SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

JOINT HABITAT PROTECTION AND ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT, SHRIMP, AND GOLDEN CRAB COMMITTEES

Bahia Mar Doubletree by Hilton
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

June 14, 2018

SUMMARY MINUTES

Golden Crab Committee Members

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Jessica McCawley, Vice-Chair
Tim Griner
Charlie Phillips

Habitat Protection and Ecosystem-Based Management Committee Members

Doug Haymans, Chair
Dr. Wilson Laney, Vice-Chair
Robert Beal
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Dr. Michelle Duval
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Shrimp Committee Members

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Roger Pugliese
Cameron Rhodes
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Observers & Participants

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Dr. Clay Porch
Dale Diaz
Erika Burgess
Dr. Jack McGovern
Rick DeVictor
Dr. Erik Williams
Shep Grimes
Steve Murphey
Howard Rau

Other observers and participants attached.

The Spiny Joint Habitat Protection and Ecosystem-Based Management, Shrimp, and Golden Crab Committees of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened at the Bahia Mar Doubletree by Hilton, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, Thursday morning, June 14, 2018, and was called to order by Chairman Charlie Phillips.

MR. PHILLIPS: The committee members are listed on the bottom of the agenda, in case you forget what committee you're on, and, at the end, we're going to consider sending this out for scoping, and so we don't necessarily need to get into the weeds. We want to cover all the bases and make sure that all of the ideas and thoughts are covered, and I am ready when you are, Chip.

DR. COLLIER: Thank you. Since last time we talked about this, we've had two AP meetings, and I am going to actually go through the Golden Crab and Deepwater Shrimp AP meeting first. It's Tab 10 A1b. The reason for that is that meeting just occurred prior to the Coral meeting, and so they kind of follow each other, based on some of the discussions.

This was the first meeting for the Golden Crab since 2014, and also for the Deepwater Shrimp since 2015, and so they hadn't met in a while, and we covered several different topics. We gave them an update on the amendments that were available, and then we also discussed the options paper that I presented to you guys at the last meeting, with the additions that you provided, or had recommended, one being consideration for VMS or other monitoring devices for that fishery as well as an option for transit provisions for the shrimp fishery.

Those two items were included in the options paper that they were presented, and we had a lot of great discussion on all the topics, and there is a brief overview. When I had come to you guys in March, I was way off on the areas that they wanted to potentially open for the golden crab fishery, and so, if you look in this document, you have an appendix, and I think it's Appendix B, and there is a series of maps that I have developed, in working with some of the golden crab fishermen, based on the recommendations that they had.

Since then, I am considering other coral models that are out there. There were some developed in 2017, and I was using the ones that were developed in 2012, and so things might change as we're working through the process. The fishermen also indicated that VMS is probably just going to be an added cost to their trip, and it's not much value for management. It would be very difficult to determine when they're actually fishing, and they also indicated that it's not going to actually indicate where the trap is fishing. They can set traps maybe a half-mile away, begin setting traps a half-mile away, to actually land in a different destination, which might actually be away from coral, and so they recommended not using VMS for that.

After talking about a lot of golden crab issues, we went into the deepwater shrimp, and they made some motions there. They wanted to include two different areas for consideration for the northern edge of the Oculina Bank that was established in Coral Amendment 8, and both of those have been provided to you in previous council meetings, and so those coordinates are now included in the options paper, and they also wanted to consider an area on the southern end, below 28.5 degrees North, on the Oculina Bank, and the consideration for that was because, during the development of the Oculina Bank and trying to protect some of the coral, there was concern, prior to these vessels having VMS, that they might actually go into some of the coral areas. Now that they have VMS on their vessels, they might not need such a larger buffer on that eastern edge, below 28.5.

Then, finally, we discussed the transit provisions. They were concerned with disconnecting trawl doors or stowing them below deck. They felt that this could be a safety concern while doing it at

sea. What they recommended was actually requiring the gear be in the rigging and also take the straps off the nets, and I believe that's similar to what some of the Gulf of Mexico shrimp regulations also list.

After talking about Coral Amendment 8, we went into an update on deep-sea coral research, and, after we get done talking about the amendment today, I'm going to take you over to a website that is showing some of the ongoing research in our area.

Then, finally, they went over the regulations recommended for removal. There were no mentions made at this meeting, but one of them that they did request to consider was U.S. Code 8103, where it says: "Except as otherwise provided in this provision on a documented vessel, each unlicensed seaman must be a citizen of the United States, an alien lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence, or a foreign national who is enrolled in the United States Merchant Marine Academy; and not more than 25 percent of the total number of unlicensed seamen on the vessel may be aliens lawfully admitted to the United States for permanent residence."

That was an issue for one of the deepwater shrimp vessels. They actually had to come to shore, because they identified offshore that they had more than the legal percentage of aliens on the vessel. However, when they came back to shore, that was not the case. Another thing to consider under regulations for removal is we did discuss the permit cards, and, for this fishery, they did like the operator cards, and they recommended that they not be taken away from this fishery.

We also had quite a bit of discussion on the royal red shrimp fishery. Now, this is a fishery that is not currently managed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. The reason that this was included as a topic for their discussion is because the landings have been pretty volatile recently, and we wanted to get some background on why the landings were going up and down. Specifically, they have been down in the last year or so, and they indicated that there has been a significant aquaculture effort from out of the country, and this is really impacting the value of the royal red shrimp, or not only the value, but when these guys can go fishing for it.

There is additional information that's provided in your report, and it's called "Deepwater Shrimp Advisory Panel Royal Red Shrimp Fishery Description". I think it gives you a pretty good idea of what they were talking about, and it describes the royal red shrimp fishery and how difficult it is and the reasons why things are changing in it.

MR. HARTIG: Chip, is there actually aquaculture of royal reds, or is it just the aquaculture of other shrimp has put pressure on the royal red marketing?

DR. COLLIER: There is some aquaculture, and so they do it offshore, but they also have fisheries inshore as well, and that's been impacting it, and they're doing it for a much cheaper price than what the guys off the Atlantic coast can do. Now, I will say that they indicated that it's a much better product coming from our area.

Following through, I did provide Appendix A, which are the boundaries that were provided to you at past council meetings, and so those are all listed there, and those will be used to make shape files as we move forward, if you guys recommend going forward with these current actions and alternatives. Then Appendix B is a series of maps that I've been working with the Golden Crab AP, based on some of the feedback at the meeting.

Going through the maps, the one that's provided here, this is -- The light blue area is the CHAPC, and the black dots are observations of coral, and these dark lines are 1,600 feet, 1,900 feet, and 2,400 feet. They indicated those were some of the depths that they would like to consider the fishery to operate, and so those are going to stay throughout the maps, as we progress forward.

Then, going down to the B part of the maps, this includes information on the habitat probability, and, as you get to -- The red color indicates that it is high probability of coral. Orange, or brown, depending on how your eyes see color, that is a probability of three to five, and purple is two, and the green code is one, and that's low probability of coral. Then, obviously, if the area is not filled out, that's a zero probability of coral.

We continue down into the next series of graphs, and so we eliminate the extremely low probability, and the new areas that could be opened, based on those maps and the probability maps, those are indicated in yellow here. Once again, the coral are black dots, and you can see the depth profiles that they would like to fish. Continuing down, you can see how that overlays in the B map with the habitat probability maps, and these continue on. You guys can look at them at your leisure. This is just an options paper, to make sure that we're getting the full scope of ideas that could be considered in management.

As we go all the way down to Map Number 7, this was a map that was discussed with one of the golden crab fishermen after the meeting. What he wanted me to do was just follow the depth profile of the 1,600 to 1,900 feet, and this is Map 7, and you can see the potential coral that have been observed in that area as well as how it overlays with the coral habitat probability map.

Now we will go to the Coral AP, and this AP had -- It's been a while since they had met as well. The last time we had met was May of 2014, and they too were provided updates on amendments. Then we talked about the joint coral/golden crab/shrimp amendment, and some of the ideas that they discussed was they indicated that the ACL for golden crab seemed very high, since they had not met their ACL, and they indicated that there could be overfishing in the fishery, if the fishermen are suggesting that they need to work new areas that are previously underfished, and they recommended that the council use a precautionary principle established in the Magnuson Act to protect coral.

If there is gear conflict among fishermen, it would be better to focus on methods to communicate than to open potential coral areas. Additional options should be developed to focus more directly at the gear competition issue, and they did not recommend the use of probability models developed by Kinlan et al. as a sole source for developing alternatives, and there is very limited data on coral distribution, and more data are being collected this summer.

They went on to discuss the same concerns that the golden crab fishermen had with VMS. The Coral AP recognized those same limitations, and they recommended looking into other technologies, recognizing that, for enforcement, there might not be real-time data that's available, but it would be better to have location information for the traps than real-time data.

The AP wanted additional information on the map that was provided to them on the recommendation for Action 3. At that point, I had not pulled out the actual coordinates for the Oculina Bank, based on past recommendations, and so they wanted us to incorporate new multibeam information as well as some of the past VMS tracks into the new options paper, and I haven't been able to do that, but we're still working on it.

Then the final action that they talked about was Action 4, which was the transit provisions. This could be -- They had suggested that this could be better addressed by other advisory panels, but they wanted to ensure that any provision would prevent illegal fishing that would impact coral, and, after that, you have the series of motions that they made for that section.

Then we had a very interesting presentation on coral disease in south Florida, and this was given by one of our AP members, Dr. Josh Voss, who is a -- He works at the Harbor Branch Oceanographic Institute. There, they're seeing an increase in a new coral disease off of south Florida. It's been increasing since 2014, and it has impacted fifteen species of coral, with some of these areas having as much as 50 percent of the coral species impacted by disease.

They have been working through the Coral Disease Advisory Committee to address some of the disease outbreak, and they are trying to figure out new and innovative ways to try to mitigate this disease outbreak, and some of the options can be pretty invasive, and some of the options haven't been really tested on a large scale, but they have been shown to show promise in the lab experiments, and there is some brief bullet points there.

MR. HARTIG: Chip, has any of this been observed in the deepwater corals, as far as disease goes?

DR. COLLIER: I am not aware of any of this being observed in deepwater coral. Going on to Topic 4 from there, there is a new area that's going to be established beginning July 1 of 2018, and it's called the Southeast Florida Coral Reef Ecosystem Conservation Area, and this was developed in partnership between the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and FWC, and there is some information there. We had a long discussion on it, and, if Jessica wants to discuss this more, she is more than welcome to. She is much more familiar with it than I am. There were no recommendations made on this.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Just a little bit more about this is there was a box drawn by the state legislature during the last legislative session. It did not necessarily come with any management recommendations. I know that the local folks would like for this particular area to have additional fisheries regulations, but we're certainly not there yet. I can also tell you, on the coral disease event as well as on this Southeast Florida Coral Reef Initiative, the FWC Commission meeting that's happening next week will have an entire discussion item on this, with a panel discussion, including FWRI, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, and DEP, to talk about all of these items, but particularly the disease events and our restoration efforts. Also, I don't believe that the disease has impacted deepwater coral, as far as we know.

DR. COLLIER: They were given an update on some deep-sea coral research that's occurring this summer, and we will go over that, once again, after the next one, after we go over the options paper. In discussions of regulations for removal, they did express some concern over some of the regulations that were listed. One of the concerns that they had was removing the ACL for spiny lobster. The concern with that is, if you increase effort for spiny lobster, you could be impacting some shallow-water coral, if they're able to put out more traps, if the recreational dive fishery increases, and I see Jessica has her hand up.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I just want to indicate that this isn't valid. The fishery, the traps are limited, and we're in a trap reduction program, and so removing the ACL has no effect on the state's management for the lobster fishery. It's very locked down. The number of traps is locked down, and we are in a trap reduction program, and so this is not a valid concern.

DR. COLLIER: Thank you for that. That is all I had for the Coral AP. Any questions?

DR. DUVAL: Thanks, Chip. I noticed that one of the bullet points up near the top of the Coral AP report was that they didn't recommend the use of probability models developed by Kinlan et al., and I assume that that's the one that you were using to develop these maps, and what were their reasons for that? I'm just curious.

DR. COLLIER: They said there is very limited data for the deepwater coral, and they want to have more information incorporated. They also indicated that the probabilities associated with -- Taking these probabilities to a larger scale could be an issue, but what I would like to do is there were some new maps developed by Poti et al. in 2017 included in some other research, and maybe have the SSC consider these probability maps for use in management, and I don't know if they've been used elsewhere, and so I definitely think at least the SSC has to look at it and provide some guidance.

DR. DUVAL: Just a follow-up. I assume that these Poti et al. maps are ones that the Coral AP members recommended or that this additional information is information that they recommended be considered?

DR. COLLIER: No, they didn't recommend those either. I specifically asked which data could be used, and I didn't get a real clear answer. They said definitely use the point observations of coral, and so we have those throughout.

DR. DUVAL: Thanks.

DR. COLLIER: Now we're going to go into the options paper, and, right now, the title of it is "Draft Options Paper Modifications to Shrimp and Golden Crab Access Areas", and that probability needs to be modified, given that we've added a couple more items into it.

We have the purpose for the action, and the purpose of Coral Amendment 10, Golden Crab Amendment 10, and Shrimp Amendment 11 is to modify access areas for the golden crab and rock shrimp fisheries while maintaining protection of deepwater coral, develop an appropriate monitoring system for the golden crab fishery to ensure protection of deepwater coral, and modify transit provisions in the shrimp trawl fishery to make the regulations compatible with vessels. We have modified this based on the inclusion of these two other action items, and does that sound like a pretty good purpose for the action?

The purpose of Coral Amendment 10, Golden Crab Amendment 10, and Shrimp Amendment 11 is to modify access areas for the golden crab and rock shrimp fisheries while maintaining protection of deepwater coral, develop an appropriate monitoring system for the golden crab fishery to ensure protection of the deepwater coral, and modify transit provisions in the shrimp trawl fishery to make the regulations compatible with vessels.

MR. PHILLIPS: Sorry. I was still thinking about what Gregg told me, and so any discussion on the purpose?

DR. LANEY: Chip, a question. Is the purpose to modify or to consider modification?

DR. COLLIER: I think all of this is considering, and so, yes, we could add that in there.

MR. PHILLIPS: Any other thoughts? Okay. Do you need a motion for that, or is it just direction for staff?

DR. COLLIER: No, I don't think we need motions quite yet for this, since it's still an options paper. The need for action, the need for action for Coral Amendment 10, Golden Crab Amendment 10, and Shrimp Amendment 11 is to increase access in the golden crab fishery and better achieve optimal yield, modify access in the rock shrimp fishery, revise transit provisions for shrimp trawlers, to reflect how vessels are designed, and provide protection to essential fish habitat and coral.

MR. PHILLIPS: Is there discussion or thoughts?

DR. LANEY: Again, Mr. Chairman, I would say it's consideration of modification. From my perspective, it's not a commitment to modify.

MR. PHILLIPS: All right. Anything else? Okay.

DR. COLLIER: In the background, I have some information on some deepwater coral, and this is the same background that you had last time, with the exception of modifying some of these areas in the golden crab based on the information that was provided by the Coral AP, and so, as opposed to focusing in on this area that we had off of Georgia and South Carolina, I expanded that, and you can see that Map 1.3 includes a much larger area, and it gives you a better predication of the likelihood of suitability for coral. Once again, these maps are going to change, since there are some more recent maps that have been developed.

Going from the background, I will go all the way down to the -- Last time, there was some discussion on landings, and so, in the table, I just have a short series of landings for the golden crab fishery from 2008 to 2017, but, in the figure, since you can incorporate a lot more data in there and you can see the overall trends, I incorporated information from 1997 all the way up through 2017, and this was all landings that have been provided for golden crab, and so I went back to 1950. Data was available from 1997 onward.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay.

DR. COLLIER: Similar to information for rock shrimp, I have the same table of landings, and I modified the data source. Then I went back to 1982 with landings for rock shrimp, and so you can see the overall trend in rock shrimp landings from 1982 to 2017. Then I added a section on the transit provisions, and so, with all that being said, here are the actions that we've developed so far. We haven't really met as an IPT to discuss this, but I have been working with SERO on some of the actions and alternatives.

MR. PHILLIPS: Chip, since we've got Robert and Nuno and Howard here, I would like for them to give like two or three minutes for how they prosecute the fishery, so that, when we're talking about corals and boundaries and buffers, the committee will have a better idea on how they fish, and so how they would stay out, and so, if they can come to a mic down at the corner. Howard, maybe you or Nuno or Robert, but just give us a condensed version, real quick, and tell us what kind of electronics you use and can you see the coral and how do you stay where you want to stay.

MR. RAU: I'm Howard Rau, and I'm a golden crab fisherman. Actually, we fish in deep water, 1,500 to 2,400 feet. If I'm going into new territory, before I make a set, I will run the bottom back

and forth, in order to look at that bottom. I can tell whether there is coral there or whether it's mud bottom, and these traps are very expensive, and, if you lose one -- I would say one of my traps probably costs about $350 apiece.

It is very easy to hang up out there. If you're not experienced and you get in that hard bottom, you could lose a whole trawl because of that, and so you have to really be careful in where you set. We fish the traps -- Well, I fish them in fifty-trap trawls, fifty-trap pot lines, and they're 400 to 500 feet apart, and we'll grapple one end up. When we grapple, we probably grapple I would say from one to five spots back, at the south end, because we're always hauling from the south to the north, because of the Gulf Stream.

If you make a set, you have to know -- You have to be experienced, and you have to know how the gear will travel, because it can move a mile in your set, but you know the speed of the Gulf Stream, and it changes too, because it's not always consistent, because of the depth. Sometimes the current is running 500 feet, and sometimes it's running 200 feet, of the surface, and that will change the drift on the gear. Any questions?

MR. PHILLIPS: Are there any questions?

DR. DUVAL: Thanks, Howard, for being here. I really appreciate the description of how you all set the gear. I just have one quick question. You said that you fish fifty-trap trawls, and I didn't quite hear how far apart you said each --

MR. RAU: I am having trouble hearing.

DR. DUVAL: I am sorry. You said that you fish fifty-trap trawls, and I couldn't hear how far apart, within the trawl, each trap is.

MR. RAU: Each trap is either 400 to 500 feet apart.

DR. DUVAL: Thank you.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thanks. Any other questions?

MR. GRINER: How long do they soak for?

MR. RAU: It depends. You can't go past seventeen days, because, if the crabs are there, you start to see a death rate, but they're a very bait-intensive crab, and they are slow to get in the traps, and so it's usually a week to ten days on a soak.

MR. GRINER: Do you immediate set them back?

MR. RAU: Excuse me?

MR. GRINER: Do you set them back as soon as you haul them?

MR. RAU: That's correct.

MR. PHILLIPS: Anything else?

DR. LANEY: Did you say that you have -- How do you relocate your trawls after your soak period? Do you have buoys on the ends of the trawls, or do you have pingers on them or something, given the fact that they can drift for up to a mile, you said?

MR. RAU: No, we actually see them on our fathometers, and so we look for the line. There will be a loop and a line between each trap, and that's how you locate them, and you find the end, because we usually do a skip. You will go a block, and then you will go skip and then trap, skip and then trap. When you see a larger loop that runs for more distance, then you know you're getting to your end. Does that make sense?

DR. LANEY: Yes, and thank you.

MR. PHILLIPS: All right. Any other questions?

MR. GRINER: So there is no buoy associated with it, and how do you get ahold of it and haul it back?

MR. RAU: We drag a grapple.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. Well, mostly, I just wanted to make sure that the committee understood how they set their gear and how they stayed out of the coral and how they ran the bottom, which is not a whole lot different than how I used to shrimp fish in the Gulf, staying out of loggerhead bottom when I was shrimping, a long time ago, and I didn't have near the fathometers that they have now.

DR. DUVAL: Just one more question for Howard. What are the dimensions of the traps, and how much do they weigh?

MR. RAU: They're forty-eight-by-twenty-one-by-twenty-four, and it depends on my traps. Some I use rebar in, and it's a two-throated trap on top, just to make it go to the bottom, and so they weigh probably sixty to eighty pounds.

MR. BROWN: Howard, when you fish in the area and it's productive, and I'm sure that, over a period of time that it might change, but do you ever come back to that area at any point in the future, and how long does it take before it kind of replenishes itself?

MR. RAU: That's a really good question, and I never fish on the exact same spot when I'm fishing. When I was fishing, I would always move my gear either in or out a little bit, but, if you're talking about an area, I would say it takes about six months for that area, maybe four to six months, to replenish with a good stock of crab again.

MR. BROWN: I was just thinking about what you were saying about how slow they were, and I didn't know if it took a long period of time or if they seemed like they came back pretty quick through there.

MR. RAU: No, it takes time if you're hammering one spot, and that's why I don't like to hammer one spot. I like to keep moving all the time, and then, within the area that we have, it's kind of like a rotation, and so you start out maybe in 1,600 feet and you work out to 2,400, and then you would go back in. You would go back in and start the rotation again.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay. I think this has been very informative for the committee, and we'll go ahead with Chip. Thanks.

MR. ALMEIDA: I just want to make it clear that these traps are not drifting on the bottom. I just wanted to make that clear.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thanks.

DR. COLLIER: Okay, and so, going back into the options paper, these are pretty similar options to what you had seen before, I believe. Under Action 1, we have the no action alternative. Then we have Alternative 2, which looks at a variety of the -- It's looking at the probability maps, and it's looking at areas north of 29 degrees, based on the recommendations from the Golden Crab AP members, and we have a series of those, ranging from low probability to very high probability, and so you can see the language that's listed there. We also have Alternative 3, which was recommended after the meeting, and this was looking at an area potentially from 1,600 feet to 1,900 feet, as an allowable fishing area. Do you guys think that is a good range of alternatives to be considered as we're getting ready to take this out to scoping, or should there be other options to consider?

MR. PHILLIPS: Thoughts? It looks like you've got the range covered, Chip.

DR. COLLIER: Action 2, we've worked on this quite a bit, trying to get some ideas of what kind of requirement for the golden crab vessels or gear might work, and I looked into several different things. I still have listed, under Alternative 2 and Alternative 3 -- These are options for VMS, and you saw those last time, and they have been modified based on some recommendations from the Law Enforcement AP to incorporate some information.

Alternative 4, what I did was I looked at some different technologies that have been used in other fisheries, and pingers are used up in the Northeast as part of the -- I think it's the Harbor Porpoise Take Reduction Team that requires pingers on some of the gillnets up there, and so this could be an option that could be considered for golden crab. It wouldn't provide real-time data, but it would indicate exactly where the traps are. Law enforcement would have to go over these locations and find exactly where they were, and so there's some options here for consideration of pingers.

Then another idea that we came up with is potentially using some GPS capabilities and archive vessel position and provide that to National Marine Fisheries Service, and this is similar to language, I believe, that's in the Gulf of Mexico charter boat amendment right now.

MR. GRINER: Going back to Action 1, Alternative 3, was there a reason why they didn't recommend giving them all the way out to the 2,400-foot depth contour?

DR. COLLIER: That could be added as two sub-alternatives under Alternative 3, one for 1,600 to 1,900 feet, and then we could add a sub-alternative for 1,600 to 2,400 feet, if you like.

MR. GRINER: Yes, I would like to do that.

DR. COLLIER: Are there any thoughts on other monitoring devices that might work at a depth like this? I contacted several technology companies, and I didn't get too much positive feedback on what would work for these kind of depths in this kind of fishery.

MR. PHILLIPS: I am expecting, if it's the pleasure of the committee to go to scoping, that while it's out that we'll collect up that data, so there is no cost and things like that.

DR. COLLIER: All right. Going on to Action 3, we have several different alternatives listed here, and we're starting off with Alternative 1 is the no action alternative. Alternative 2 is just to follow the ninety-four-meter, and so this is going to be just following the ninety-four-meter, similar to, I believe, some of these other suggestions, but, in Alternative 3, there are specific recommendations that were listed. We have one from November of 2013 that was provided to the council, and then Sub-Alternative 3b was provided in March of 2014.

These areas are pretty similar, and here's kind of a map of it. There is a map somewhere in the document that indicates exactly where it is. It was in the AP report, and these two are pretty similar to each other, and I believe Sub-Alternative 2b is extending -- It's trying to protect a little bit more coral, where there appeared to be a coral mound within the area. Then Alternative 4 comes from the AP, where they recommended this area south of 28.5 degrees North, on the eastern edge of the Oculina Bank, adjust the Oculina Bank OHAPC to match the 100-meter contour and the ninety-four-meter contour, develop some options for that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thoughts? Okay. It looks like it's still in the range.

DR. COLLIER: Then, for Action 4, we provide some language for potential consideration for transit provisions for the shrimp trawl fishery, and what we did here is we went through and took all the different alternatives, or all the different methods, that we have for transit provisions in the South Atlantic region and the Northeast region and in the Gulf of Mexico, and so we have eight different alternatives.

Under each one of those, we provide where these would apply, whether it's to shrimp vessels in a closed area due to cold-weather closures or, if it's in a marine protected area or a spawning special management zone, and then the Oculina Bank Area of Particular Concern. This one is pretty long and drawn-out, and I'm not going to go through all the alternatives there, but we did try to cover the range of alternatives that you guys indicated from the last time.

MR. PHILLIPS: Any thoughts? Everybody looks happy with it, Chip.

DR. COLLIER: Excellent. I have a draft timeline here. We're at this point right now, and we're at the scoping document and potential scoping in August of 2018. We would come back to you guys in September with the comments and revised actions and alternatives, based on some of the scoping and IPT recommendations, and then it follows from there. What we're looking for from you guys today is consideration for taking this to scoping, and I have put together a draft motion up there, and if there's any other discussion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I would like to make a motion that we take this amendment out for scoping.**

MR. PHILLIPS: It's seconded by Mark. Is there discussion?

MR. BELL: Just related to the transit provisions, we did get input from both this AP as well as the Law Enforcement AP, and that's all been documented.

DR. COLLIER: Yes.

MR. PHILLIPS: Any other comments?

DR. LANEY: No objection or anything to the motion, but just a comment to the effect that all of us should remember, as this goes out to scoping, that the council is, from my perspective anyway, and from a historical perspective I think, managing these habitats in cooperation with NOAA Fisheries as deepwater coral ecosystems and not just looking to avoid impacts to high-relief coral. I think Roger and other of our stakeholders have made presentations in the past that clearly show it's the adjacent areas of sand adjacent to some of the more high-relief coral areas that are important as nursery habitat for a lot of the juvenile snapper grouper species, and so I would just consider -- I would ask us to consider that as we're sending this thing out to scoping and certainly as it comes back from scoping, when we review the input from other stakeholders. Thank you.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you.

DR. DUVAL: No objection to the motion, but I was just curious -- Maybe this is a question more for Chip, but I know the Coral AP had asked about meeting jointly with the Golden Crab and Deepwater Shrimp AP, and I was just curious if there was a plan to move forward with that, so that there could be some discussion.

DR. COLLIER: We do have a plan to move forward with that. Actually, all APs wanted to meet together. The Deepwater guys wanted to meet with the Coral people, and so I think it's a great opportunity to have some open discussion between those APs.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Chip, just to the extent that any of these areas that are now being considered in the actions as fishing access areas, to the extent that they were considered before by the council, whether that was Coral Amendment 8 or -- I guess that would be the primary amendment, but it would probably be helpful for the council to have a little bit of background as to why they weren't chosen to be fishery access areas at that time, so that you can have a little bit of a historical perspective for the current council when they're looking at it next time.

MR. PHILLIPS: Very good thoughts. Any other comments? **Seeing none, do I have any opposition to this motion? Seeing none, the motion passes.** Chip, what's next?

DR. COLLIER: Just one little plug for the research that I've been talking about. There is a research cruise going on currently offshore right now, and the Okeanos Explorer is actually sending ROVs out, and you can actually see live streams with some of the critters that are in our region right now, and so they have a series of different cameras, and it's a great opportunity for you guys to see, and, also, you can comment as well. If there are certain things -- It is a live feed, and they are willing to take information from people and answer questions, and so this is some live pictures that are -- Well, it's saying it's previously recorded, but you can see some information that they have collected from the Okeanos Explorer, and so it's okeanosexplorer.noaa.gov.

MR. PHILLIPS: Is that everything you've got, Chip?

DR. COLLIER: That's it for me.

MR. PHILLIPS: All right.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on June 14, 2018.)

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July 16, 2018

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