



# SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Trish Murphey, Chair | Jessica McCawley, Vice Chair  
John Carmichael, Executive Director

## AGENDA

### **Habitat and Ecosystem Committee**

Villas by the Sea  
1175 Beachview Drive  
Jekyll Island, GA 31527

**Tuesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025, 3:00 PM – 4:00 PM**

Approval of Agenda

Approval of Minutes (September 2024)

1. Habitat and Ecosystem AP report (October 2024) – Stacie Crowe, Habitat & Ecosystem AP Chair (*Attachment 1a-1c*)
2. 2024 Annual Habitat Report (*Attachment 2*)
3. Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Workplan (*Attachment 3*)

Other Business

Adjourn

### **Habitat Committee Members:**

Trish Murphey, Chair

Tom Roller, Vice Chair

Robert Beal

Carolyn Belcher

Gary Borland

Amy Dukes

Tim Griner

Judy Helmey

Jimmy Hull

Kerry Marhefka

Jessica McCawley

Lt. Tom Pease

Charlie Phillips

Robert Spottswood, Jr.

Andy Strelcheck

**Attachments:**

**Attachment 1a:** Habitat and Ecosystem AP report (October 2024)

**Attachment 1b:** Habitat and Ecosystem AP report presentation

**Attachment 1c:** Essential Fish Habitat Letter to NMFS

**Attachment 2:** 2024 Annual Habitat Report

**Attachment 3:** Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Workplan

**Staff Lead:** Kathleen Howington ([kathleen.howington@safmc.net](mailto:kathleen.howington@safmc.net))

# **OVERVIEW**

## **Habitat and Ecosystem Committee**

The Committee will approve the minutes from the September 2024 meeting and the agenda for the March 2025 Committee meeting.

### **1. Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel (HEAP) Report (*Attachments 1a-1c*)**

**Description:** Stacie Crowe, SCDNR, HEAP Chair, will deliver the April 2024 HEAP report. Staff will review the letter summarizing the HEAP's five-year Essential Fish Habitat review.

**Committee Action:** Consider HEAP recommendations and provide guidance to staff. Review and approve the EFH letter for submittal to NMFS.

### **2. SAFMC Annual Habitat Report (*Attachment 2*)**

**Description:** Council staff will review the annual report including habitat activities during 2024, as outlined in the Habitat Blueprint.

**Committee Action:** Review the 2024 Annual Habitat Report

### **3. Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel Workplan (*Attachment 3*)**

Council staff will review the HEAP's Workplan that includes the following items to discuss during the Summer 2025 meeting:

- Review progress on the habitat website.
- Review progress on the habitat program communication strategy
- Essential Fish Habitat Consultations
- Review of beneficial use projects and discussion on future impacts
- Revision of [Alterations to Riverine, Estuarine and Nearshore Flows](#) policy to address impacts from freshwater discharges and impediments to river flow
- Space program impacts on habitat (if the information is available).
- Central Virginia Offshore Wind (CVOW) update from Dominion Energy on habitat created by wind farms and fish mortality during construction
- Sea Optic fiber cables
- Climate readiness projects overview and EFH project update
- Climate and Ecosystem Fisheries Initiative (CEFI) Overview
- Identify higher abundance locations and additional life stage information for EFH clarification in each fishery management plan (improving EFH tier structure)
- Integrate food web information from food web policy into EFH definitions
- Work plan update

**Committee Action:** Approve the agenda topics for the 2025 Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel summer meeting.

### **Other Business**