

SAFMC Habitat Program Workplan

2023 & 2024 – 2030

OCTOBER 2023 DRAFT

I. Recurring Tasks

- HEAP: complete a Habitat Annual Report each Spring
- Staff: Update the workplan, present to Council (timing TBD)
- Convene 2 meetings of the HEAP, at least 1 to be held in-person

II. Immediate Tasks – for the remainder of 2023

- Prepare the 2024-2029 workplan for consideration in December 2023.
- Solicit HEAP members based on the revised membership composition for appointments in December 2023.
- Habitat AP, November 2023: Review the Blueprint; Develop a plan to prepare the initial Habitat Annual Report at the Spring 2024 meeting.
- Complete the initial information outlines to support the Tools and Partner evaluations.

III. Short term – 2024-2025

- Complete EFH 5-year review
- Populate Habitat website pages
- Develop the Communication strategy
- Complete the Partner Evaluation
- Complete the Tools Evaluation

IV. Long Term – 2025-2030

- EFH review, 2029/2030

Detailed Guidance for Select Tasks

1. Habitat Tools and Products

Individual tool or product evaluation criteria

- 1.1. Tool Goals and Objectives
- 1.2. Tool ownership and maintenance
- 1.3. Quantitatively evaluate usage
 - 1.3.1. Who are the target users?
 - 1.3.2. Who are the actual users?
 - 1.3.3. How much use received?
 - 1.3.3.1. Web user stats, based on actual use and not searching bots
 - 1.3.3.2. Verified use in documents, comment letters, FMPs etc. Include citations.
 - 1.3.4. Does the tool as provided match the goals and objectives when initiated?
 - 1.3.4.1. Are those goals and objectives still relevant (see 1)
 - 1.3.4.2. Are there additional benefits the tool can provide, or additional goals it can meet?
- 1.4. Costs and funding requirements – development, support, maintenance, QA/QC
- 1.5. Are there other, more direct sources of the info provide by the tool, particularly that may be provided by a partner, NMFS, or otherwise available without SAFMC funding and support.

Overall Evaluation of the suite of tools and products

- 1.1. Identify and list the current-short term-long term Council needs and priorities for the available tools and products
- 1.2. Rank tools and products relative to:
 - 1.2.1. Benefits to the Council
 - 1.2.2. Importance to EFH obligations
 - 1.2.3. Cost-Benefit ratio
 - 1.2.4. Likelihood of providing the necessary support over into the future
- 1.3. Ensure BSIA standards are met by the tool so the information can be used, consider SSC role and potential peer review requirements.
- 1.4. Develop a robust and objective grant submission and review process for maintaining and supporting tools chosen for retention and considering future tools.
 - 1.4.1. Ensure a clear Council role in identifying priorities and needs.

2. Habitat Partners Evaluation Criteria

Provide the following for each partner

1. Name
2. Type (NGO, Government, University, etc.)
3. Purpose of the organization
(Where appropriate include the following: Mission, Goals, Objectives and General focus (research, advocacy, information, etc.)
4. Scope of the partner organization
(Geographic: Local, regional, national and Activities)
5. Other member organizations, with attention to those otherwise associated with SAFMC
6. Purpose of the partnership to SAFMC
7. Benefits to SAFMC
(Where appropriate if it addresses: Habitat program goals and objectives, FMP program, Science program, and Other activities or mandates)
8. Costs to SAFMC
 - 8.1. Financial
(If applicable: Dues, Travel, Support for initiatives, programs, products and Other potential hidden costs)
 - 8.2. Time – travel, meetings, participation
(As appropriate: Staff, APs, Council members, Dues, and Travel)
9. Additional Information to address for an existing partnership:
(History and duration, and Tangible and direct benefits to SAFMC)

3. Habitat Webpage - Draft Outline

1. Homepage
 - 1.1. Infographic conveying Council's habitat role
 - 1.2. General info
 - 1.2.1. Staff contacts
 - 1.2.2. Links to sub pages
 - 1.2.3. Program information overview: purpose statement, goals and objectives, background docs (blueprint)
 - 1.3. Current Workplan
2. Research needs
3. Blueprint
 - 3.1. Blueprint
 - 3.2. Supporting docs links
 - 3.2.1. FMPS addressing Habitat
 - 3.2.2. EFH reviews
 - 3.2.3. Users Guides
 - 3.2.4. MSA and CFR
4. AP
5. EFH
 - 5.1. Habitat Actions –
 - 5.1.1. Amendment links
 - 5.1.2. Link to specific CFR with text descriptions
 - 5.1.3. Maps
 - 5.1.4. Data files
 - 5.1.5. Ongoing and Upcoming – next 5yr review, planned amendments, etc.
 - 5.2. Policy statements
6. Partners

4. Communication strategy

General Guidance

- Clearly state the Councils role in identifying and protecting habitat;
- Use the website and story maps to increase awareness of the Council's role in habitat protection;
- Review other Councils' websites and presentation of EFH for ways to improve SAFMC's presentation
- Highlight habitat protection work separately from ecosystem-based management work;
- Develop a short video on what the Council can and cannot do relevant to habitat;
- Make a general connection between healthy habitat and healthy fisheries;
- Use an infographic to illustrate the role of the Council.

Tasks – 2024

1. Develop text and an infographic, suitable for use on the website and in outreach materials, to clearly state the Councils role in identifying and protecting habitat.
2. Develop an annual plan for habitat outreach and noticing activities
 - 2.1. Address recurring events such as national habitat month
 - 2.2. Coordinate with Council timing (AP, committee, etc)
3. Develop a plan for creating the suggested video on council habitat roles.
4. Conduct a review of other Council approaches to presenting EFH information.
5. Discussion of Lake Okeechobee discharges with focus on impacts to Oculina reef off Florida and impacts to the deepwater shrimp fishery.