



THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Agenda

Stacie Crowe, Chair | Paul Medders, Vice Chair

Hilton Garden Inn Charleston Airport & Convention Center 5625 International Blvd, North Charleston, SC 29418

October 28 - 30, 2024

Other than the starting and ending times of the meeting, times indicated on the agenda are approximate, and the order of business may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the completion of agenda items. Interested parties should be aware that discussions may start earlier or later than indicated.

Public comment will be solicited at the beginning and at the end of the meeting. Those wishing to comment should indicate such in the manner requested by the Chair, who will recognize individuals to provide comment in-person or on the webinar.

Monday, October 28, 2024, 1 pm – 5 pm

Welcome and Introductions

Approval of Agenda – Stacie Crowe, AP Chair

Approval of April 2024 AP Minutes – Stacie Crowe

Public Comment

Habitat and Ecosystem Committee Chair Remarks – Trish Murphey

1. Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) 5-Year Review (*Attachments 1a- 1c*)

- a. Food Web Policy Update (Prey and References) Subcommittee Report - Wilson Laney
- b. Next 5-year review: Long term goals – Kathleen Howington
- c. Panel Member Discussion and Recommendations – Stacie Crowe

Tuesday, October 29, 2024, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

- 2. EFH Policy Statement on Energy – Paula Keener (*Attachment 2*)**
 - a. Panel Member Discussion and Recommendations – Stacie Crowe
- 3. Review of upcoming projects that require EFH consultations – Kathleen Howington and Jordan Wolfe (*Attachment 3*)**
 - a. Panel Member Discussion and Recommendations – Stacie Crowe
- 4. Revision of Alterations to Riverine, Estuarine and Nearshore Flows policy to address impacts from freshwater discharges and impediments to river flow (*Attachments 4a and 4b*) – Kathleen Howington**
 - a. Panel Member Discussion and Recommendations – Stacie Crowe
- 5. Offshore wind infrastructure coverage and artificial reef footprint - Brendan Runde and Avery Paxton (*Attachment 5*)**
 - a. Panel Member Discussion and Recommendations – Stacie Crowe

Wednesday, October 30, 2024, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

- 6. Army Corps of Engineers Project for Reefs - Kevin Spanik (*Attachment 6a and 6b*)**
 - a. Panel Member Discussion and Recommendations – Stacie Crowe
- 7. Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council Fishing Effects Database and App– David Stephenson (*Attachment 7a and 7b*)**
 - a. Panel Member Discussion and Recommendations – Stacie Crowe
- 8. SAFMC Habitat Blueprint – Kathleen Howington (*Attachment 8*)**
 - a. Habitat Website: Review Progress on the Habitat website
 - b. Tools and Partner Evaluation
 - c. Habitat Program Outreach and Communication Strategy

9. Review Workplan - Kathleen Howington (*Attachment 9*)

10. Meeting Dates and Methods discussion – Kathleen Howington (*Attachment 10*)

- a. Panel Member Discussion and Recommendations – Stacie Crowe

11. Other Business

Public Comment

Adjourn

Attachments

Attachment 1a: Food web policy

Attachment 1b: Presentation on changes made to the Food Web Policy

Attachment 1c: Next EFH 5-year Review Goals

Attachment 2: EFH Policy Statement on Energy

Attachment 3: Review of Upcoming projects that require EFH consultations

Attachment 4a: Riverine, Estuarine and Nearshore Flows Policy

Attachment 4b: Review of Flow policy working group process

Attachment 5: Offshore wind infrastructure coverage and artificial reef footprint

Attachment 6a: Army Corps of Engineers Project for Reefs

Attachment 6b: Post 45 Mitigation Reef Monitoring Final Report

Attachment 7a: MAFMC Fishing Effects Database and App description

Attachment 7b: MAFMC Fishing effects Database presentation

Attachment 8: Habitat Blueprint Update Presentation

Attachment 9: Habitat and Ecosystem AP Workplan

Attachment 10: Meeting dates and Methods

OVERVIEW

Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel

The Advisory Panel will approve the minutes of the April 2024 HEAP meetings and the agenda for the current meeting. Trish Murphey, NCDMF, Chair of the Habitat and Ecosystem Committee and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, will make opening remarks (Final April 2024 Advisory Panel Minutes included in briefing material).

1. NOAA Fisheries EFH 5 Year Review (*Attachments 1a, 1b, 1c*)

Description: The Subcommittee formed during the May 2023 meeting to support the EFH Review for the Food Web Policy (Prey and References) will report out. The panel will discuss edits to the Food Web Policy and how to integrate the edits to the User guide. The panel will discuss the next 5-year review goals.

AP Action: Provide input on the Subcommittee report supporting the EFH review. Provide input on the Five-year review goals.

SAFMC EFH 5 Year Review – Subcommittee members (May 2023) Limited FEP II Update (Prey and References) Subcommittee

- Wilson Laney, Chair
- Kevin Spanik
- Laurent Cherubin
- Honorary members: Chip Collier and Lauren Gentry

2. EFH Policy Statement on Energy (*Attachments 2a and 2b*)

Description: Paula Keener, Energy Policy Workgroup Chair, will highlight the activities of the Workgroup and review the draft Energy Policy update, which refines the core policy addressing primarily oil and gas exploration and develops a new section highlighting renewable energy and offshore wind development.

AP Action: Recommend the policy for submission to the Council.

3. Review of Upcoming projects that require EFH consultations (*Attachment 3*)

Description: Kathleen Howington and Jordan Wolfe, Habitat Conservation Division, will review the multiple complex project types that the Habitat and Conservation Division foresees reviewing more of in the future. These projects include Living Shorelines Beneficial Use of Dredged Material, Shoreline Stabilization, Thin Layer Placement, Tide Gates in Salt Marsh Habitat, and projects for Managing Flood Risk from tides, sea level rise, stormwater, & storm surge.

AP Action: Discuss possible recommendations for the Council. Provide feedback on where the Council could be involved in EFH consultations.

4. Revision of Alterations to Riverine, Estuarine and Nearshore Flows policy to address impacts from freshwater discharges and impediments to river flow (*Attachments 4a and 4b*)

Description: In April 2024, Daniel Kolodny from the Indian River Lagoon Council gave a general description of the Indian River Lagoon and the issues that are affecting its habitat health. The HEAP recommended to the Council, and the Council approved, a revision to the Alterations to Riverine, Estuarine and Nearshore Flows Policy to address impacts of freshwater discharge and impediments to river flow.

AP Action: Discuss revisions to the Policy to address these issues. Establish a working group to work on the revisions.

5. Offshore wind infrastructure coverage and artificial reef footprint (*Attachment 5*)

Description: Brendan Runde and Avery Paxton (SEFSC) will summarize their offshore wind project and artificial reef footprint findings.

AP Action: No Action

6. Army Corps of Engineers Project for Reefs (*Attachment 6a and 6b*)

Description: Kevin Spanik will summarize the report provided by the Army Corps of Engineers and SCDNR on Post 45 Mitigation Reef Monitoring.

AP Action: No Action

7. Fishing Effects Database and App (*Attachment 7a and 7b*)

Description: Dr. David Stevenson (MAFMC) will give a short summary of the Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council Fishing Effects Database and how to use the app.

AP Action: Provide feedback on the data included in the database and recommend sources of information to fill data gaps.

8. SAFMC Habitat Blueprint (*Attachments 8a and 8b*)

Description: Kathleen Howington will review progress on the webpage for the Habitat Program. The panel will review the tools and partners for the Habitat program and provide feedback on outreach/communication plans.

AP Action: Identify any additional partners the HEAP should establish a communication pathway with. Identify current methods for communicating habitat information to the public. Discuss future communication goals and methods.

9. Review Workplan (*Attachment 9*)

Description: The Panel will discuss the short- and long-term goals for the HEAP.

AP Action: Approve the revised work plan for submission to the Council.

12. Meeting Dates and Methods discussion (*Attachment 10*)

Description: The panel will discuss the next meeting dates and methods.

AP Action: Decide on the next meeting date and make a recommendation for the future of the HEAP meeting methods and dates.

Other Business

Public Comment

Adjourn