



# Communities Project Phase II: Stakeholder Outreach and Communication Assessment and Strategic Plan Development

## Resilient Fisheries Project Overview

### Description

Phase II of the Communities Project focuses on turning the community knowledge developed in Phase I into a practical, relationship-driven outreach and communication strategy for the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Building on identified fishing communities and their characteristics, this phase will conduct a targeted stakeholder outreach and communication assessment to understand how communities prefer to receive information, engage with the Council, and contribute local knowledge. The work will produce a strategic Outreach and Communication Plan and supporting tools, such as guidance materials, training, and an online communication hub, that support a more consistent and effective integration of community perspectives into management decisions. By emphasizing trust-building, clear communication, and actionable qualitative data, Phase II is intended to strengthen engagement with stakeholders and support adaptive, community-informed fisheries management across the South Atlantic region. For more information please see the [Phase II RFP](#).

### Progress Updates

- The proposal review and selection process was completed in March and a contract is now in place.
- The selected proposal was one of six received in response to the Council's request for proposals.
- The project is now underway with an initial oversight team meeting planned for late May, during which project timelines and milestones will be reviewed.

### Project Team

*Contractors: University of Florida:* Edward Camp; Angela Collins; Bryan Fleuch; Joy Hazell; Michael Jepson; Kai Lorenzen; Andrew Ropicki; Jennifer Sweeney Tookes; Tracy Yandle

*Oversight Team:* Julia Byrd, Chip Collier, Christina Curtis, Kathi Kitner (SEP), Lara Klibansky, Christina Package-Ward (NOAA, SEP member), Jason Walsh (NCDMF, SEP Vice Chair)

### Anticipated Timeline

**2025**

- ▶ **Dec-** Request for proposals released.

**2026**

- ▶ **Jan/Feb -** Proposals reviewed and contractor selected; Project Begins
- ▶ **Mar -** Project Oversight Team to be formed and quarterly meetings begun
- ▶ **Oct -** Draft Stakeholder Assessment report presented to Social and Economic Panel

**2027**

- ▶ **April -** Draft Outreach and Communication Plan presented to Outreach and Communication Advisory Panel
- ▶ **Sept -** All final reports presented to Council
- ▶ Implementation of project outcomes begins.