SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
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Summary Report

Habitat Protection and Ecosystem-Based Management
Virtual Advisory Panel Meeting
April 22, 2020

Wednesday, April 22, 2020, 9:00-11:00 a.m., 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Members of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council)'s Habitat Protection and Ecosystem-Based Management Advisory Panel (AP or Panel) convened virtually on April 22 via Go To Meetings webinar to discuss topics pertaining to the conservation of fish and fish habitat and activities advancing Ecosystem Based Fishery Management (EBFM) in the region. The Panel operates on consensus therefore no motions are provided.

[NOTE: Meeting agenda and overview may be found at: https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/AgendaOverviewHabEcoAPWebApril20.pdf]

Wednesday April 22, 2020 9:00 am – 11:00 am

The Advisory Panel (AP) was convened by AP Chair Anne Deaton (North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries; also Chair of the NC Subpanel). Chair Deaton asked that members and guests provide introductions and audio voice checks for recognition. The following AP members were present: Anne Deaton (NC; Chair), Dr. Laurent Cherubin (At-Large), Dr. Cynthia Cooksey (AP Panel Vice-Chair and SC Sub-panel Chair), Dr. Rene Baumstark (FL), Dr. John Galvez (USFWS, FL), Dr. James Geiger (SC), Dr. David Glenn (NC), Jeff Hartzler (FL), Dr. Lisa Havel (ASMFC, At-Large), Brian Hooker (BOEM, At-Large), Thomas Jones (GA), Dr. Paula Keener (SC), Dr. Wilson Laney (SAFMC Regional Habitat Liaison), Bob Martore (SC), Paul Medders (GA Sub-Panel Chair), Rita Merritt (NC), Patricia Murphey (NC), Dr. Steve Ross (At-Large), Shane Staples (NC) and David Webb (FL).

Council members present included the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council's Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Based Management Committee, Steve Poland (NC), and David Whitaker (SC) as well as the Council Vice-Chair Mel Bell.

Council staff present included: Myra Brouwer, Cindy Chaya, Dr. Chip Collier, Dr. Brian Cheuvront, John Hadley, Kim Iverson, Kelly Klasnick, Cameron Rhodes, Suzanna Thomas and Christina Wiegand.

Roger reviewed the changes to the agenda. The AP approved the agenda as modified, and the minutes from the October 2019 meeting as transcribed (Attachment 1: https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/A1_HabitatPro&EcoAPMin_Oct19.pdf)

The following topics (**bold font**) were addressed during the meeting by the indicated presenters. Links are provided to the presentations given to the meeting participants, and a summary of the presentation and any recommendations by the AP to the Council or staff are provided below each topic heading.

The Advisory Panel approved the minutes of October 2019 (Attachment 1, above) and agenda (https://safmc.net/download/BB%20HabitatEcosystem%20AP%20Oct20/AgendaOverviewHabEcoAPWebOct20Rev.pdf).

Chair Deaton recognized Dr. Todd Kellison to give the first presentation.

1. **NOAA Fisheries EBFM Activities for the South Atlantic Region: Status and Timelines for Completion of Deliverables supporting FEP II** (Attachment 2: https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/Late%20Materials/A02_NOAA%20%20Fisheries%20EBFMUpdate%20April%202020.pdf)

Description: Todd Kellison, NOAA Fisheries SEFSC and Kevin Craig, NOAA Beaufort Lab provided the Panel with an update on the status and timelines for completion of the South Atlantic Ecosystem Status Report and the South Atlantic Climate Vulnerability Analysis in support of the NOAA EBFM Implementation Plan for the South Atlantic.

Panel Member Action: With respect to the South Atlantic Ecosystem Status Report, AP members asked questions regarding sea level rise (SLR) data to be included in the report; inclusion of state partner landings data; human dimensions information to be included; principal components analysis specifics; and questioned the omission of any data on the status of estuarine ecosystems in the South Atlantic. Dr. Kellison was asked to provide the draft report, once available, for Habitat AP review and comment.

2. **Mapping/Characterization of South Atlantic Deep Water Ecosystems** (Attachment 3: https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/Late%20Materials/A03_DEEP%20SEARCH%20Pres%20Cordes%20Demopoulos.pdf)

Description: Heather Coleman and Dr. Erik Cortes of NOAA staff provided an overview of Deepwater Mapping and Characterization conducted under the NOAA DEEP SEARCH Program.

Panel Member Action: AP members asked questions about production of new bathymetric maps based on the survey work done by Dr. Cordes and colleagues; about the timing of further presentations to the Council based on the work that has been done; and about other similar habitats located around the world and/or on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. Dr. Keener asked specifically that a link be provided to the office's oceanography supplement for last year and the most current oceanography supplement for this year.

3. **Ecosystem Considerations: Prey supporting Dolphin Wahoo Fisheries** (Attachments 4-5: https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/A4_DW_A02b_AM12_DecisionDocument_2020_03.pdf

https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/A5_DWComm_FINALReport_03_2020.pdf)

Description: Steve Poland, NCDMF, and Chair of the Council's Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Based Management Committee updated members on Council action to designate Bullet and Frigate Mackerel as Ecosystem Component Species.

Panel Member Action: AP members asked about the need for Secretarial authorization for designating Ecosystem Component species and indicated that they were very supportive of the Council's movement forward in designating Bullet and Frigate Mackerels.

Wednesday April 22, 2020 1:00-3:00 p.m.

4. **Kitty Hawk Offshore Wind Project** (Attachments 6-8, 13: https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/A6_Avangrid%20Kitty%20Hawk%20Final%20SAP_25NOV19%20-%20PUBLIC.pdf

https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/A7_FC_A05_KittyHawkWindProj_FisheriesCommPlan.pdf

https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/A8_Buoy%20Fisheries%20Notice%20032020.pdf

https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/Late%20Materials/A13_Robbins%20Pres%20Kitty%20Hawk%20Wind.pdf)

Description: Rick Robbins, Fisheries Liaison Officer for the Kitty Hawk Offshore Wind Project being conducted by Avangrid Renewables, provided members an update on Kitty Hawk Wind Project, Site Assessment Plan, Fisheries Communications Plan and the Meteorological Buoy Deployment Notice.

Panel Member Action: AP members asked Mr. Robbins about the technical specifications of the instruments used to collect multibeam data; security measures taken for the meteorological buoy placed at the lease site; the turbine tower foundation footprints; met buoy deployment schedule; and data availability. Brian Hooker explained to the AP members how to access data from the site via the BOEM web site. Dr. Glenn asked about the availability of wind and wave data from the met buoy. Mr. Robbins will track down the answer to that question with the project team.

5. **Southeast Coastal Ocean Observing Regional Association (SECOORA)** (Attachments 9-11, 14:

https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/A9_Strategic_RCOOS_Plan_2019_FINAL_Combined.pdf

https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/A10_2020-LOI-SOLICITATION.pdf

https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/A11_FACT%20Network.pdf

https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/Late%20Materials/A14_SAFMC%20SECOORA%20Briefing%2020200417.pdf).

Description: Debra Hernandez, SECOORA Executive Director provided an overview of key sections of the SECOORA's Regional Ocean Observing System Plan; the currently open SECOORA LOI process; and an update on FACT network (https://secoora.org/fact/).

Panel Member Action: AP members asked about the opportunity for a graduate student project in south Florida and the east coast, looking at temperature and fisheries; Debra solicited any recommendations for that position from AP members and indicated that she would talk more offline with the members seeking information on that topic.

6. **Council/NOAA Fisheries EFH Consultation and Regional Innovations Workshop** (Attachment 12, 15: https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/A12_CCC-HWG_2019_EFH%20Consultation%20Workshop%20Report_final.pdf

https://safmc.net/download/Briefing%20Book%20Habitat%20AP%20April%202020/Late%20Materials/A15_PuglieseCCCHabWGPresToHEAPApril20.pdf)

Description: Roger Pugliese provided a summary of the Council/NOAA Fisheries EFH Consultation and Regional Innovations Workshop and an overview of the report on the workshop.

Panel Member Action: AP members expressed their appreciation for Roger's presentation and inquired about the availability of the summary report from the workshop. Roger had provided the report in the briefing materials. Members stressed the need for continued coordination with the Council and Advisory Panels, especially with regard to the potential impacts of dredging activities, and the use of environmental dredging windows, and adherence to the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. A recent report provided by NMFS was brought to the attention of the AP (Wickliffe, L.C., F.C. Rohde, K.L. Riley, and J.A. Morris, Jr. (eds.). 2019. An Assessment of Fisheries Species to Inform Time-of-Year Restrictions for North Carolina and South Carolina. NOAA Technical Memorandum NOS NCCOS 263. 268 p. https://doi.org/10.25923/7xdd-nw91). Roger indicated that he would distribute the report to the AP.

The meeting was adjourned following Mr. Pugliese's presentation.