



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Ben Hartig, Chair
Dr. Michelle Duval, Vice-Chair

Robert K. Mahood, Executive Director
Gregg T. Waugh, Deputy Executive Director

Summary Report: Information & Education Advisory Panel Meeting Crowne Plaza Hotel 4381 Tanger Outlet Boulevard North Charleston, SC May 5, 2014

The Information and Education Advisory Panel met May 5th in North Charleston, SC. The advisory panel received the following presentations and provided comments/ recommendations to Council staff.

Overview of SAFMC Outreach Activities 2013-2014:

Amber Von Harten, Council staff, provided an overview of highlighted Council outreach activities from 2013-2014. Outreach activities completed to date include the SAFMC website upgrade, *SA Fishing Regulations* mobile app, SAFMC Visioning Project and associated outreach materials (flyers, overview, port meeting discussion form), and Q&A webinars with technical staff prior to public hearings. Staff presented the beta version of the SAFMC blog that will be developed in 2014 and solicited input from the AP on strategies for developing blog articles.

Overview and Update of Council Visioning Project & Port Meetings:

Amber Von Harten, Council staff, provided an overview of the SAFMC Visioning Project and the port meetings associated with the project to collect input from stakeholders. The Visioning Project will develop a long-term plan for the snapper grouper fishery and was initiated by the Council in December 2012. Since that time staff has facilitated Council member visioning workshops at each Council meeting to help the council develop a draft vision statement, goals and objectives for the project and a method to collect stakeholder input. To collect input from stakeholder, the Council chose to host port meetings in key fishing communities throughout the region. 27 port meetings were conducted throughout NC, SC, GA and FL with 360 stakeholders participating in the meetings. Staff provided the AP highlights of the issues that were identified region-wide. The Council will receive state by state summaries of the port meetings at their June 2014 Council meeting; sector summaries at the September 2014 Council meeting, and will hold a special Council workshop October 14-16, 2014 to begin development of the strategic plan for the snapper grouper fishery. Staff also provided information on the outreach materials and activities associated with the Visioning Project.

Overview of the Oculina Experimental Closed Area (OECA) Evaluation Plan and the Outreach component of the OECA Evaluation Plan 2014 Draft Report:

Kim Iverson, Council staff, provided an overview of the history of the OECA and updates on the draft outreach component of the OECA Evaluation Plan. The AP reviewed the recommendations of the Outreach Team and provided the following additional recommendations:

Objective 2. Develop a focused campaign targeting recreational/commercial fishermen in the central eastern Florida area.

Project 1. Provide SAFMC regulation brochures to area fishermen

Recommendations from the AP:

- Include USFWC Wildlife Refuges in the area for distribution of materials.
- Recommend purchasing advertising space on fishing forums.
- Work with other NGOs, e.g., CCA to provide information on regulations.
- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 2. Work with fishing chart manufacturers and or vendors to improve available information for the *Oculina* Experimental Closed Area.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 3. Work with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) to provide written information regarding the *Oculina* Experimental Closed Area in (a) their publications targeting both recreational and commercial fishermen and in (b) mailings for fishing licenses and permits.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 4. Develop and distribute news releases to focus on law enforcement activities, research and monitoring projects, and the ecological importance of the area.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Capitalize on the 20-year anniversary of the OECA for media purposes.
- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 5. Develop a Powerpoint presentation about the *Oculina* Experimental Closed Area, distribute on CD, post at Web site, and present to fishing clubs, environmental groups, local governments etc.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 6. Develop and distribute posters and rack cards/brochures at area bait and tackle shops, marinas, fish houses, boating stores, fishing tournaments, boat shows, etc.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Develop a current list of boating/fishing stores and tournaments to target for future distribution.
- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 7 (NEW): Develop kiosk for target boat ramps/landings.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Work with marinas that participate in the Clean Marina program to display/place kiosks and/or signage.
- Work with USFWS wildlife refuges as well to develop and place new or existing kiosks/signage within refuge boat landings/ramps.
- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Objective 3: Coordinate a broader media campaign with partners to reach central Florida residents and visitors using newspaper, radio, TV, Internet, and existing environmental education network (e.g. environmental centers, schools, academia, area businesses).

Project 1: Develop an *Oculina* Web site or work within the existing site to establish a comprehensive web-based outlet to include access to useful education and outreach products. Publicize availability of information from new site by having links posted on other fishing/Non-Governmental Organizations/tourism related web sites.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Use FWC “Gone Coastal” for distribution of information on OECA.
- Partner with University of Miami RASMAS for student production of videos – Beneath the Waves Film Festival.
- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 2: Develop education products for teachers (K-12) and informal educators, post on Web site, and develop packet for distribution to science teachers.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Identify *Oculina* scientist or researcher spokesperson to do Skype interviews with current or past NOAA Teacher at Sea participants. Work with NOAA Fisheries on getting contacts and help facilitate the exchange.
- Florida Marine Science Educators Association may be a target audience to help distribute education products for teachers and informal educators (www.fmsea.org). Also ask them to post information on OECA on their website.
- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 3: Create media packet targeting ecological importance of area; packet should include popular news items about *Oculina* Experimental Closed Area.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 4: Develop a traveling portable exhibit that can be displayed at fishing tournaments, tradeshow, seafood/maritime festivals, aquariums, science museums, libraries, government centers, etc.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Consider the USFWS wildlife refuges for use of the portable exhibit (especially Merritt Island, FL). Jennifer Koches, AP member, offered to help make connections.
- Consider creating panel style, pop-up displays that could be shared among partners; low cost, easy to travel, and can be changed out more frequently.

- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 5: Offer media excursions to the *Oculina* Experimental Closed Area and HAPC/ tours and interviews regarding enforcement activities onboard the *CT Randall* law enforcement vessel.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Science Online blogging events may be a good outlet for reaching a wider audience during media excursions.
- June 27, 1994 was when the rule was implemented. Upcoming 20th anniversary could be good time to push a social media campaign highlighting the OECA; Collaborate with NOAA Fisheries, FL FWC and other partners to coordinate a social media campaign the week of June 27th, 2014.
- Include an agenda item during the Habitat Committee at the upcoming June 2014 SAFMC meeting to highlight the 20th anniversary of OECA. (Recommendation from Council staff, Gregg Waugh.)
- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 6: Develop TV documentaries working with environmental TV outlets (e.g., Discovery Channel, Public TV).

Recommendations from the AP:

- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 7: Work within existing program to deploy a real time data buoy in the *Oculina* Bank area to provide weather and sea-state information for boaters and fishermen and integrate information into web site.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Project 8: Assist with the continued development of an interpretive *Oculina* coral display at the Smithsonian Marine Station in Ft. Pierce, Florida.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Objective 4: Evaluation

Project 1: Develop a survey tool to assess the effectiveness of the campaign and widely distribute before, during and after majority of activities underway.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Consider using pre and post surveys (web-based or print) with teach workshop participants.
- Use social media posts and measure the “likes” and comments received as a measure of the effectiveness of using social media for outreach on OECA; also consider using Q&A type social media posts to gauge stakeholder knowledge about OECA and outreach efforts.
- Use electronic survey – GoDelivery, Survey Monkey, and other survey software – as a mechanism to evaluate education projects for OECA.

- Send an evaluation survey to participating teacher workshop participants.
- Consider using law enforcement violations as a measure of effectiveness of the outreach campaign. (Work with law enforcement to calculate the number of violations since the OECA was implemented to see if violations have declined; make linkages with outreach campaigns and law enforcement.)
- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

****NOTE:** Kim will send a copy of the survey that was previously used so that the AP can provide further recommendations about the survey and use of a survey as an evaluation tool.

Project 2: Continue to receive input from local constituents (through the database established from the June 2004 outreach meetings) regarding the development of materials and level of community awareness.

Recommendations from the AP:

- Develop a list of area constituent groups for targeting outreach campaigns.
- Develop a list of area festivals, fishing tournaments, etc. for targeting outreach campaigns.
- Consider use of a survey that asks questions of fishermen about their offshore fishing activities (general locations, types of fishing, etc.) that may coincide with areas around the OECA and other types of survey questions designed at targeting an audience for outreach efforts.
- Support the recommendations of the Evaluation Team.

Update on the Marine Resource Education Program (MREP) for the South East Region

Kim Iverson, Council staff, provided an update to the ongoing MREP project for the South East Region. The program has continued in 2014 with 29 participants from throughout the region. However, the program is dependent on continued funding. Kim Amendola, NOAA Fisheries/AP member, gave details on the past funding – Walton Foundation, NOAA Fisheries, NFWF for 2013; 2014 was funded through NOAA, FL-FWC (2 funding sources) and additional funding through GMRI; 2015 funding will likely come from FL-FWC and the Walton Foundation. Finding a commitment for a long-term source of funding is imperative to the continuation of MREP Southeast. The program is well supported and has put 60 fishermen through the program so far.

There was discussion about hosting the meeting in other locations and the possibility of having state-level MREP projects.

- The MREP Southeast Steering Committee felt strongly that having the meeting in Tampa facilitated regional collaboration among participants and access to the federal labs.
- There is some consideration of having the management workshop in other locations (possibly Panama City for the Science Workshop; Charleston, SC for Management Workshop).
- There is also consideration of adding a third workshop that would be a Field/Data Collection Workshop to incorporate field sampling methods.
- Two areas that could also be considered in terms of outreach and MREP:
 - The scope of observations from the fishermen vs. the scientists (their view maybe different from the scientists); help the scientists to identify large themes for outreach;

- Help scientists with observational data (they are always looking in the rear view mirror) and the need to communicate how scientists vs. the fishermen view the fishery. Our role as outreach staff is to help both sides interpret the science vs. what fishermen are seeing on the water and help bridging that information gap.
- The Caribbean is considering bringing a separate program to the Caribbean as a stand-alone MREP Caribbean.

Election of Chair & Vice Chair

The former Chair and Vice Chair of the I&E AP both recently resigned their seats on the AP leaving the AP without a Chair or Vice Chair. Therefore, the AP conducted nominations and elections of a Chair and Vice Chair for the advisory panel. Scott Baker and Richard Abrams were elected Chair and Vice Chair of the AP, respectively.

MOTION: APPOINT SCOTT BAKER AS CHAIR OF THE I&E AP.

MOTION APPROVED

MOTION: APOINT RICHARD ABRAMS AS VICE CHAIR OF THE I&E AP.

MOTION APPROVED

Other Business

Staff discussed with the AP the possibility of following up on previous suggestions from the AP about developing a Communications Plan for the Council's Information & Outreach activities. Charlene Ponce, GMFMC and AP member, provided information about the Gulf Council's Communication plan. She indicated that the plan is currently under review and that it is a valuable tool for the agency. The AP supported development of a Communications Plan for SAFMC at future AP meetings.

I&E AP Members in Attendance:

Scott Baker, Chair

Richard Abrams, Vice Chair

Shelly Krueger

Patricia Smith

Phil Maier

Paul Medders

Lt. Mike Mastrianni

Kim Amendola

Jennifer Koches

Charlene Ponce

Diana Martino

Staff Contact: Amber Von Harten