



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Carolyn N. Belcher, Ph.D., Chair | Trish Murphey, Vice Chair
John Carmichael, Executive Director

AGENDA

Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Based Management Committee

Beaufort Hotel
2440 Lennoxville Rd,
Beaufort, NC 28516

Thursday, December 7, 2023 – 10:30 A.M – 12:00 Noon (Times subject to change)

Approval of Agenda

Approval of minutes (September 2023)

1. Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel (HEAP) Report (*Attachment 1a and 1b*)
 - a. Review November 2023 Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Report – Paul Medders, GADNR (AP Vice Chair)
2. EFH 5 Year Review Update: Process and AP Subcommittees (*Attachment 2*)
Committee Action: Provide guidance on suggested approach for EFH 5-year review.
3. SAFMC Habitat Blueprint (*Attachments 3a and 3b*)
 - a. Review Habitat Blueprint Workplan
 - b. Review the draft outline for the annual report addressing habitat activities throughout the Southeast region.
Committee Action: Provide guidance as appropriate.
4. Coral Management (*Attachment 4*)
 - a. Guidance on utilization of deepwater coral modeling for management
 - b. Coral Amendment 10 – guidance on resubmission
Committee Action: Provide guidance as appropriate
5. Approve agenda topics for Spring 2024 Habitat and Ecosystem AP Meeting
 - a. Overview
Committee Action: Review and approve list of agenda items as modified.

Other Business

Adjourn

Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Based Management Committee

Trish Murphey, Chair

Mel Bell, Vice Chair

Robert Beal

Carolyn Belcher

Gary Borland

Lt. Cameron Box

Tim Griner

Judy Helmey

Kerry Marhefka

Jessica McCawley

Tom Roller

Robert Spottswood, Jr.

Andy Strelcheck

Laurilee Thompson

Spud Woodward

Attachments

Attachment 1a: Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Report (November 2023)

Attachment 1b: Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Report Presentation (November 2023)

Attachment 2: EFH 5-year review update: Process and Subcommittees

Attachment 3a: Draft 2024-2029 Habitat Program Workplan

Attachment 3b: Draft annual report outline

Attachment 4: Presentation to discuss possible coral management actions

Staff Contact: Kathleen.howington@safmc.net

OVERVIEW

Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Based Management Committee

The Committee will approve minutes from the September 2023 meeting and the agenda for the current meeting.

1. Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Report (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)

Description: Paul Medders, GADNR (AP Vice Chair) will review the November 2023 Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Report.

Required Committee Action: Consider HEAP recommendations and provide guidance to staff.

2. EFH 5 Year Review Update: Process and AP Subcommittees (*Attachment 2*)

Description: Council staff will provide an update on the EFH 5-Year Review process and discuss the report from the [National Fish Habitat Summit](#) held in 2017 focusing on what a 5-year review of EFH should entail and if we are meeting that goal.

- *Buttonwood Clarification Subcommittee:* Simen Kaalstad, Chair, Rene Baumstark, David Webb
- *Limited FEP II Update (Prey and References) Subcommittee:* Wilson Laney, Chair, Kevin Spanik, Laurent Cherubin
- *Tidal Freshwater Boundary Subcommittee:* Casey Knight, Chair, Anne Deaton, Stacie Crowe, Rene Baumstark, Wilson Laney, Paul Medders, Sam Young

Required Committee Action: Discuss the EFH review and provide guidance.

3. SAFMC Habitat Blueprint 2024-2029 Workplan and Annual Report Outline (*Attachments 3a and 3b*)

Council staff will review a draft workplan for 2024-2029 habitat program activities, including input from the Habitat and Ecosystem AP. Staff will also review an outline for the annual report meant to address habitat activities during the prior calendar year, as outlined in the Habitat Blueprint.

Required Committee Action: Review workplan and draft Annual Habitat Activities Report outline.

4. Coral Management (*Attachment 4*)

Council staff will provide a general overview of how recent modeling work (presented to the SSC in April 2023), could be used for management. Additionally, staff will review the action proposed in Coral Amendment 10 and the reason for its disapproval in July, 2022 ([disapproval letter](#)). A [presentation from the SEFSC](#) was provided to the Council in September 2022 summarizing the results of a survey of the proposed Shrimp Fishery Access Area in Coral Amendment 10.

Required Committee Action: Discuss potential management actions resulting from deepwater coral modeling work and provide guidance to staff. Provide guidance on whether or when to resubmit Coral Amendment 10.

5. Agenda Items for Habitat Protection and Ecosystem Based Management Advisory Panel Spring 2024 Meeting

Council staff will review a draft list of potential agenda items noted below to be covered during the spring 2024 Habitat and Ecosystem AP meeting:

- EFH 5 year review
- Inclusion of wind energy in the [Energy Exploration, Development, Transportation and Hydropower Re-Licensing](#) policy
- Annual Habitat Activities Report
- Review Progress on the Habitat website pages.
- Review progress on the Habitat Program Communication Strategy
- Citizen Science Update: SciFish and Online Project Portal

Other topics of interest

- Review of tide gate and Living Shoreline projects and discussion on future impacts
- Review the impact of the loss of artificial reefs
- Revision of [Alterations to Riverine, Estuarine and Nearshore Flows](#) policy to address Indian river lagoon discharge.
- Space program impacts on habitat
- Sackett vs EPA impacts on wetlands

Other Business