-term triple storm -- I have not put my boat back in the water yet, because of that, and there are other fishermen as well, and so it's a longer-period event, and it will have substantial economic consequences for all of us for that period of time.

DR. DUVAL: I will just echo what Ben said and add a little bit more to what Cameron provided. Even though obviously North Carolina did not suffer a direct hit from Irma, but the Outer Banks have suffered tremendously, and it's not just the swell. It's the over-wash that occurs. On NC 12, all up and down there is standing water and sand. I mean, DOT has bulldozers that they just keep up there to try to move that stuff.

That was one of the reasons why we had to reschedule our ASMFC cobia public hearing last week in Hatteras, was because of the over-wash on the roads, and so, even though -- There was impacts from Irma, and there was the swell from Jose, which caused that last week, and then Maria caused mandatory evacuations of visitors from the Outer Banks, so that people wouldn't be impacted, because we really weren't quite sure, based on Irma's creeping west, what was going to happen with Maria, and so they're just now reopening Hatteras Island to visitors, but, with the swell out there, there is no way anybody has been able to go out and fish. Thanks.

MR. BOWEN: Just to give you an update, since Cameron named Steve and I a while ago, I have communicated with Steve this week, and he's just now put his vessel -- He's got it repaired and put his vessel back in the water, just in time for the gale to blow this weekend, and so neither one of us have fished, and back to Matthew and this one and that one, and I keep losing the names of all these storms, but I am just shy of \$19,000 in repairs on my vessel in eleven months, and that's not financed. That's not through a bank. That's paid out, and just to be able to have the opportunity to go fishing, and we still have not left the dock.

DR. MCGOVERN: Cameron, can you tell me what the numbers are again for the spiny lobster traps? You said 465,000 pots, and what is the expected loss out of that?

MS. RHODES: All of these numbers were provided to me by Bill Kelly, and so I would definitely follow up with him on this, but I can give you all of those numbers again. They expect that -- There are 465,000 traps in Florida. 350,000 are in Monroe County. The current estimates say that anywhere between 20 to 80 percent of those traps are going to be a loss, and so they're estimating

that 175,000 have been lost or destroyed. I should note that Bill also told me that that fishery is worth \$150 million annually, but the turnover brings it to about \$9 million.

DR. MCGOVERN: Do you know the value of a single pot, by any chance?

MS. RHODES: I do not. Anyone else?

MR. PHILLIPS: All right. Any other questions?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Not on this point, but I am ready to give Chester the names of the plaintiffs in the aquaculture lawsuit. The plaintiffs are the Gulf Fishermen's Association, the Gulf Restoration Network, the Destin Charter Boat Association, the Alabama Charter Fishing Association, Fish for America, USA, Inc., the Florida Wildlife Federation, the Recirculating Farms Coalition, Food and Water Watch, Inc., and the Center for Food Safety.

MR. BREWER: Are those all plaintiffs, or are some of those amicus curiae?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Those are all the named plaintiffs that I know of, and the briefing, at this point, the schedule is for the final brief to be filed, and I believe that's for the defendants, on February 2, 2018.

MR. BREWER: Thank you.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. Anything else? Any other Other Business? Seeing none, Gregg.

MR. WAUGH: Okay. Upcoming meetings, in October, we've got an I&E AP meeting and then, towards the end, October 24 through 26, is the SSC meeting. Looking to November, you all wanted us to work in -- Our Snapper Grouper AP is meeting November 8 and 9, and you all wanted us to work in a one-day Snapper Grouper Committee meeting, and so we were wondering -- We checked our schedule, and we were wondering if everybody is available on the 13th, Monday, November 13th.

DR. DUVAL: I can't make that. That's when the ASMFC Menhaden Management Board is meeting. It starts meeting at one o'clock that afternoon up in Baltimore.

MR. WAUGH: Is the ASMFC all that week?

DR. DUVAL: No, this is a special -- This is outside of the annual meeting, because there was no way we were going to be able to tackle and finish menhaden, and so the meeting starts at one o'clock on Monday and finishes at five o'clock on Tuesday, the 14th. Then I have a commission meeting the rest of the week.

MR. WAUGH: So that whole week is bad.

DR. DUVAL: That whole week is bad, except for Friday.

MR. WAUGH: Okay. We will regroup and send out a doodle poll to see when. Thank you. Then, of course, we have our council meeting the week of December 4th. That's it. Mr. Chairman. That is in Atlantic Beach, North Carolina.

MR. PHILLIPS: Is there anything else to come? With that, we will find ourselves adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on September 29, 2017.)

Certified By: _____ Date: _____

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DAY 4 SEPT 28, 2017

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Thursday 9/28/17 Public Sign-In

Name	Last	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic?	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic?	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic?	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic?	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic? (Check all that apply)	If Other, please provide more information:
david	bush						ncfa
Rusty	Hudson	Private Recreational	Charter/Headboat/F	Commercial Fisherman	Seafood Dealer/Wholesaler		Fisheries Consultant
Dean	Foster					Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)	
Lora	Clarke					Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)	
Leda	Cunningham	Private Recreational Angler				Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)	
Leda	Cunningham	Private Recreational Angler				Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)	

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Friday 9/29/17 Public Sign-In

Name	Last	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic?	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic?	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic?	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic?	How do you participate in fisheries in the South Atlantic?	If Other, please provide more information:
Dean	Foster					Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)	
Lora	Clarke					Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)	
Leda	Cunningham	Private Recreational Angler				Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)	
Ernest	Muhammad						SC DNR
Rusty	Hudson	Private Recreational Angler	Charter/Headboat/For-Hire	Commercial Fisherman	Seafood Dealer/Wholesaler		Fisheries Consultant