

**SUMMARY REPORT
FROM THE
INFORMATION AND EDUCATION
COMMITTEE MEETING
St. Simons Island, GA
March 7, 2013**

The Information and Education Committee met on Thursday, March 7, 2013. The Committee received an update on the Marine Resources Education Program for the Southeast Region, including the MREP Science Workshop scheduled for April 2-4, 2013 in Tampa, Florida, and the *Managing Our Nation's Fisheries 3* national fisheries conference scheduled for May 7-9, 2013 in Washington, DC.

The Committee reviewed a summary report from a joint meeting of the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel and the Information and Education Advisory Panel held on February 6, 2013. The following items were included in the report: 1) Outreach efforts for Vessel Monitoring Systems; 2) Development of the South Atlantic Fishing Regulations mobile application; 3) Law enforcement information for the SAFMC website upgrade; and 4) Improvements in dissemination of regulatory changes to law enforcement field officers.

The Committee received a demonstration of the new South Atlantic Fish Regulations App from Outreach Specialist Amber Von Harten. The new app has been completed and was released for both Android and Apple platforms this week. As directed by the Council, the App includes regulations and other information for species managed by the Council, as well as Highly Migratory Species. Council staff acknowledged assistance from NOAA Fisheries staff, NOAA OLE, the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel, and National Marine Sanctuary staff in review of the information within the app.

The Committee also reviewed the Summary Report from the meeting of the Information and Education Advisory Panel held on February 7, 2013. The Summary Report included recommendations from the advisory panel regarding: 1) MREP Southeast; 2) use of social media tools; 3) the SAFMC website upgrade; 4) Proposed Outreach Activities for 2013-2014; 5) the Council's Visioning Process; and 6) Communications Strategic Planning.

Council staff updated the Committee members on the Council's use of social media tools, including Facebook and recent implementation of the Council's Twitter account.

During the Committee meeting, the issue of a policy directive regarding email correspondence for Council members was discussed. NOAA General Counsel agreed to provide legal guidance.

The Committee provided the following directions to staff:

- There was support for including additional information on the SAFMC website regarding VMS, including a presentation by NOAA Fisheries Service provided at the March 2013 meeting.
- Emphasize success stories for use of VMS in outreach materials.
- Include information on the Council's website and Facebook page regarding the Council's consideration of modification/additional Marine Protected Areas to reduce bycatch of speckled hind and Warsaw grouper.

- Conduct live Q&A during Council meetings using Twitter and allow questions to be asked through video streaming during the public Q&A sessions.
- There was support for the addition of a new section of the website to include “Amendments Under Development”.
- Utilize informal constituent meetings organized by fishermen as an opportunity for outreach on specific issues.
- The Committee requested additional guidance from NOAA General Counsel regarding a policy directive to the Regional Fishery Management Councils specific to email correspondence per a memo presented during the Committee meeting.