

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
INFORMATION AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Jekyll Island Club Hotel
Jekyll Island, GA

March 3, 2010

DRAFT MINUTES

Information and Education Committee:

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Tom Swatzel

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Dr. Nick Farmer
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Dr. Jack McGovern
Jennifer Lee
Cathy Sakas

Nancy Fish
Phil Steele
Dr. Bonnie Ponwith
Bob Gill
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Additional Observers and Participants Attached

The Information and Education Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened in the Club Ballroom of the Jekyll Island Club Hotel, Jekyll Island, Georgia, March 3, 2010, and was called to order at 11:42 o'clock a.m. by Chairman Robert H. Boyles, Jr.

MR. BOYLES: The first item on the agenda is the approval of the agenda. Are there any suggested changes or additions to the agenda? Seeing none, the agenda will stand approved by acclamation. Well, Kim, I guess we don't have meeting minutes to approved. Okay, no meeting minutes so we will go right to council outreach efforts and turn it over to Kim.

MS. IVERSON: I will attempt to go through this full agenda very quickly. I want to acknowledge that we have Cathy Sakas, our vice-chairman from our I&E Advisory Panel. We met earlier this week for a very productive meeting for two days and all of the committee members should have gotten a copy of the summary of the AP recommendations from that two-day meeting.

I will attempt to go through some of the agenda items that we discussed and you have the list of recommendations before you. I've asked Cathy to help go through some of those recommendations based on the agenda before you this morning. What I wanted to do was quickly provide you with a – again, thank you to Anna for helping with organizing and following through with the I&E AP meeting earlier this week.

I wanted to go through and give you kind of an overview. It has been two years since our Information and Education Advisory Panel met, so a lot of things have changed since we were together. What I wanted to update the committee on are some of the outreach efforts that I informed the I&E Advisory Panel and just refresh your memory on some of the things that have been in the works in the past couple of years.

You're familiar with the MPA Regulations Brochure. That was a cooperative effort with South Carolina Sea Grant. There were 20,000 copies made and distributed throughout the South Atlantic, very similar to the process we used for our regulations brochure, our general regulations brochure. The document was well received and the AP members had positive comments on that.

We also put up our portable Oculina Bank Display with our DVD monitor and revealing the DVD. I wanted to let the committee know that this display has been used. We have had requests from the South Carolina Marine Educators Association. It was used at their conference back in November. Myra and I are going down to Georgia to Deepwater Coral Teachers Workshop at the Georgia Aquarium in a couple of weeks, the 13th of March. They've requested that we set the display up there as part of that workshop.

The Fisheries Training Center has requested the utilization of the display as part of their training program. We asked the AP to please give us comments and make sure that we could further use the display and advertise its availability. Right now we don't have a checkout process for it. Quite honestly, with everything else that has been going on, we'll work towards advertising the availability of this.

I remind the committee members that this is available at the state level. Anyone can borrow this and set it up for an indefinite period of time until someone else requires it or wishes to use it. Overall in 2009 the councils received \$50,000 from NOAA Fisheries to gear towards outreach efforts in a unified manner.

The eight regional management councils collaboratively got together and said how could we best utilize this money, worked with the executive directors from each of the councils and came up with a strategic plan. Part of that strategic plan included the publication of a national four-color brochure that you've seen before that highlights the councils. I think this has been well received by the public.

Sometime when we get questions, well, who are these people and how is that different from the National Marine Fisheries Service or how does that integrate with the states, this publication has proved really helpful. The publication was also distributed last June at the Capitol Hill Oceans Week and as part of the councils' participation.

Part of that national outreach effort was sponsorship of the National Marine Educators Association Journal "Current". We had to purchase the rights to have an entire issue dedicated to the regional fishery management councils. Again, we worked collaboratively to create articles and highlight some of the issues that the councils are facing.

Myra Brouwer worked on a deepwater coral article; I think you have seen that. Anna and I collaboratively worked on a summit to summarize fisheries of the U.S., which was a daunting task. This publication, of course, was distributed to all members of the National Marine Educators Association and extra copies were purchased using that funding that we received from NOAA Fisheries to distribute to the councils.

Part of that ongoing effort was recreation of a National Unified Council Website. It's www.fisherycouncils.org. We can visit that site later, but I just cut and paste some things out of it. Some of the fishermen on the home page of the site you will recognize as being from the South Atlantic. In addition to the website, reinitiating the website and updating that, we have a portable display that uses, as we affectionately refer to, the Goat Fish Brochure, that one I noted earlier.

That graphic was used on the back of an all-council display and we have that – it's down in the Caribbean right now, but we can check that out anytime when you want to talk about all the original fishery management councils. Back to Capitol Hill Oceans Week, we paid to sponsor a plenary session as part of the outreach efforts on Capitol Hill back in 2009.

Unfortunately, that coincides every year – it's the second week in June – with our Florida council meeting so I've not been able to personally participate, but they are looking for chefs this year to participate in CHOW 2010. Megan Westmeyer from the Sustainable Seafood Initiative that participates from the Shrimp AP has volunteered to have a chef from Charleston participate, and I think we'll be pushing for that. That was the 50K in a snapshot. We have requested additional funding for outreach efforts.

Doing outreach efforts was a really good positive thing for us to work collaboratively to do this project, and we have been told that the councils won't have specific funding for that, but we will work with each other in the future to continue to work collaboratively for outreach. Another outreach effort that we've mentioned briefly in previous meetings is the VIP Media Cruise that was associated with deepwater coral research that was conducted last summer.

There were four research cruises, two off the east coast of Florida, one in the Gulf of Mexico and one off the coast of North Carolina. We were contacted right at the last minute to help with outreach efforts, and Myra Brouwer and I worked collaboratively to put together two shuttles that we took media out to the research vessel. We had representatives from NBC News, the Associated Press, the Daytona Beach News Journal, Orlando Sentinel. We had really good news coverage.

We were living right and we had beautifully flat, calm seas as we went out to the Research Vessel Seward Johnson. The scientists on board, including scientists from NOAA Fisheries and USGS and several other agencies, there were so many people represented there, put together stations on board the research vessel. We were just a little bit delayed getting to the research vessel so we didn't see the retrieval of the submersible, but they were kind enough to let us stay on board long enough to witness the submersible being deployed at the late afternoon.

We had scientists talking about the latest technology. This is what is referred as a lander. It monitors bottom conditions in deep sea coral areas. It is being deployed. This is a scientist, Dr. Murray Roberts, from Scotland. It was very international in focus. The Associated Press ran with it in a news release. Brian Skoloff from Associated Press did a very good job of summarizing what was going on on board the vessel.

John Reed was interviewed and appeared on the NBC Nightly News Report that you're familiar with. There again we had an opportunity to work with the media and the deployment of the submersible. Stations were set up. Council member Ben Hartig participated in the event. We also had an FWC law enforcement representative that went with us on board the shuttle.

I think Ben will concur that it was a very interesting experience. There you see Gary Sanders for NBC News. One thing that we learned in this process is we put together a very elaborate and very detailed media packet. Illustrations are very good to have, very simplistic. We learned very quickly that less is more in dealing with the media.

We unfortunately had an illustration that came out on the golden crab fishery at the end of that cruise that was an unfortunate miscommunication, but in the future we've learned lessons on that. Again, the submersible was deployed and we were able to get a lot of good things for the media to use. Overall it was a very successful experience with the exception of that one glitch with the NBC Nightly News. That's it in a nutshell. Then I'll defer to Cathy to kind of go through the recommendations from the advisory panel regarding those outreach efforts.

If the committee will indulge me for a minute just so we can expedite this process, another thing that I did with the advisory panel, since we hadn't met in two years and a lot of issues have been put on the table from a management standpoint, is that I went through the various council

amendments that have been approved, things that were implemented recently, things like Snapper Grouper Amendment 16, Amendment 1B; things that have been recently approved, 17B, by the council and, of course, the issues with Amendment 17A ; also talking about king and Spanish mackerel issues, golden crab issues, catch share issues.

I've presented them with an overview of the management issues that you as a council are dealing with right now, and they provided some overarching recommendations after viewing that. I'll defer to Cathy and let her give you some of the AP recommendations, if it pleases the committee.

MS. SAKAS: I really appreciate you all being here to listen to what the I&E AP came up with. We met for two days and I want to tell you that you have a very hard-working staff. You know that, though, I'm sure. We were all very impressed with Kim and Myra and Anna and Julie. They all do a yeoman's job. We felt a little guilty about providing comment on their work because when you provide comment that just adds to their burden.

But that being said, we praise them for all the work that they've done. We did have a few suggestions. You know that if you are going to get educators together you're going to have comment and we have a lot of things. We know that most of what we recommend will take a long time to implement, but we can at least go for the low-hanging fruit.

We reviewed several different outreach tools and brochures that Kim and team had put together. The MPA brochure we thought was particularly well designed. It has easy-to-read maps, good illustrations, and the text layout, but we did note that what is really compelling to the general public are stories.

If you tell the success stories of MPAs in Australia, even in our own United States, certainly in California, then people start to realize that these things do make a difference, that this is a good management tool to use. We just would like to flesh out the stories just a little bit more wherever we can.

We also realize that in this quick information age that some of us don't particularly want to read through a long brochure, so we suggested that a rack card or a postcard with a quick glance for the information so that people can learn more about MPAs in a faster manner. This would help with fishermen accessing the information as well as the media, but in particular writers, outdoor writers.

We also suggested that or made comment that the collaborative efforts that have been done by the regional fishery management councils in developing the outreach for 2009, great use of leveraging funds on a low budget, so we were supportive of that and recommend that we proceed in that manner.

MR. BOYLES: Any questions for either Kim or Cathy or comments?

MS. SAKAS: Okay, then I will continue on. We reviewed the current management issues, and one of the things that was recurrent throughout the comments from our panel was that we fully appreciate that you, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, are the information brokers

but you're also the people that others can come to. You are the personal face of this council; and so with that in mind, we suggested that to leverage the information getting out, that we use partnerships.

One of the things that we fully appreciate is that information coming from what is perceived as the government sometimes is looked with I guess as not credible, but we know that museums and aquariums, if they get the information through museums and aquariums, that is considered credible. We suggested that perhaps working through partnerships would be a good way of maybe leveraging that credibility and getting to different audiences.

Also suggested was conducting periodic webinars to selected people to help disseminate information, factual information, and especially in regards to the red snapper. We also want to use fact sheets, see more fact sheets and summaries to consolidate the information and emphasize the requirements of the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act to constituents.

We know that there is some information out there that is incorrect, that misleading about the flexibility of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and we would like to get that information out there first and foremost so that we can continue with the Act and that it can do its job. I mentioned the credibility of using museums and aquariums.

Also, on one of the publications, there are periodic publications about the amendments, and some of the amendments are in the process of still being worked on; so in order to alleviate confusion as to where we are in the process, it was suggested that there be a scale right underneath that amendment with this is where we are in the progress, kind of like when you get appliances and it's the energy efficiency. You know where you are on that scale of energy efficiency.

Well, we thought that would be a good thing to do as a timeline so that alleviates the confusion as to where we are in the process. We also want to focus on general information. People want to know what impacts them and so we suggest – well, we'll get into that with the website, but we wanted more detailed information so that those that want to dig deeper can, but right up front just have what is the bottom line, what impacts me right now.

We also thought it would be a good idea to develop a question-and-answer document and in particular to put that online, but we fully appreciate that a lot of questions come into Kim and team, and a lot of time is spent answering those questions; so if we can just compile maybe a lot of the questions and focus on those and post those on a periodic basis, that might help with the time constraint on Kim. She is doing a lot of things and we know that takes up a lot of time, and we want to make sure that her time and her expertise is leveraged, and we feel that would be good way of doing that.

MS. IVERSON: If I may, one of the things that came out of this list of general recommendations, too, was to have a Q&A with either Chairman Harris or some of the members of the council, so it's not something that I'm writing from my perspective but from your perspectives on the impacts of the Reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act, what is required by the council and how the council is juggling its new roles and responsibilities. I thought that was a really good idea. I like the idea of having a Q&A.

We've done that with John Carmichael for the SEDAR process, with a two-part series in the Newsletter. I think those types of Q&A things with these are the questions that I have and also utilizing more Q&A type documents on our website.

MR. BOYLES: I see some enthusiasm from our chairman ready to be engaged in the Q&A right away. One thing, Cathy, I was struck by kind of the graphical representation of where you are or where we are. I know in a lot of Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission plan amendments and addenda there is that graphical representation, and I think it's very, very helpful to the public just to understand where we are in the process and what remains to be done. I think that's a good suggestion.

MS. IVERSON: One other thing, too, I did discuss this at the AP meeting that there was recently a readability workshop held at the Southeast Fisheries Regional Office. The teams that are working on these documents – and Gregg Waugh sent around some samples of how the documents will be put together and there has been some discussion – I don't want to jump ahead of anyone at this point, but there has been discussion on readability of the current documents, the plan amendments and maybe perhaps some sort of restructuring and simplification in addition to the amendment itself as it is going through this development process that would better help the public to understand and working at different levels of information.

You would have maybe a fact sheet on an amendment or a 20-page summary and then the amendment itself; and then if you really want to dive into the appendices so that they're not all lumped together and intimidating to the general public, to our constituents, so we're moving in that direction and the advisory panel had some really helpful recommendations as well.

MR. BOYLES: Any questions or comments for either Kim or Cathy on ongoing management issues and how we communicate them to the public? Okay, Kim, do you want to roll on.

MS. IVERSON: I've asked Myra to come and just brief you on a notice of intent or a letter of intent that has been included in your briefing book regarding a NOAA Environmental Literacy Grant and just a brief overview from Myra on that effort.

MS. BROUWER: The NOAA Literacy Grant requests for proposals recently came out. We started discussing about this being potentially a good avenue to get more funding for outreach activities. We talked about possible projects that we could think of and where our needs are. The RFP is very specific at requesting projects that are making use of technology and that are going to reach a very wide audience, and so evidently using the internet is one very good way to do that.

We held a meeting with George Sedberry of Grays Reef, personnel from the South Carolina DNR, Kim, Anna, Megan Westmeyer with the South Carolina Aquarium and the Sustainable Seafood Initiative, and we sort of brainstormed on things that we could put together as a letter of intent to submit a proposal for this grant.

What we have done is put together a letter with the aquarium being the primary – I guess the PI, I don't know what another word is, but the lead agency that is requesting this funding. They are,

as Cathy mentioned, educating – you know, one of their missions is to educate the public and they have a lot of credibility and they have the staff and the means to put together a project of such a magnitude. With their help and in partnership with South Carolina Sea Grant and the DNR and Grays Reef and the council, we are proposing to develop web-based modules or tools that will reach to different target audiences.

They will be very simple with a lot of graphics and interactive scenario-driven things; you know, what happens if you change the size limit of this fish, what does that do to management, what does that do to the population of that particular species, things like that, things that are going to engage the public.

It is being structured in two phases, so Phase 1 would be development of this web-based series of modules. We also discussed developing mobile device applications to target even more people. Apparently mobile applications are a very popular way to acquire information and more and more they're being used for education as well. Phase 2 of this project will involve creation of these mobile applications for various audiences. The proposal is due in April and so we are very early in the process. We are crossing our fingers that it will be well received, and I'll take any questions from you.

MR. HARRIS: A question about mobile applications. It would be very helpful for me if I could download a file on my telephone that had all the South Atlantic Council regulations on it. Is that what you're talking about?

MS. BROUWER: That's exactly it, Duane.

MR. HARRIS: That would be wonderful because I get calls all the time and half the time I'm not anywhere near my regulations brochure. If I could just go to my phone and pick it up, it would be great.

MS. IVERSON: Mr. Chairman, hopefully one day we'll be able to say there is an application for that.

MR. BOYLES: I'll second that, Myra. We, just a couple of weeks ago, were asked to put out a press release by our board. With all the news and all the comments and all the focus on 17A, there were a number of folks who had the impression that 17A was a done deal and there thousands of square miles of bottom closed in addition to the spawning season closure. I would echo Duane's comments; if we could do that, that would be terrific. Are there any other comments or questions for Myra on the Environmental Literacy Grant Proposal? Myra, remind us when do you think we'll hear – what is the timing on notice of award?

MS. BROUWER: The proposal is due April 16th, I believe, and the awards are typically made during the summer months. It's a three-year project and the overall funding I believe is near \$400,000.

MR. CURRIN: Just a comment to thank the AP for their volunteering to assist with the development of that grant. As someone who has attempted and struggled to write grants in the past, it's always extremely helpful to have people assist you with that. I appreciate that.

MS. SAKAS: It's over to me, yes. Thank you, Mac. We were just going to say that the AP really has a lot of expertise on our panel, and we have thrown our support behind this NOAA Literacy Grant and offered our expertise in helping to write that and helping to craft it. We fully appreciate that in this lean budget time, that going after grants is extremely important to leverage our outreach. So, ladies, we'll be working with you.

MR. BOYLES: The question is next on the agenda is the website review, which Kim is telling us is probably going to be about half an hour to go through. What's the desire of the committee; to take a break for lunch, Duane?

MR. HARRIS: Yes, let's go ahead and break for lunch now and then come back in at 1:15 and reconvene the I&E Committee.

MR. BOYLES: I would like to reconvene the I&E Committee. I will turn it back over to Kim Iverson and go back to the agenda on reviewing the South Atlantic Council's Website.

MS. IVERSON: A lot of the advisory panel's time was spent on our website as being the face of the council, face and interaction with the public, so it's really important and I didn't want to rush through this. I think most all of the council members are familiar with our website, the navigational opportunities that it presents.

Some of the challenges, I will just point out we have had this website for several years now. We are operating – and I say we because Myra and Anna and I, all three share in the duties of updating and upgrading and rearranging things within the website. We're using an open-source software called dotnetnuke, and that open-source software is good, but it has its limitations.

We've run up against those limitations on several occasions in trying to upgrade and give our website a new look. Also, our history behind the development of our website we've talked about in the past, and just to remind you that we kind of had the front end of the website that is evident by the home page and the "about us" information, our news and meetings information, postings, fish ID and regulations, a very popular component of our site.

We have an extensive library with all of our fishery management plans and plan amendments, and I'm told that this is a very, very useful component of our website. For instance, with the snapper grouper fishery management plan we have background information and links to our current topics and then a complete total listing of all of our fishery management plans, plan amendments, notice of availability, federal register notices associated with the development of those amendments and the final rules.

NOAA GC has referred to our library as very, very useful in looking up documents and researching. There are very good components. We have a lot of information on a lot of levels.

One of the challenges is that our Habitat Ecosystem Component of our website has a separate host. It is hosted at a different location. It is really a separate website.

We tried to integrate that as far as the look and feel of the website, but you'll notice when you go to the ecosystem section the pull-down menus change. The information that is there changes. We've kept the quick link section, but it is different, and that in itself poses challenges. One of the things we're looking at is updating, upgrading, putting in some of the tools that are more commonly used in websites now, things like the ability to sign up for eNews, implement an eNewsletter type of thing.

Currently all of our e-mail distribution is handled on this compute through my personal Outlook Box, and we have several distribution lists that I've set up, and I can tell you that you can max out a distribution list fairly quickly. The intent is to work through Constant Contact. We have a contract with them now to shift all of the information that is on this computer over to Constant Contact to let them manage that data base and have the ability to go onto a home page, sign up for e-mail distribution, eNews, should we develop an eNewsletter, et cetera.

One of the things that we talked about at the advisory panel level was the use of social network media, perhaps developing Facebook – and I don't want to get too detailed into that right now, but the ability to do that via our website and restructure our website where we could perhaps use Twitter and send out tweets and some of those other social media; the ability to put RSS, really simple syndication feeds our website so that information that is posted there can get it out to the public more readily. When changes are made, those updates can be noted on our website.

We have a really good basic website. We just have issues that need to be addressed. We went out to a couple of contractors to look at us because we are web mistresses, as we were referred to by our advisory panel members, but we're not web experts. We strive to be web goddesses one day, but right now we're just muddling through, so this is far and above our capacity to expand our website.

We decided that we needed to seek outside help and go to a contractor or two and look and see what kind of proposals we could get. I'm going to defer to Myra – we've worked together as a team on this effort – and let her walk you through the Slant Media Proposal that we have received. This was also part of your briefing package. No, this was not; we received the PDF version of that proposal on Friday, so bear with us as we go through it.

MR. BOYLES: Okay, council members, I think Mike just sent that around to you with some attachments so refer to your e-mail.

MS. IVERSON: Yes, and I sent it out this morning about 7:00 or 7:30, something like that. It was with your I&E AP recommendations and then there are two other attachments.

MS. BROUWER: As Kim mentioned, we sought a vendor to help us contract the facelift, I guess, of our website. Their name is Slant Media. They're a local Charleston-based company. They were recommended to us by our IT contractor; so not having any experience whatsoever

doing this sort of thing, we basically said to them – we had a series of conference calls, one face-to-face meeting.

We explained to them what our needs were, some of the new tools that we were looking to introduce to the website. They gave us a proposal or a quote that was divided into three or four separate portions. The first portion is called the discovery phase, which is the process by which they gather information on the client and they do a lot of the background research to make sure that the services that they ultimately conduct are going to reach the appropriate audience and things like that. That's what we have received from them so far; that's as far as we've gone. Basically what we'll show you here are their recommendations and the results of this initial discovery phase for the council.

MS. IVERSON: And if you'll bear with us one of the things that Slant Media does they like to be minimalists, so the graphics are relatively small and dark, so I don't know if the lighting will allow us to effectively display the proposal, but there, again, you should have a copy.

MS. BROUWER: As I mentioned, we had a kickoff session, one on one or face-to-face discussion and a couple of conference calls to tell them what our needs were. We mentioned that we would also like to sort of streamline and consolidate the look of our website and pass that on to some of other outreach and education products such as the newsletter and things like that, so that type of branding exercise.

They conducted some industry research. Apparently they actually did quite an extensive search on the council process, the various councils and what that is all about and who our constituents are. They said, well, you know, we have gone over what your advantages are, so they understand, based on the information on the current website, that there is a lot of very, very good information that unfortunately some of it is not very easily accessible to the regular user because the navigation on some portions of our website is rather cumbersome.

We do receive calls once in a while from folks who do know the information is there; they just can't find it. One of the main things that we want Slant Media to do is to help us come up with a better way to organize the website. These are some of the challenges that they found. Obviously, there is no direct channel to communicate with fishermen, and this is from their perspective. Bear in mind that they are not very familiar with the council process and the level of communication that we have with the fishermen.

Again, cumbersome and inadequate technologies for sharing information; this goes back to the data base problem that Kim mentioned a couple of minutes ago. This is another one of our challenges, as we all know; and, then, of course, the trust issue. They feel that these are things that they can help us improve upon with a redesign of our website and some of our other outreach materials.

Then, of course, the overlap as we all know of various agencies. Their goals are to help us, like I said, improve our communication, help us with education material and make sure that we are reaching the appropriate audiences, encourage more participation. They had mentioned things

such as what Kim just mentioned, the social networking and other tools like that to make the process more transparent and easier for the fishermen to get in touch with you and us.

And, again, that is what I'm talking about including opportunities for more dialogue, more direct dialogue with the fishermen. These are the recommendations basically, the strategies that they would use were we to contract with them for this project is to come up with a personable face for the council, make it I guess a friendlier type of website so that people will not be as intimidated to go there.

Again, integrating those communication channels and tools, getting a registry on the website so folks can go on there and register to receive the newsletter or to receive e-mail updates, that sort of thing. This would be their tactics; this is how they would go about doing this, so, obviously develop the website, a new more efficient website including perhaps switching the platform. As Kim mentioned, it is an open-source software called dotnetnuke.

Apparently it is no longer one of the most popular open-source software products out there. There are others that are more efficient and more versatile. They have three, I believe, that they have in mind or that they would propose that we use. Again, better organization, more intuitive navigation, add a calendar feature, add the RSS feeds, perhaps a Facebook page. These are things that I've already touched on, unify the look.

Sorry about this, we weren't able to alter this presentation and that is why it's a little cumbersome. I don't think it's meant for a PC; it's actually meant for a Mac, so that's why each word has to be a different click. I'm not sure of the term they used for what this is, but basically this is what would help them guide their efforts and this is how they perceive the role of the council to be.

The larger words are what they perceive to be the main goals of what the council does. We thought they did a pretty good job of capturing the various things that the council is and does. Then they went through a process of putting together these mood boards, is what they call these, suggesting I guess visually things that we can do to unify the website.

The one that you see on the screen they call the life aquatics, so this is obviously underwater images, the resources, also education. You see the child in the aquarium and the perspective, the place that people have in that realm. This is life from the ocean so this has a little bit warmer tones and then incorporates the people, so it's geared towards no longer the resources but the people who are using those resources on the ocean.

This is a similar one focusing more on the traditions. This statement they call a value proposition. Again, it's something that they would use to guide their efforts in helping us come up with a better website. It states that for fishermen, environmentalists and scientists who want to have a voice in the sustainable management of fish populations in the waters of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, the council is the link between the people of the region and government.

Right off the bat one of the things we noticed is that this does not mention federal waters so it gives the impression that you're talking about state waters, but nonetheless this is what they presented us with and it can be tweaked. These are the recommendations in order of priority; the website development being number one.

The social media plan is something they recommended we do, that we take advantage of using Facebook and Twitter. There are advantages and disadvantages. Perhaps Facebook would be more of a burden on staff because it's more open. We don't know how we feel about this. Like Kim said, we just received this proposal on Friday and so we have not had time to discuss it in-house at all, really. There you have the recommendations and that wraps it up. Any questions?

MR. BOYLES: Questions for Myra on what was proposed from the Slant Media folks? All right, seeing none, we're going to move, Cathy, into some comments from the AP on this topic.

MS. SAKAS: We were given a homework assignment prior to coming to the meeting on Monday and Tuesday. Our assignment was to look at the best practices on other websites and bring those as recommendations so that we could discuss those. We looked at quite a few websites. You can see those in your handout here. The ones that we visited and particularly liked were Everglades Plan and also the new website from the Pacific Council.

The Pacific Council actually has like moving pictures, and what we discovered is that multiple people can go to that website and not everybody is going to see the same image, which we thought was pretty cool. Some of our specific recommendations was, number one, to make sure that whatever the hottest topic was to be right up front on that first page as you come to the website, use lots of pictures.

We also wanted to note that one of the recommendations from our past meetings was to use the website to start directing people to that website so that more information could be housed in one place so that people know where to go to access it. We spent a lot of time on how to improve the navigation. We did review the proposal from Slant and also another one from Obviouslee, spelled with lee and not ly.

We did provide specific recommendations to go back to these two companies and ask more in-depth questions as to what services they provide and how much they would charge for those services. Anyway, we really commended Kim and her team on improving the website that is in place now; and with just a little bit more tweaking we can really have an incredibly useful tool that will be very easy to navigate by the general public.

We also fully appreciate that, again, you all are the face of the council and that to humanize the council would be to actually have people go to you. Maybe even little bios of you all with your images on the website might be a good way to go. Anyway, putting a human face to the council is very important.

Some of the other recommendations were, again, management system and the calendar. I won't go through this; you all can read this yourselves. We did have a big discussion on the utility of blogs, and that is one way to get the information out and again using that question-and-answer

kind of forum where you're not really engaging the public, answering their comments directly but taking the questions and then answering those in a controlled format.

We talked about the social media and recommended that we look into that not as a way to sway public opinion but just more as another vehicle to get information out. We fully appreciate that a lot of people are going to want that information pretty quickly so that they can download it from their iPhones or whatever the vessel is that they're using to download.

We certainly appreciate Duane's suggestion of using applications. We actually looked at applications, too, and we thought that was a pretty good idea. Anyway, the major summary is in this attachment, but we fully appreciate and support what they're doing with the website, the new upgrade, and we want them to go forward with that.

MR. BOYLES: Thanks, Cathy, and again thank you for the work that you and the AP did over the past couple of days. It has been a while since we've met and there has been a lot of water over the dam, so a lot of stuff that you had to cover and we appreciate it. Any questions for Cathy on the recommendations or comments from the AP? Mac.

MR. CURRIN: Cathy and Kim, I just noticed in going through some of the quotes and information from discovery and Slant that one of them at least had an estimate of \$12,000 for each application that you might want to use. How does that compare to anyone's history or knowledge of what the development of something like that would cost on average? That just struck me as being expensive at the very least.

MS. IVERSON: We don't have something to compare it to, but I can assure you that we will, especially working through that Literacy Grant Proposal, and that is where those applications could be expedited depending on the funding. There, again, Mac, we are at the discovery phase ourselves and that includes pricing.

One of the things that I was hesitant to bring up because I generally don't like to talk about budget items – I leave that to my boss and friends at that level – but because the people that sat around the table earlier this week, our advisory panel members had experience from dealing with everything from multimillion dollar websites at both dotcom before the dotcom bust to \$5,000 church websites.

We had a wealth of experience and a lot of dialogue and discussion. I expressed that to the advisory panel; I said please don't let the budget concerns drive your recommendations, but from your experience please give us an idea of what your feelings are on the estimates that we have. After reviewing our website and reviewing some of the functionality that we want to do, after realizing that we're going to have to start with an entirely new platform – this is not an upgrade of our existing site. This is a benchmark website.

We would be starting over using the information and the data that we currently have on the site and revamping it and hopefully in a way that it will last another ten years, we can continue to upgrade it and have the flexibility that we need. We asked our advisory panel to give weight to

that, and they did in a very helpful manner, so we had a broad range of experiences and cost estimates, and somewhere in between is where we felt that these two proposals come in.

That's why we wanted to go through those proposals with you. Folks obviously had less time to work on this; and keep in mind what we've paid Slant Media so far in this discovery process, I think it has been very helpful for us to kind of do some self-reflection as far as our outreach efforts and what it is that we want to try to convey and what you want to convey as the council from your website and just interactiveness with the fishermen and the constituents and the NGOs and all the other folks that we work with on a daily basis and to put that out there, what the council's role is in all of this and the fishery management processes.

I think our website, the initial image and ease of navigability and friendliness as a face of the council will be very, very helpful. It's not bad now but it could be better. I'll just briefly touch on the Pacific Management Council's website because that just came up this past week. Thank goodness they were the first, and so we can kind of use some of their examples on how we conduct our changes.

One thing that Nancy Fish from the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries – they made some small tweaks to their website at one point and their constituents were like, oh, my gosh, you've changed, you move this regulation page from here to here, so she brought it to the forefront that we need to be very careful and do a really good front end of publicizing the changes to the website, providing the constituents with updated information that we are going to be changing it and this is how you can navigate it.

I'm sure we'll get some people that are frustrated that are used to going to the briefing book by clicking seven times. Hopefully you won't have to do that anymore. I can't shorten the briefing book but I can shorten the accessibility to it and making it just more user friendly. For the Pacific Council, they created a committee of their own staff and went about that.

Keep in mind they have a full-time IT person. It makes the difference, but it took about a year to get their website to this point, and they spent – 12 to \$15,000 were there overall expenditures, but a lot of staff time was involved in the developmental process because they did have an IT person on staff that was available to help answer questions. They did hire a marketing firm out in Portland to do that.

One of the other things I wanted to point out at this point, as the advisory panel members were doing their homework, is we came up with some other websites that we thought were really nice. They were graphically pleasing. I'm learning words and things to express what I like. It's like good wine. You taste it and you can't really explain it, but when you see the websites, you know what it is. You know, you can't put your finger on it, but it's really nice.

The horizontal layout of these websites was very appealing, the simplicity of it, the ease of navigation, use of graphics. You know, our website currently is very text heavy and not graphically easily using icons and that type of thing. We liked the new IGFA and they just came up with this. We thought that was a very good website.

There, again, going back to the Everglades Water Reservation and Restoration Site, they're dealing with very controversial issues down in the Everglades right now, and Pamela Fletcher, who is our advisory panel, filled us in on some of those things. They just recently upgraded and revamped a couple of their websites in order to meet the constituent needs and to help better disseminate that information to assuage some of that controversy associated with some of the decisions that are being made down in the Glades at this point.

We really liked that fresh, kind of clean layout, and we're hoping that we can take some of these examples that our advisory panel members have given us, to take the mood boards that Slant Media provided us and incorporate these elements into a new website. One of the things I've been very impressed with, if you look at both proposals, is that they expedite things.

I guess in the world of fishery management two years now doesn't seem that long, but they're talking about a matter of a few months that we would be able to have this website up and working. We would probably do this in stages. We talked a great deal about the social media, whether to have blogs.

One of the things is the Pacific Council does have a blog, but it's not interactive. They don't accept comments right now. They're using their blog to post meeting information. If you go their blogs, it's not a two-way communication at this point. They said they may look into that, but right now all of their staff members have access to the website and they can post things. If there is a catch shares workshop that is coming up, for example, or some sort of a SEDAR assessment workshop, all of their employees have access to the blogs.

They can take photographs, they can post it on the blog. Their executive director reviews everything before it is posted, but all of the staff members, including the administrative staff, have access to the blog. They can create links. That's another thing that we discussed internally on the website is having links and tags to document so if you view different components and different information on the website, you can link to the document.

We're going to integrate that within the internal component of our website so it's a much more inactive and ease of navigation. I was under the impression that a blog was a two-way thing. You have to accept comments. We discussed also forums between the advisory panel members, and certainly we stay away from that platform, but as far as the blog is concerned I think it's a nice kind of user-friendly way.

It's a quote-unquote cooler way of posting news releases and meeting announcements and that type of thing to have a blog and be able to keep that updated, so people go straight to the blog to find out what is going on. They also use Twitter. They send out tweets during the council meetings to let people know when they're not on schedule, when they are on schedule, the committee meeting is running long, that type of thing.

The tweets are done by various staff members throughout the meetings. I found it interesting that the tweets are helpful for their council members because evidently, and like our council they kind of come and go dependent upon their committee meetings, so I think with the South Atlantic Council, most of our committee members and council members sit at the table, but it

was interesting that they used tweets to alert the public and their other council members when the committee meetings are beginning and ending. I'll be glad to answer some questions. Like I said, we're in an exploratory process, too, and I'd love to get more comments from the committee.

MR. CURRIN: It's very exciting. I would urge you, and I'm sure you will, to heed Nancy's advice about the changes and be very sensitive to that, because if you look at the average age of the council members and the average age of the fishermen that are involved in this process, and as I understand it from the fishermen that is going up and up an up, and that resistance to change for all of us old dinosaurs is very difficult to overcome and frustrating at times. I'm sure you will be very sensitive to all of that.

MS. IVERSON: And to that point, we haven't met in a couple of years so we were all reminded of the average age of the advisory panel members as well.

MR. BOYLES: I have it on good authority that we have council members who are on Facebook. Are there comments or questions for Kim or Cathy? Kim, I think what you're hearing from the committee is a real desire to continue to explore this and explore these new tools and upgrades. I'm struck by the fact that press releases as a communication tool are at least decades old, if not centuries old in terms of a tool. I think it's exciting for us. I agree with Mac's comments. Any other suggestions or guidance for Kim and the staff?

MS. SAKAS: Just getting back to what Mac said about dinosaurs and all that and changes on the website, that was one of the things we wanted to address was the ease of navigation on the website so that anybody any age can go to that front page and know where to be directed, where they should go in that website to find out the information that they want. We're very sensitive to that.

MS. IVERSON: I realize that during your council meeting week you're bombarded with information and briefing book materials and your mind is pulled in 15 different directions. When you get a chance to go back maybe – you just received this Slant Media Proposal, and we're in the developmental process of all of this, but if you have comments, please, if you want to discuss it, if you have questions, if start you start looking at other websites, if you start visiting other websites and you find something that you really like, a calendar or something, an example of another agency that may be is utilizing tweets or blogs, whatever, the newest and latest social networking media, please let us know.

If you find something that you really don't like, that doesn't work because we did that, we discussed that, but I'm not going to just lay it out here in front of the committee this afternoon. If you find websites that you just think this is terrible, don't ever do this, let me know that, too, because we can take this back to whatever contractor we determine to go with. But overall I'm hearing from the committee that you're supporting moving forward with this effort.

MR. BOYLES: Kim and Cathy, great job, Anna, Myra, fantastic work. I think you've got some good direction to move forward and move down the road. Mac.

MR. CURRIN: Just one more comment, and thanks again to Cathy and the AP for all the hard work and in-depth analysis that you all put into this and all your efforts. We greatly appreciate it. Also, I know Kim sent out to everyone a while back a copy of the National Marine Educators Association Magazine. She very easily pointed out the article that Myra had written about corals in that magazine, but through her humility failed to indicate that she also authored an article in that magazine. I just wanted to tell you how much I appreciated that and how proud we are of both of you for your contributions to that.

MS. IVERSON: Thank you very much and I appreciate that. One last thing is I failed to display this. It was noted in your briefing book materials, but this is the All Council Website. It's very nice. The Pacific Council is hosting this because not only do they have their IT person, they have their own server that can host this.

They have the capability of doing this at the regional level. I think it is through the National Marine Fisheries Service Regional Office. This is something that is a good tool. If somebody wants to go to this website, a lot of the things that are posted here are cross referenced on our website, the Current's issue.

I think it's affectionately known as the goat fish brochure and some other updated things. I think if you go there you'll see some of our South Atlantic fishermen that are prominently displayed on the home page, so take the time to go and look at that as well. There, again, if you have any comments I'll look forward to hearing from you, Anna and I both.

MR. BOYLES: Operators are standing by if you call before two o'clock. Any other comments or questions? Again, Kim, Anna, Cathy, thank you for a great brief. I think you've got some good direction from the committee. Any other business to come before the I&E Committee at this time? Seeing none, we will stand adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 1:55 o'clock p.m., March 3, 2010.)

Certified By: _____ Date: _____

Transcribed By:
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April 8, 2010

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Jekyll Island, GA
Wednesday, March 3, 2010

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