

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18 Public Hearings

Key Largo, FL
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Summary Minutes

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BOB JONES 17A

Bob Jones:

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman. My name is Bob Jones and I'm the executive director of Southeastern Fisheries Association, which is a 501(c)(6) organization, founded in 1952 in Jacksonville. We're headquartered in Tallahassee and our function is to take care and protect the seafood industry and the culture of those people who work therein.

Not since the unjustified net ban in the mid-1990s have we seen such angst, anger and concern in the faces of the fishermen and fishing-related businesses, who will be devastated by the red snapper fishing ban and the proposed closure of huge sections of the South Atlantic to all bottom fishing, and I suppose that's 17A.

My comments today will be based on our belief that the proposed ban on red snapper fishing should be rejected by the Secretary of Commerce as unjustifiable, which would negate the proposed closures to all of the bottom fishing.

Our involvement began last June in the parking lot of Hall's Seafood and Restaurant place in Ormond Beach. We were called over, there were a group of fishermen who were concerned about what was happening. Eugene Raphael, my president and I drove over, talked to them, we got there -- there was about 50 fishermen in the parking lot. And of course we got out and they started asking questions. And the first thing we told them: we don't have the answers. We just don't have the answers to all of the problems that are occurring in the fishing world.

But the first thing we did to tell them that we would do whatever we could to help them solve their problem, but they needed to get organized, to get a voice; and the second thing they needed to do was to find a qualified, certified scientist and have them examine the SEDAR document, knowing that whatever report that scientist wrote was going to be his report; it wasn't going to be anything we said they had to write; we would have no input into that -- he would look at that document and make his report.

They formed the East Coast Fisheries Section -- Southeastern is an umbrella for that group, but they set their own Board of Directors, they raise some funds and they hired Dr. Hester. They sent him the document and he sent them back what his opinions were.

So here we are today, nothing proposed by the South Atlantic Council has changed. As it continues to push to ban red snapper

fishing, regardless of the facts and the concerns presented by so many people who are affected by the snapper ban.

So we'd like to offer this: from 1976 to the present day, NMFS and the South Atlantic Council have never measured any red snapper spawning aggregation, to the best of our knowledge. They may have -- we don't know it. This should be a priority -- priority number one from now on: what are the spawning aggregations? How much is that biomass? Two: since 1976 commercial red snapper harvest has been reduced from 700,000 pounds to less than 100,000 pounds. And since 1990 the commercial harvest has remained near that level.

The red snapper fishery on the east coast is predominantly but not exclusively a recreational fishery, and I've had people within government ask me why we're involved because it's not that big of a fishery for us to be involved with. And my answer has been that we have some significant questions on the way that the science is being done and we think it can be improved, which would be to the benefit of all the fishermen, recreational and commercial.

Dr. Hester wrote in his report that the SEDAR 15 data workshop was unable to provide observation-based estimates of fecundity or natural mortality; 2) provide any fishery's dependent or independent measure of recruitment; 3) provide early recreational catches prior to 1981; and the most remarkable feature of SEDAR 15 is that it concludes: the red snapper fishery has been overfished since the 1960 and the virgin stock in 1945 was 30,000 metric tons and current stock size is about 600 metric tons. And we find nothing anywhere to support those numbers. Until the early catch problem and the selectivity for the recreational fishery is resolved the assessment is incomplete, and it's impossible to evaluate stock status or provide management benchmarks.

The information reviewed by Dr. Hester indicates or implies to us that the red snapper stock is at equilibrium at this point in time. There are so many scientific statements flying around with opposite points of view it makes the science used in the red snapper and group models suspect. No matter what facts and computations were brought forth by Dr. Hester and other non-NMFS scientist, we feel it was ignored. The stock assessment process could be greatly improved.

Having said that, it makes us wonder: is the stock assessment process truthful, that is, does it have a written set of rigorous standards for data quality that must be met before an assessment

can be made? There must be a standard for precision and one for accuracy as these are long-time, traditionally-accepted standards in the field of science. If NMFS scientists don't believe precise and accurate measurements of red snapper and grouper fish stocks can be made, will they let others try to prove them wrong, or will they keep other scientists from getting that chance?

As for the SEDAR process, it needs to inventory and classify the data more clearly, such as -- and the reason I say this: the document, I don't remember if it's 300 or 500 pages, but it's a lot of words and it's a big document -- it's a very difficult to read. If NMFS could go in that document and identify and separate out for lay people and fishermen what is the fishery-dependent data that they use? Where is it in there that we could look at, identify and separate fisheries' independent data. Where is that in the document and where can we find it?; identify and separate empirical data from model predictions and don't call predictions data. Predictions are predictions -- data is something that has been seen and recorded; separate out simulated area from the measured areas; measure over a great dimension, and I know they don't have the money and there's always been a problem of money and people, but you have to measure over a pretty good area to find out what's there, you need to sample large volumes of fish and you need to make repeated measurements, and make them consistent with independent indices. Start heading in that direction and bring all of us up the learning curve as we search for real data on which to build better science and better models.

One of our advisors sent the following comment, and I wish to put in the record. I don't think he was being personal, but he had strong statements. Quote: "Transparency and disclosure is the missing information in all of this process. NMFS reports numbers that have been conjured up from almost nothing and then tries to snow the readers by overwhelming them with meaningless tables of who knows what kind of numbers. They use sophisticated math, they use assumptions that probably wouldn't fly in the real world. And the document and the numbers and the way it's done is very difficult for non-scientists to understand, and we don't ever hope to be able to understand the nitty-gritty of what a certified scientist does, the algorithms and anything that goes with that, but there's got to be a way that the words that are written down can be better understood by the people that are affected, and that's the challenge, but that's what we're pointing out.

But the process cannot improve without first the authors disclosing how bad the information that they are using really is, and they're

only using information that's available, it's not complete, never has been complete, but it's all they have and they have to use it. And they need to develop a backbone to tell the councils that it cannot be done, that you cannot make that kind of assessment without quality data."

He closes it: "When I took population dynamics" (this is not me) "the professor said that this was not for application, but for playing "what-if" scenarios. They would assume all the fishery-dependent data that they were using in their teaching class were without error and continue to do the training. Somehow this got into the management realm and too often without challenge, which is another aspect of this mess that needs to be examined. With fishery scientists, some fisher science calling today the Golden Age of Population Dynamics, someone needs to tell them about fool's gold" end-quote.

Southeastern Fisheries request that the National Marine Fisheries Service and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council ask Secretary Locke to return the proposed interim rule without action. We would ask that that rule be re-examined and any of the new data, eolith measurements or any other data that's been collected since that was done, whatever year it was done, be included in the due process, so that the document will be in more keeping with reality.

I also submit SFA's testimony on the interim red snapper ban as part of this testimony and I thank you for your time.

George Geiger:

Thank you, Mr. Jones.

TOM HILL 17A

Tom Hill:

My name is Tom Hill and I am Key Largo Fisheries, right here in Key Largo. I have 37 employees, or employees with families and I've got about 100 fishermen that supply products to us from Key West to right here. We service about 250 restaurants and bait and tackle stores from Key West to Fort Lauderdale on a daily basis.

And unlike Bob I don't have a lot of facts and figures to bring to the council today, but I do have some facts, and the fact is that if these amendments go through it's going to make it very difficult on this community as for supplying fresh fish to a lot of the restaurants and for me to service tackle stores and to deal with.

So the other thing is -- that's the facts, and the figure is that I've got to figure out how I'm going to pay my employees. While I'm quite proud of the fact that we haven't laid anybody off in this recession, we have constantly recreated ourself in order to keep alive and keep going, and that's an important point.

I have a short story I wanted to share with the council and that was that years ago my father had a -- he was a commercial fisherman and he had a mate and they were lobster fishing. And during that lobster time they came across Molasses Reef right out here. And on one end of Molasses Reef was a huge schools of snapper. And his mate got real excited and said "I'm going to go fishing tonight, Jack and catch some of those snapper."

So he went home and he got everything ready. And the next morning my father met with the mate and he said, "Well how'd you do last night?" He said, "I didn't catch a fish." And my dad said, "Gordon, how could you have gone there and not caught any of those fish we saw?" He said, "Well I fished on the other end of Molasses Reef. And just to prove to myself that you can fish on one end and that doesn't mean you'll be able to catch the fish that are on the other end."

And there's sometimes, Chairman, I feel that the scientists involved have been fishing on the wrong end of the reef, that where we're getting facts and figures that may not be the facts and figures that need to be taken into consideration to make the decisions that we're making.

Two years ago we had another meeting in the Key Largo area, and at that time it was concerning lobster, and I made some comments to the council at that time, and the comment that I made didn't have so much to do with the fishing factor as much as that I feel that we're not addressing another issue, and a major issue, and that's the pollution factor, and that I really don't know that we have a fishing problem as much as we have a pollution problem. We're not supplying areas for the fish, crustaceans, whatever, to reproduce where it's a nice environment for them.

We have a situation right now -- one citing of the situation right now: Dade County, Brown County, West Palm Beach Counties all have pipelines where their sewage, it says treated water, goes into the gulf stream, but there are many times when fisherman are out and they're finding condoms, tampons and other debris floating, and that doesn't come through treated materials. And if we're constantly dumping that into the ocean, then there's going to be

repercussions, especially when you have the majority of the population in the state of Florida lives in the Southern end in that area.

The other siting, or the other instance that I want to bring to light was an article that was in *The Miami Herald* this last weekend, November 8th, it was page 25A. And it says: "Our Oceans Ail, Bureaucrats Quarrel." And in the middle of that article it made comment concerning the Gulf of Mexico, and since that's part of what we're discussing -- it said that "Every summer a dead zone of oxygen-depleted water twice the size of the State of Massachusetts in the Gulf of Mexico."

And I had someone tell me this morning -- 'cause we were talking about the fact that I was coming here today, so it's not verifiable yet, but he made a comment that there was a barge load of phosphate that was dumped in the Gulf of Mexico, 100 miles off the State of Florida. Again, when we're dumping materials that don't necessarily belong in our waters, when we're trying to recruit numbers or we're trying to raise fish, we should -- we're not taking any of that into consideration, and we're not dealing with those issues.

I have a solution, and part of the solution is that our President Obama, his Administration is very interested in environmental issues. Why don't the State of Florida, the federal government, somebody tap into some of the stimulus money and use that for cleaning up our oceans, cleaning up some of the situations.

The instance I talked about as far as Dade County, Broward County and West Palm Beach County: that has been addressed since the time that I brought up it. Whether I was instrumental in that are not, it seemed to have gone through the realm of being addressed, but we're not going to see a conclusion to that 'til the year 2020 -- that's 11 more years of dumping products into the ocean without any recourse.

I find myself more concerned about what we're doing with our estuaries and with our ocean and knowing and just watching some of the other things, we've stopped other fishing in the past, snook being one, and it just seems like we should be balking on snook out here and that's not the case. And I would if the council would take some of those comments into consideration.

George Geiger:

Thank you, sir.

LARRY WREN 17A

George Geiger: Larry, are you going to speak on all three subjects?

Larry Wren: You know it, and a few more.

George Geiger: If you would, could you separate, when you talk could you --

Larry Wren: I would have if I'd had a little more preparatory time but I didn't, so you can coach me into which amendment's which, if you wouldn't mind, is that okay?

George Geiger: Sure.

Larry Wren: Okay, the one's that affects me. First off my name is Larry Wren, I am vice president of the Islamorada Charter Boat Association. Excuse me, I'm speaking. Thank you. Okay -- I didn't know if you were paying attention or looking out the window.

I'm here because the economic impact of the grouper closure, to start with, is my first comment. I have two charter boats in Islamorada. I'm getting questions from customers about catching groupers, not wanting to book trips next year. I don't want to tell you that that's right out of my pocket, but it is. In this economy I can't have that, especially to the point that we don't have gag groupers in our Atlantic water right out here, but yet I can't go fishing for groupers to please customers and customers are not fishing with us now for that reason. That's all I have to say on that.

The next one I'd like to speak about is the deep dropping -- no more deep drop fishing below 240 feet -- 17B, then. I am very much against that. You're taking away options that I have as a charter boat operator on almost a monthly basis. I notice you've got also dolphin coming up next year, you've got fish sales coming up next year -- a lot of different things coming up in the near future that affect me. Every time you take one of these options away that I can do with a customer it hurts me economically.

I'm in the process of putting a new boat together, which I'm spending \$180,000.00 out of my pocket on. What for? To take some guy out there and troll around for something that's not there because we can't fish below 240 feet? I understand that's what's going on. I am very much against you limiting any options. If you can change the bag limits, all in favor of it. Unfortunately we both know anything that comes up from 240 feet, the mortality issue is

very very high. But still -- snowy groupers, recreational -- which amendment is that?

George Geiger:

17B.

Larry Wren:

So I'm in the same one. I'm sorry I didn't prepare all this but I tried to get here -- took time out of my day to come here. I also am against you limiting a catch that we don't really -- nobody fishes for them that much on the recreational side. So if you're taking away our recreational, you're going to take away a handful of fishermen that do it, that do the deep dropping because the commercial guys clean it out. Again, your allotments need to have different sections for the commercial, the recreational and the charter boat folks, so that everybody get their fair amount and we don't have these blanket closures across the board that's going on. I think that's an important one. That's my 17B comment.

The snapper-grouper we sort of covered in my initial statement. And which one of these is the purely commercial -- the tilefish and snowy grouper -- isn't there one that just purely affects the commercial of the plans? Basically I'm against any of the amendments that would limit my ability to take a paying customer out there on a recreational basis and he can fish for that species.

Again, if you want to change the bag and possession limits -- and I've run well in excess of 100 and some charters a year, which in this economy is pretty darned good -- there's not a lot of guys doing 250 days anymore. But the days that we fish the bottom deep-dropping are very very few; but when we need to do it, it saves us from the customer having a very slow day and maybe it's a make or break the day. And for you to take those options away from us is completely wrong. It's, again, just like the grouper thing. I'm losing bookings, that's my family's food, due to the fact that you've blanketly shut off group fishing for a fish that really does not exist in our waters anyway in the Florida Keys. I am based out of Islamorada, right here. So it's just economically harmful and anything else you will hurt me and the organizations that I belong to and represent. And I would like things left as they are until you get good quality studies, versus studies that are old and the data that's flawed or the data that's being challenged in courts because other people don't agree with it. It's happening.

And I look at what's happening in Louisiana -- different states are not abiding by your rules. Didn't Louisiana -- they didn't shut off the snapper and the grouper. Am I wrong?

- George Geiger:* You're talking about the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, number one. The only two states that did not adopt concurrent rulemaking for red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico were Texas and Florida the first year; the second year, Florida has not adopted concurrent rulemaking with the federal --
- Larry Wren:* But aren't there studies that are showing that the red snapper population was not as bad as what you're saying it was?
- George Geiger:* In the Gulf of Mexico?
- Larry Wren:* Well in the Gulf of Mexico -- we don't have a ton of red snapper in the Florida Keys. I'm just bringing up as a whole that as you shut down fishery after fishery after fishery, and what I watch you do in the Gulf usually happens in the South Atlantic. And what was it, a month and a half ago, all of a sudden there'll be no more amberjack fishing? Didn't I see that, that you shut down amberjacks?
- George Geiger:* They closed recreational amberjack, yes, because of the anticipated catch that the allocation that was allocated to the recreational sector.
- Larry Wren:* Did they close commercial amberjack also, or was it closed at the time?
- George Geiger:* They did not close it because the commercial sector fish is under a hard tack, and I can't tell you what poundage that is because I'm not on the Gulf Council. But understand -- you know, the way that's administered, and our fisheries are becoming the same way: the commercial sector fishes under a hard tack of X number of pounds. When that hard tack is met, they're closed.
- The recreational sector fishes under an allocation, which is also equilibrated to a poundage level. When that's met the recreational sector closes. If the commercial sector has not met their tack, based on their allowable catch, they're not closed. And conversely, if they do meet their tack and the recreational sector has not, the recreational sector is not closed.
- Larry Wren:* When you close a section like that, is that closed fishing for them or closed for bag and possession?
- George Geiger:* Closed for bag and possession.
- Larry Wren:* Closed for bag and possession? Even with the mortality rate of dropping the fish -- well jacks don't die as you bring them up; I

don't kill jacks -- we'll fight them, we'll let them go, but neither here nor there.

I think you understand my positions, and I mean as an independent business that survives on people going fishing, you guys are making it tougher and tougher and tougher for us.

George Geiger: We understand your position -- do you understand ours?

Larry Wren: No because your position seems to change all the time.

George Geiger: Our position is governed by the Magnuson-Stevens Act. And what we are required to do to end overfished and overfishing conditions that are resultant from a scientifically-approved stock assessment process. In the case of snow grouper, you requested that each sector should have an individual number of fish to fish for. In fact, there is two allocations for snowy grouper: there's a commercial tuck for snowy grouper which I think is 100,000 pounds, and they are limited to a 100-pound daily trip limit.

Larry Wren: Okay.

George Geiger: Which -- four fish, probably.

Larry Wren: Well yeah -- somewhere in that area.

George Geiger: Yeah, four fish. And the recreational sector, unfortunately, based on the allocation, which happens to be 96/4 -- 96% of the allocation for snowy grouper is commercial; 4% is recreational. We are left with the required reductions that we have to attain to end the overfishing condition. We're left with 533 fish to manage between North Carolina, Cape Hatteras and Key West. My name is not Solomon.

Larry Wren: No, neither is mine. That's just crazy.

George Geiger: If you take 533, now, and divide that between the recreational sector and the for-hire sector, how many do you think the for-hire sector's going to get?

Larry Wren: Probably about 400 of them, I mean to be honest. I understand --

George Geiger: A lot less than that.

Larry Wren: Yeah I understand your point or where you're coming from --

George Geiger: We have a huge, huge problem.

Larry Wren: We do have a problem, but the problem for me is if I'm getting customers that will not book trips because fishing is being shut down and they read and watch this stuff on TV, they see it on Florida Sportsman, they see it all over and we're losing charters because of that, I hope there's a bailout plan for me someplace but so far there hasn't been one. As my boat's stop running as much as they used to, due to the fact that the fishing -- and I know, don't you have dolphin on the table next January or February or March, a reduction in dolphin?

George Geiger: No.

Larry Wren: Are you sure? I think you do.

George Geiger: My executive director, and I yield to him.

Larry Wren: I thought I read somewhere dolphin was preparing to go on the --

George Geiger: And if that were to occur there would be a process exactly like this: in two cases, where you'd have scoping, where you could come out and tell us what to do to alleviate the problem, which from your problem with gag grouper to where we are today with 17A,B and 18, we underwent scoping and had people come out. And by the way, there was also an amendment for readjustment and figuring out how to reallocate between the commercial and recreational sector, specifically aimed at snowy grouper and golden tilefish a year and a half ago that went nowhere, because in the State of Florida I held every public hearing. Do you know how many people showed up?

Larry Wren: Did you have one here? Because I always show up if you have one here.

George Geiger: It was in Miami.

Larry Wren: Okay.

George Geiger: Three people.

Larry Wren: Well I mean I know apathy exists and everybody like to complain, and that's why I made a point --

George Geiger: Everybody show up when all of a sudden they find out it's going to impact them directly, and I'm sorry for that, but I take a sworn oath

of office, we've got federal law and federal law really dictates what this council must do in terms of ending overfishing.

Larry Wren: Can I ask a question?

George Geiger: Sure.

Larry Wren: When I go to get my grouper sandwich in the Panhandle next March, where's that fish going to come from?

George Geiger: Right now over 80% of it comes from foreign imports anyway.

Larry Wren: Okay well you made my point -- that's the whole thing I wanted to bring up, the foreign imports.

George Geiger: Sure.

Larry Wren: And I think that that's -- I think that's wrong, I really do.

George Geiger: Thank you sir.

Larry Wren: Thank you.

JOHN JONES 17A

George Geiger: Go ahead, Mr. Jones. If you would, identify yourself and anybody you're representing please.

John Jones: My name is John Jones. As I said, one of the many John Jones's in the Key West area. And I'm a commercial fisherman since 1980, when I moved to Key West. I fished at Tortugas years ago, had a big boat, fished with a dear old friend, Peter Gladding, who you've probably heard of. And I basically fish for snowy grouper out of King's Point Marina.

We've cut down to 100 pounds per trip, and I can live with that -- I have a small boat and economically I can do it. It's not great, but when I hear this going to go close this 40 fathom, which is 240 feet, it's very confusing. I'm assuming it just shuts the snowy group down completely, and at that point we're going to have the black grouper and gag grouper, which they don't catch down here; that's going to be closed for four months and the snowy grouper, so I guess we'll go strictly into imports, which is a problem because they have no limits to start with.

And I yellowtail, I'm 74 years old, and doing the deep dropping is basically my income. I'm not retired, I get Social Security and that's it. I don't get a pension from the Navy or Army or any business that I've been in business all my life. And it's just about going to shut me down economically. And of course in these economical times right now I probably wouldn't get unemployment 'cause I'm self-employed, and it could be a little tough. And I can always go back to doing some yellowtailing, but that's another problem: once you close the group down that's going to be heavily-targeted, and with this economy prices are kind of poor anyway.

But I scratch out -- and I have a mate that fishes with me, and of course he depends on that income. And it's just getting tougher and tougher. And we already have, like I say, the 100-pound per day, and when we fish the deep you don't get out that often -- the wind comes and everything else. We're lucky we didn't have hurricanes this year. But then we do get out we hope for good weather with -- the Gulf Stream's been not cooperating this year -- it's been in close and we drift fish.

So all these factors make it tougher and tougher in today's world. And I don't know what alternatives they have but I believe that this 40-fathom thing is basically because of the Warsaw grouper. And the only Warsaw grouper that I ever knew of in the South Atlantic out here was caught at 50-fathom rock. I've never caught one; never even seen one around here. When we fished the Tortugas you used to catch them in the Gulf, which encompasses anything west of the fort. So it just seems kind of crazy.

And I know that this stuff is relative to the Magnuson Act and the rules, and it gets very confusing to somebody that's trying to make a living and fill out reports. And of course our records are pretty good because when we sell our fish there's a trip ticket made and then we do a record and that gets mailed in and so we're pretty well scrutinized. So I just hope that they could have something. I don't know how many more years I can fish. Like I say I'm 74 and in good health after a lot of bionic parts, so I just hope that something can be done about it that we can live with. Thank you.

George Geiger: Thank you sir. Do you have any questions or anything?

John Jones: No.

JOHN JONES 2 17A

George Geiger: -- could identify yourself, just for --

John Jones: Okay I'm John Jones, commercial fisherman out of Key West. The other thing: it gets, with all these regulations, it gets more and more confusing. We also fish for what they call a barrel fish and we catch rose fish and we catch some gray tile, which are not in these species, so in theory, from what I gathered from the other meeting, that we would be able to fish for them. And the barrel fish are in the same basic waters as the snowies, so I guess if you catch the snowies you would throw them back and you would be -- so you'd actually be just throwing fish around in the water because these fish are -- they kind of are in the same areas together. When you find barrel fish, it's usually good for grouper.

And I don't know what implica- -- well first of all, you don't catch snowies in 40 fathoms; you might catch juveniles in about 350 feet, and if you do something like that now you're targeting juveniles, which I don't do -- I fish anywhere from basically 700 feet to 800 feet, and you catch better-sized grouper. And there's also spawning periods: if they had to close the spawning of them, which would be fine with me. But to shut the fishery down, and like I say I've doing it -- we used to do both: we would yellowtail when we fished the Tortugas and then we would also do the grouper fishing. But these regulations and how they keep track of things like that I don't know. And they also have the recreational, which that doesn't basically hurt me, but if they have regulations for them it's really not down in black and white. As they said at the other meeting there, majority of people that are recreational fish from their home on a canal, and so that's not controllable. I just seems that we're targeted pretty bad with this 40-fathom rule. Thank you again.

BRIAN BOYLAN 17A

George Geiger: Mr. Boylan?

Brian Boylan: Yes. Brian Boylan.

George Geiger: And you want to speak on the closure? Okay.

Brian Boylan: Brian Boylan, Key Largo. I just -- I've been fishing in Key Largo here for about 40 years, mostly bottom fishing. And I don't ever remember a large gag grouper population. We do catch some gag, but not that many. I catch gags all the way out to 300 feet of

water. And what was one of my comments would be that if we have to have this closure, I would like to see it moved out to the alternate alternative you have for 300 feet, as opposed to 240. The reason being is we have a significant drop-offs all the way down the Keys in 280 feet of water where we catch mutton snapper, yellow eye snapper and stuff like that, and we don't catch, in all my years of fishing I've caught to speckle hind and one morsel grouper in those areas. So I think for Key Largo -- I don't know what affect that would have on the rest of the North Carolina, South Carolina or the mainland Florida, but for the Keys it would make a significant difference for the recreational guys to be able to fish those ledges, 250, 280, up to 300 feet. After 300 feet it kind of levels out, out all the way out to, up here anyway, up to about 600 feet, where it starts to get bumpy, where we catch the snowies.

And the other question I have -- maybe somebody can answer -- is as opposed to say in 240 or 300 straight on out, couldn't they have a corridor? I mean I'm not sure what the max depth that they get these speckled hind or these Warsaw grouper, how deep they go, but we do have a fishery beyond the 1,000 feet where we get the queens. So just a comment. And I would prefer the amendment where the alternative would be 300 feet. Thank you.

George Geiger: Thank you very much, sir -- appreciate it.

JOE GALLAGHER 17a

Joe Gallagher: My name is Joe Gallagher, I'm a commercial fisherman, fish down here about 32 years. As I read it and I read it in The Keynoter the other day when I saw 240 feet being the maximum depth that we could fish, I knew that I would simply be out of the snowy grouper and tilefish business entirely, 'cause we just don't catch 'em inside of 240 feet -- not at all. I'm talking about where I am, not North Carolina -- I know nothing about the fishery up there.

At the same time you said that you aren't going to continue the 100-pound limit with the snowy grouper for commercial fisherman, is that true?

George Geiger: It's a 100-pound trip limit but it's considered a bite catch trip limit.

Joe Gallagher: I beg your pardon.

- George Geiger:* When the council put the commercial trip limits and the recreational bag limit in place in amendment 13(c) it was intended as a by-catch limit for both recreational and commercial.
- Joe Gallagher:* By-catch? In other words I'm fishing for something else and catching them accidentally?
- George Geiger:* Accidentally.
- Joe Gallagher:* What else would I be fishing for?
- George Geiger:* Golden tilefish, blueline tilefish, I don't know. But if you encounter those species, based on the requirements that we had for reductions in mortality, we had to do something to achieve the reductions directed by the stock assessment and mandated by law, and the only way we could achieve those mortality reductions were to put in these by-catch trip limits for the commercial sector and the very restrictive bag limits for the recreational sector where in fact we said we were attempting to discourage the prosecution of those fish. And that's stated in the amendment.
- Joe Gallagher:* I didn't realize the fish that I was catching were by-catch, they were my main target -- the snowy grouper.
- George Geiger:* They were intended by us to be by-catch. For example, with the reductions that are required when we set the annual catch limits for snowy grouper in the recreational sector, for example, we have 533 fish that can be caught by the recreational sector from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina to Key West -- snowy grouper, and in the commercial sector we're talking about 100,000 pounds.
- Joe Gallagher:* I understand we didn't reach that last year -- is that correct?
- George Geiger:* Yes, and that was the intent, because it's a by-catch fishery.
- Joe Gallagher:* In other words we're staying within the guidelines?
- George Geiger:* Yep.
- Joe Gallagher:* Well I will repeat what I just said, though, that if they enforce the 240 feet maximum depth that you can fish, no one in the Florida Keys will catch any more snowy grouper by accident or on purpose. They're just not there. They may be there up in North Carolina or Georgia or wherever, I don't know, I'm just talking about down here. I've never caught one inside of probably 350 to 400 -- and even those are juveniles. I don't fish there, I fish off 600

to 800, and under this proposal, the recommended one or the most likely one, 240 foot would be the limit from here and all the way up to North Carolina, even though the fisheries and the topography and everything is very different.

George Geiger:

The topography's different but the biological characteristics of the species are the same. The fish occur outside of 240 feet in North Carolina all the way down here to the Keys. They occur in the same water depths. And probably over whatever live bottom strata that they occupy down here, whatever live bottom strata is different up there it's still live bottom.

Joe Gallagher:

I can only speak for about 250 square miles that I would cover. And there's an even slope coming about 100 feet depth to 600 feet. In fact, it's kind of fascinating to watch it on the machine: there are no ups and downs, and there are, for all practical purposes, no fish between 100 and 600 -- I'm talking about snowy grouper now, or blueline tile, except for a couple odd places. And I have a couple of numbers but I only caught small ones and I stopped -- I didn't want to catch juvenile fish.

So what I'm saying is that anybody who is fishing for snowy group in order to make some sort of living in the Florida Keys will be flat out out of business fishing for them, just absolutely. And I base that just on having fished for so many years. Now I can't speak for other areas, so they mention that perhaps we should suggest that as people have talked about -- and the gag grouper, which we don't catch a lot of down here, that they should modify it, based on the difference in fish populations and where they are, because they certainly aren't inside of 240 feet down here. I could fish from now 'til God knows when and I'll never catch one -- not one. So we're either in or we're out, and if it's 240 feet we're out. I just wanted to make that clear.

George Geiger:

Okay. I think we've got that.

Joe Gallagher:

The other question I had: is this a program which -- I'm too old to worry about it, but I'm still concerned -- is it a program with the idea that this will be a temporary thing until fishing stocks recover, or do we ever really believe that they're going to recover, it's more or less a permanent thing?

George Geiger:

Well as a manager I can tell you that everybody puts these regulations in place and has rebuilding plans with the hope and belief that the stocks will recover. And we've certainly seen other stocks recover with closures and the things that we're

contemplating here. And what you're talking about is a rebuilding plan, and the rebuilding plan is to get the stock built to a specific spawning stock biomass which represents some historical biomass that was extant at one time but has been fished below what is considered to be a sustainable level. How long it takes to achieve that is a scientific estimate.

Joe Gallagher: Snowy grouper will take awhile.

George Geiger: Exactly -- well it take 45 years to grow a 45-year-old fish. And in a healthy fish population, you know I've got a fishery scientist in the back of the room who's glaring at me and waiting for me to make a misstatement so he can pounce on me at the break, but you've got a -- in a healthy fish population you've got representatives of that population in every year class. So when you have fish that are captured either with the fisheries dependent or independent sampling process, you find fish in every year class up to their maximum age. And when you have gaps or you have big holes in that population, that's very very problematic. And unfortunately when you have a relatively long-lived species like snowy grouper and you have gaps, it takes X amount of years to fill those gaps because they only grow one year at a time.

But when you ask is it in forever, in place forever, I can tell you no, that stock assessments will allow us, if the stock shows on a consistent rebuilding projection, council has the latitude to ameliorate the regulations that are in place to accommodate those increasing spawning stock biomass. And this council has done that in the past with king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, with pinkies.

Joe Gallagher: Just one last comment: about 20 years ago, when I was fishing most heavily for snowies and catching quite a few, some of my friends were catch 1,000 pounds a day. I kind of wish you guys would have had a limit on us 20 years ago at 250, 300 pound or so and perhaps we wouldn't be facing some of the problems we are today. I'm just -- I realize that's hindsight, but --

George Geiger: Well it's not really hindsight. I can tell you this: 20 years ago I was a member of the outraged public, screaming at this council to do things like that. I mean I was there.

Joe Gallagher: And I wanted you to do that.

George Geiger: I was approached by the police and told I was going to be escorted from a conference in Melbourne, Florida. I'm a retired lieutenant colonel in the Army, and that's how outraged I was at what was

happening within this process. And here I am, 16, 18 years later on the process, part of the process. And I can tell you that significant changes have taken place. And unfortunately it's like closing door after the horse is already out of the barn, just as you've already said. It's very very unfortunate, and makes everybody on the council -- I can tell you none of us like what we're doing, or what we're having to do. I mean this is very very distressing.

Joe Gallagher:

And one last, then I'll sit down and let somebody: there was a severe drop-off in catches about 20 years ago. But since then it's leveled off. I'm catching about the same number of fish as I was ten or fifteen years ago. There doesn't seem to be -- in other words it's not continuing to plunge. The average fish I've -- I've only been out a few times. I come down in October from up north and I fish 'til May. And the average fish I just happen to catch, I just figured out before I came down here was 23 pounds per fish -- snowy. And there wasn't a lot of fish so it's kind of a small sample. But -- and I can remember I used to count up all the fish and divide all the weights, and the first year I fished for snowies I averaged 21 pounds a fish. So I don't see that there's that situation, where as the stocks decline you tend to get smaller and smaller fish. That doesn't seem to be, from my small amount of empirical evidence that that doesn't seem to be happening. But again, it's a very small sample -- I don't catch that many fish.

George Geiger:

Okay, thank you sir.

BRUCE ANDERSON 17B

Bruce Anderson: 17A is the red snapper closure?

George Geiger: Yes.

Bruce Anderson: 17B is the --

George Geiger: The deepwater, 240 feet out.

Bruce Anderson: And 18?

George Geiger: That's comprehensive ACL.

Bruce Anderson: Comprehensive ACL?

George Geiger: Yeah, the accountability measure that we have to put on all stocks by 2010.

Bruce Anderson: Okay, so 17B is the deepwater closure?

George Geiger: Basically the question and answer period is downstairs.

Bruce Anderson: Okay.

George Geiger: And we're taking public testimony here as to what your preferences are in regard to the alternatives that have been identified for the council to work on in each one of the amendments that we're addressing here today.

Bruce Anderson: Okay. Now you're from Florida?

George Geiger: I am.

Bruce Anderson: Where are you from?

George Geiger: Sebastian.

Bruce Anderson: Okay. All right. Hi, my name is Bruce Anderson, I run a charterboat *Captain Easy*, also a member of the Islamorada Charter Boat Association. I guess mainly I'm here to comment on 17B, but I got some comments for the general way this whole thing's working altogether. You know, that 17B you guys are looking at closing the deepwater snapper and grouper fishing. I hope when you guys do this that you do it fairly and you really don't stick it to us like you did with the shallow water closure, and you guys got to use some common sense when you do this.

You closed the shallow water grouper fishing in the months that we, down here in the keys, fish for them. I'm sure the people in North Carolina and South Carolina and Georgia probably -- they probably don't like the closure, but they probably like the way it's set up because in the winter time, when they're sitting at home the fish are being protected for them, and the time of year when we'd catch them we're not allowed to fish for them. And then in summer time when we're out dolphin fishing, doing other things, then it's open.

It's the same thing with the vermillion snapper closure. And the same thing is going to affect us when you do the deepwater closure at 17B in the same kind of fashion and timeline that you did the other ones. You know, we're having a hard time down here. It's getting to the point where we're going to have a hard time figuring out what to go fishing for each day 'cause of all the different

closures you're doing. You're stacking them up against us during the time of year we need them to stay in business. I don't know what else to say, I've never really been to one of these meetings before. I don't understand that much about this stuff, but I don't understand why I get these newsletters and I look at it and it shows the council members and where they're from -- and obviously you're from Sebastian, but the other guy on there, it says he's from Tallahassee. And why is he on the South Atlantic Council? Isn't that in the Gulf?

And then I feel like down here in South Florida, especially in the Keys, we have no representation. You guys are stacking these closures up against us and doing this in a way that's very unfair to our area. It's almost like geographically unfair. So I don't know what else to say, that's why I figured I'd come by. Right now I'll tell you, most of the fishermen down here in the Keys feel that this council is ignoring them, isn't doing anything for them, and most of the guys I fish with every day don't see any point even coming by here and giving a comment 'cause we feel like all our comments that have been given up to this point have been ignored. So that's what I got to say, and hopefully this will actually get to somebody and somebody will listen to this kind of stuff. That's it.

George Geiger: If I may address the membership of the council, the composition of the council: for each of the South Atlantic States, of which there are four represented on the council, they have three voting members. Florida has three voting members, and I am one voting member, I represent the recreational appointment, Ben Hartig, who is delayed, is a commercial appointee. He lives in Hope Sound. The name you refer to who is identified with the Tallahassee address, Mark Robson, is the Florida -- I can't tell you his direct title, but he is responsible, he's the management office for saltwater species in the State of Florida for the FWC. So he works for the state organization.

Bruce Anderson: Yeah, okay, but I know that most of the guys I fish with everyday feel like we're not represented down here in the Keys.

George Geiger: Well for nine years, Tony Iarocchi, just until last year, was a member of this council. He lives in Marathon.

Bruce Anderson: Okay.

George Geiger: So it's -- it's a gubernatorial appointment, I know there were two people whose names were submitted from the Keys for this appointment cycle: Don Demaria and I can't recall the other

gentleman's name -- Jeff Kramer, and Ben Hartig, the three of them were -- and Ben got the appointment.

Bruce Anderson: Well however it works out I hope you guys think about us down here. You know you're stacking all these closures up in the wintertime. The only time I go to catch vermillion snappers is January through April -- mostly January and February. It's not a big part of my fishing, but it gives me an option that time of year when I need it, okay, and now I can't catch vermilion this year.

Grouper fishing -- we do most of our grouper fishing January through April. I'm not saying we never do it in the summer time, but most days in the summer time we're out dolphin fishing or doing other things. And the time of year when we depend on this stuff is really now through the spring. And you guys close us down, and now, you know, the deepwater fishing, the deep dropping's the same thing: we don't do that much of it but it's a bigger part of our fishing in the winter, and it seems like every time you guys do another closure or figure this stuff out -- same thing with the red snappers, these are all little parts of our fishing, but when you put them all together you're slowly putting us out of business in a time of year when we need it. I mean who sat there and figured that it would be good to close these fisheries all in the wintertime when we fish for them? That does not benefit us.

I can see how it benefits people further up the coast, and I'm getting pretty fed up. I know all the guys that I fish with are getting fed up -- most of them are so fed up they don't even bother coming to these kinds of things, but I don't know, I figured I'd come by and get my comments so you've got it.

George Geiger: When you came, did you go through the downstairs?

Bruce Anderson: No. I took a quick look. I didn't sit through any of them.

George Geiger: So you don't understand why we're doing what we're doing?

Bruce Anderson: Well I understand that you're doing them all at the time of year that's killing us, okay?

George Geiger: But there's more to it than that. We don't sit there and have a calendar on the wall and say: "Let's see how many people we can screw by having a closure this month."

Bruce Anderson: Well I think you guys might sit there and say: "Let's see who we're going to screw. Oh geez, let's screw these guys on the Keys." That's the way it's looking to me.

George Geiger: Really?

Bruce Anderson: Yeah. And that's the common opinion around the docks down here. The people in the Keys feel like this council is screwing them.

George Geiger: Well let me say this: the council meetings are now televised on the web, and there's an opportunity for you to tune in and actually see on UStream I think is what we're using, isn't it, Julie? UStream TV? And those are live streaming videos of what transpires in a council meeting. And I would suggest that, seeing as how you are a professional and this is your business, and we are involved in affecting your professional business, that it behooves anybody who's in that business to understand what's going on. And before you leave I would you to go downstairs and get an understanding as to why we are doing what we're doing and how we are required by federal law to do that.

Understand that in this closure, when we're talking about why we're closing things, you know the spawning season, the January through April closure represents a spawning season for shallow water groupers. And that was why that period was selected, not to see who we could screw or benefit one group or another.

The other problem is that based on the stock assessment for snowy grouper we have to achieve a reduction in mortality that basically equates to allowing us to harvest, to land in the recreational and for-hire sector 533 fish from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina to Key West. Now how do you manage that? You know, and with the commercial sector we're talking about 100,000 pounds and they also imposed on them a 100-pound trip limit, in an effort to try and regulate that fishery. Those are the requirements that we are responding to and why these measures are being contemplated, and we have the alternatives identified in the proposed amendments that can be explained to you in detail downstairs. And they'll explain to you how we came up with those numbers and got to those particular figures. I would encourage you to go down there and understand that.

Bruce Anderson: Yeah I understand it's a tough situation, but there's got to be ways of doing this where you don't geographically exclude us from the fishing. There's got to be different ways of doing it, whether you --

you know, it might be the spawning season, but there's got to be some way you can reduce a -- there's ways of applying common sense to these kind of things where you can get everybody in on the fishery, okay? And I just hope you guys are using some common sense and think about us down here when you come to these conclusions. I don't know what else to say, figured come make my comment.

George Geiger: Thank you.

CHRIS JOHNSON 17A

Chris Johnson: Captain Chris Johnson, C-Squared Charters, Marathon, Florida. I understand your reason for closures, especially with the groupers and what-not and the spawning and so on and so forth, but I don't believe that without proper data -- and you guys thoroughly admit - - I just went through all the things downstairs and the constant in this is "We don't have the data, but we're going to close the fishery down anyway until we come up with that data." If I'm wrong, then please enlighten me, but that's the way it sounds to us.

And also, as far as regulating from North Carolina to the Florida Keys: we're looking into regulating just Monroe County, just like kingfish is regulated down here commercially with open and closing of seasons and so forth and quotas and what not. I think that a regionalized system, as far as the Southeast region does not work. I believe that especially here in the Keys we have such a different fishery than most everyone else, even I'm willing to say from Palm Beach north, much different than what we are dealing with here in South Florida and the Keys. And I do believe that you guys are going about it the wrong way, in broad sweeping terms, as opposed to looking at each area individually and seeing what sort of impacts you're having.

And I know one of the ten commandments basically in your rules for national marine fisheries, or whichever one -- I get so confused anymore -- I think it's like number three or four is looking at economic impact of what you intend to do. And I don't believe that it's been looked at thoroughly, as we are being slowly strangled and put out of business. I don't know if you've -- how long you've been coming down here or how long you've been here or whatever, but I don't know if you notice how dead it looks on US 1. Well it's an impact from the economy as a whole, but as the fishing industry down here is being slowly strangled, businesses

are going out of business that have nothing to do with fishing, but because the fishermen have left because we are being strangled.

That's, in a nutshell, what I think, and where I think your angle and approach on regulations are wrong. I look at what the Gulf Council meeting, which I can't attend because I'm at this Council meeting which I thought was quite the wrong thing to do is have a Gulf Council meeting in Key West and South Atlantic Council meeting in Key Largo on the same day is kind of annoying.

And as far as -- I deal with the fact that -- I'm going to use gag grouper as an example in the Gulf of Mexico. I have to have a 24-inch minimum size, two fish limit because that's what it is on the Atlantic side, but the rest of the Gulf Coast has a 22-inch minimum size on gag groupers. How does that make sense? It's regulations like that -- I know that has nothing to do with you, that might be a state thing. I can't retain a 22-inch gag grouper even if I caught it in federal waters I cannot retain that in state water, vice versa.

And you know as far as trying to lump us together with the rest of - - North Carolina, how many black grouper do they catch there? And to be shut out of that fishery in order to save a by-catch of gag grouper on the Atlantic side which -- we catch a few but not many; it's primarily reds and black out front -- is I think ridiculous. And as slowly -- vermillion snappers, again, not a major part of our fishery, but they are there; they are an option that is being taken away.

As far as your 240 foot on out for snowy groupers: I think it's way off-course. 240 feet of water here I'm fishing for mutton snappers. So you're going to shut me out of -- I'm from Marathon, and in that area I have five wrecks that I fish that are 240-foot out to about 300 feet and I catch mutton snappers, the occasional black grouper on those spots. I have never once caught a snowy, I've never once caught a speckled hind or a Warsaw. I know guys that have grown up here have seen one speckled hind in their life. For us to be shut out of an entire zone from 240 feet on out is crippling. And then not be able to catch groupers on top of that for our busiest time of year is also crippling. I think that is just the wrong approach to be.

I understand you go to North Carolina it's an 80-mile trip to get in at 240 feet of water. I was originally from the Northeast; I've seen what goes on up there, and I'm starting to see the same thing here. The reason why I left the Northeast was because I was shut out of a fishery up there so I figure let me try my luck here and in the last two years I've had more regulations jammed down my throat than I

ever did in the Northeast. Up there it was a little more slow -- you could kind of compensate for it and work with it -- and it's working. It's obvious it works up there -- there's more fish than they've had in years and years and years. But down here to just all at once be slammed with this is the wrong approach. That's pretty much what I have to say.

George Geiger: Thank you. And just, if I may: you're referring to the national standards, of which there are ten.

Chris Johnson: Yes.

George Geiger: And the national standard -- it addresses the requirement for the council to consider economic impacts -- is merely that. We have to be aware of the economic impacts of every alternative that we consider in an amendment, and that's done through what's called an EIS, an economic impact study, in an effort to try and understand what impact economically. But it does not direct or instruct the council to do one thing versus another because there is an impact economically.

Chris Johnson: So what's the purpose of it, then, just to say: "Well yeah, we're going to end up killing a lot of people here"?

George Geiger: Well, because when the national standards were written, number one, the council had a lot more leeway under Magnuson-Stevens to ameliorate potential regulations because of economic considerations. The national standard, that trumps all others, is national standard one, which is the conservation and management for the sustainability of the stock.

Chris Johnson: Right.

George Geiger: All the others are considerations, but they cannot trump or --

Chris Johnson: Okay, I understand exactly what you're saying. And yeah, that --

George Geiger: So we have to consider and understand. So if we have four alternatives, and one of them, all three of them or two of them achieve the requirement for reductions in mortality that we're required to achieve, and one does it with less economic impacts, certainly we would be blind or dumb to go with anyone other than the one that has least impacts economically.

Chris Johnson: Okay then why not reduce a bag limit instead of a complete closure of a fishery at a specific time, especially -- and I'm going to refer to

use down here because January through April is when I fish seven days a week, okay? Nobody gets on my boat and says, "How many mangrove snappers we going to catch today?" First question out of their mouth is, "How many grouper we going to catch today?" And then I'm going to tell them: "Well you're going to catch a lot of grouper -- we're going to throw most of them back." That's my usual sentence.

Most of my anglers don't have the ability to land a keeper grouper. They will get broken off 90% of the time. That's not fault of my mine, that's no fault of their own -- they just don't understand how hard the fish fight.

We would be happy to have maybe one black per vessel per day, instead of guy's trophy fish of a lifetime, he's been fishing here for 20 years and never caught a keeper black grouper and this year he does, and I have to tell him "I'm sorry, sir, but I've got to throw that back," and he's been looking for that for 20 years, and I can't give it to him. I don't know what I'm supposed to say to these people.

And then guess what? I've lost that customer. So there's the economic impact. I understand -- again, why can't we just reduce bag limits? A majority of our groupers caught in the winter time are shallow -- they don't blow up. They're 20 to 30 feet deep, 40 feet on a reef edge -- top edge of the reef. They're not coming out of 200 and some feet of water blown up dead, so I don't see the -- necessarily understand why you would have to be closed. And I'm sorry, but if you can't tell the difference, you know, the by-catch issue: if you can't tell the difference between a gag, a black or a red, you shouldn't be in this business, period.

As far as the economic thing is concerned, I don't think it was properly looked into, personally, but the 240 foot rule, which is one of the amendments that's being directly addressed here, I think that is just ridiculous. That is -- 'cause you're definitely not looking at us here, as a group. I mean I've caught plenty of snowy groupers and I've caught plenty of blueline tiles and I've caught all that other stuff you've got on your list except the Warsaw and speckled hind -- never even heard of one landed here in the Keys. I've heard of a couple speckled hinds -- I should take that back.

But to shut us out of a deeper water fishery which is only about six to seven miles for me to get to for bottom fishing, where I'm primarily mutton snapper fishing and not snowy grouper fishing. I fish snowy groupers at a minimum of 650 feet. So I just think that really wasn't thoroughly looked into either, and that's one of the

major problems I have is closing that out. You're definitely going to shut me out of another fishery -- I don't know if it was intended or not, but I mean --

George Geiger: To answer your questions about bag limits: in 1982 the South Atlantic Council put the first regulations in place on bottom species on the snapper grouper complex. And with the exception of only two cases -- two case, not one regulation that's been put in place has ever achieved the management goal that was intended -- not one, with the exception of two. One was goliath grouper, which was closed in 1992 and constituted --

Chris Johnson: '90, I think, but okay.

George Geiger: '92.

Chris Johnson: I believe it was -- it was '92?

George Geiger: '92.

Chris Johnson: I thought it was moratorium in 1990 --

George Geiger: Constituted no-take in non-consumptive species in the South Atlantic. We've seen a resurgence and a come-back of goliath grouper.

Chris Johnson: Right, to the point that they're almost a nuisance, but -- yes?

George Geiger: The second species that benefited was pinkies -- red porgies. We had a five-year moratorium put in place and they came back, I think we were at 5% SBR, they came back with a vengeance, and we've been able to increase the bag limit and the trip limits on those.

Those were the only two management measures that were put in place that have achieved the management goal intended. The problem is is that in every case since 1982, short-term economic considerations were taken into consideration and the council ameliorated the recommended management measures that were recommended by the science community at the time, which resulted in an ever-worsening fishery to where we are now, at a point where number one, Magnuson has taken that ability from the councils because they have demonstrated their inability to apply it wisely over time. So now it's gone, number one. And number two we are forced to end overfishing when a stock has been determined to be overfished and undergoing overfishing. By law.

Your question: "Why can't we do it with bag limits?": since 1982 they've tried to manage these species with bag limits and size limits and we found out, as the science matured, because really marine science is a relatively young science --

Chris Johnson: Right.

George Geiger: We don't know that much, we don't have a lot of data, historical data, biological data on the species that we're managing, but as we gain more and more we find out that we get very very little bang from adjusting a size limit or from adjusting a bag limit in terms of overall reduced mortality. The only way we find -- and it has been proven to achieve the reductions necessary is to get hooks out of the water. And that's effectively a closure of time type.

Chris Johnson: Okay. You were saying that bag limits and size limits has been ineffective: with the red grouper fishery in the Gulf, the long-line fishery they've got now an 18-inch minimum size, where the recreational sector has a 20-inch minimum size. What was the -- I don't understand how they can get a lesser size limit that does not reduce mortality. If anything it increases it. You're managing a fishery there with a size limit.

George Geiger: What they're trying to do there -- and I can't speak for the Gulf Council, but from my perspective, what I think they're trying to do is eliminate or reduce release mortality -- by-catch mortality. So by reducing the size limit, people hopefully will catch their fish quicker and stop fishing on fish once they catch a bag limit. Whether they do it or not I have no idea. That's all open to conjecture; if somebody spends enough money to travel 25, 35 miles offshore, are they going to stop when they catch the first two fish at the bag limit, or are they going to continue to fish all day and trying to catch a bigger fish, and cull as they catch bigger fish?

Chris Johnson: Right. No I understand your point there. It just -- it seems to me that here you're trying to reduce mortality by decreasing a size limit, but at the same time what we're doing to decrease mortality here is completely shut down a fishery for four months. That just seems like contradiction all day long. Okay, well then I've said my peace. Thank you very much.

George Geiger: Thank you sir.

WAYNE GRAFT 17B

Wayne Graft:

Wayne Graft, I'm from Big Pine Key, Florida, recreational angler speaking on amendment 17B and a little bit of 18. I just have four points:

I've listened to all the presentations today, and it seems to me that number one, we need to institute a comprehensive data collection program for this region. All of the heartburn and discontent is predicated on, from a commercial or from a recreational side, we don't believe there's a good assessment, a good data collection program in place. And I know there isn't for recreational, 'cause I've been fishing in the Keys for over ten years and I've never once been asked for any data, other than swordfish.

So that's probably the first and foremost point: if you don't have good data, you can't make good decisions. And I understand you guys are making the best decisions you can with the data you have, but I think we as a whole can do a whole lot better job of data collection.

Number two: the 240 and plus deepwater closure. Nine species are targeted. I have a problem with that because there's two fish that reside in the same area that we can target, and that's rose fish and barrel fish. We're going to end up catching those other nine species, and they're going to die, and we're going to have to just toss 'em. So to me it's either an all or nothing thing. And right now you don't control those other two, so I see a problem with that 240-plus closure just because of those other two species. If that goes into effect I believe that will decimate the reef fish. People are going to go yellowtailing. Yellowtail are going to get wiped out, cobia will be wiped out.

So I think there could be a happy medium, and you could either do it in one of two ways: you could have zones. Earlier you explained some of those zones that we have currently, based upon old data and they're small, they're too late, too little. I'm talking a lot bigger, widespread changes, and that could be something to the effect that 70% of the water is closed. Maybe every seven miles, latitude or longitude, that's closed, and then you have three miles that is open so that you have 70% closed, 30% open. So people could legally fish in those areas without hitting all the rest. That's one example.

The other example would be seasonal closures like you're doing with the grouper for January through April. You could do the same kind of thing for deepwater and synchronize that with the

different seasons for some of your fish like dolphin, your pelagic fish that come in. So between March and let's say -- March-April timeframe to August-September timeframe you could close the deepwater fishing because folks are doing other fishing at that time. It's usually that September through now when people start hitting deep drop and a little heavier.

Third point: I know, being in Monroe County I'm interested in sector allocation for Monroe County, because I believe that it has its own characteristics that are different than other parts of the region, the South Atlantic region. What we have down in Monroe County in the Keys is a lot different than the Carolinas or Georgia or even on the north or east coast of Florida. So I'm interested in sector allocation for Monroe County.

And lastly: I'm really saddened that at the rate of all the imposed restrictions that there's a generation of children that are going to suffer. I have four kids, and their greatest joy in life is going out fishing on the weekends. And this is really, you know for this time of year I won't be able to do that with them. So I know you're looking future and future generations and that's why I say I think it's important that there's a happy medium, that it's not an all-closure, and that's it. That's all I have.

George Geiger: Thank you sir. Very constructive comments. Appreciate it.

MURRAY SHATT 17B

Murray Shatt: My name is Murray Shatt, I am a recreational fisherman, also represent the marine construction industry in Monroe County for the State of Florida. I'm pretty concerned about mostly the 240 closure. I think that's going to have a great effect on the overall economy of the Keys long-range. I'm thinking most people come to the Keys, they like to fish. This is going to shut out an entire segment of the fishery. It's going to revert all the way back up the food chain as far as every kind of business in the Keys: hotels, restaurants, not just -- first of all the charter fishing guys -- they're going to be history. And it's going to work its way back up to the economy, the very fabric of the Keys because the people come to the Keys -- and I've been in the Keys for 30 years. They come here because they like to fish. They like to go offshore and do a varied amount of fishing.

When you shut off one whole segment of the fishery, that's just going to be one reason they don't want to come and fish because

they can't fish anymore. You know, we're seeing one fish after another being eliminated from the whole realm of the fishing experience, and I really think that -- I've deep dropped out there for 30 years. I did a little bit commercially when I first came to the Keys. I haven't noticed any decrease in the amount of fish that I catch when I go out there and deep drop. So I don't know -- I mean maybe in North Carolina there's less fish -- I don't know. I think it basically goes back to what the last gentleman said: we have poor or inadequate information coming into the system to start with, so therefore we're not being able to make good decisions.

And I know that the council is up against the wall with this law that they have, but I still think it's flawed, and I think making worse decisions are not the answer, and I hope that some other alternative can be done to eliminate that closure situation. I think what you're going to do is you're just going to make everybody into an outlaw, because I don't know that people are going to just throw away all their fishing rods and just never go fishing again because somebody made a rule. And that's -- I'm sure with all the other comments you're going to hear there's a lot of other comments to be pretty much agree with the rest of the ones the previous two guys said. That's all I have, really.

George Geiger: Thank you sir. Joe Messer?

JOE MESSER 17B

Joe Messer: I'm Joe Messer, I'm a recreational angler out of Summerland Key. And I've got a few points regarding 17B and 18, echoing comments that we've already heard many times already: the lack of sufficient data, I think, is at the crux of a lot of what we're facing. And the problem is we get put in that Catch-22.

What happens is from the scientific community a status is established that they believe a fish is overfished, and then a quota is set and we don't have the data. Not the problem is now once that's been done, if the data is then collected, you're punished from it, because it shows that you're surpassing your quota and you're shut down.

So it becomes a disincentive by the method and the process that we're using right now become a disincentive to get good data and truly manage the fishery effectively. And that is exactly what

we're facing, especially with the 240 foot closure and snowy grouper. This has been a fishery that's been going on for 40 years down here, if not longer. Nobody that I have talked to in any of the sessions today has been able to show any sufficient data as to how it was identified as an overfished species, but yet by identifying it as an overfished species we have one year to essentially shut it down. And that's the only conclusion we can come to. It's established that for the entire South Atlantic fisheries, 523 fish are going to be allocated to the recreational angler. That's unbelievable. And that effectively shuts down an entire industry in Monroe County.

That brings to some of the other points: Monroe County is nothing like the rest of this fishing territory that is being managed under this. It has very unique situations: it's got federal waters, state waters, different regulations that everybody is trying to adhere to down here and it's so confusing it's just unbelievable. And yet when you look at 240 feet down here, that's just beyond the reef, that's 20-minute run at most. North Carolina that's two hours offshore. Nowhere near is it the same, and it should not be classified as the same.

So what can we do about it? I think we need better data. If you want better data and you want the recreational side to give better data, they would be happy to do that if they're not penalized for it. But they way the system works right now with establishing the quotas upfront and that it's going to be shut down, there's every disincentive to provide the data. People just don't want to do it because as soon as they do it's going to get closed even that much stronger. That needs to change.

As far as the deepwater closure: also a lot of it was based upon Warsaw and speckled hind. Very few, if any, are caught in Monroe County. Because of that, I really just don't think that that proposal, that amendment should extend down into the Keys and into Monroe County -- it just doesn't apply.

If we won't consider that, then I truly believe as an another alternative is to consider sections versus a complete closure. If you want a 70% recapture rate on a species, then close 70% of the waters. And we heard this earlier from a gentleman talking about doing that and taking sections. Pick the lawns -- if you want 70% reduction, close seven miles, leave three open. A section straight from 240 fee on out. If it's 50/50, then five miles open, five miles closed. It's a workable alternative, it takes some areas, because if you try and do a complete closure it will not be effective, because

individuals are still going to go out and they're going to fish for rose fish, they're going to fish for gray tile and they're going to fish for barrel fish, but they're going to catch snowies and they're going to throw them away because they can't keep them. That doesn't accomplish anything in what we're trying to do here. If you have a complete closure for a section and yet another section open, that doesn't occur, and it's a much more logical, better approach.

There was also a discussion of seasonal closure; I think that has some possibility as well, as another alternative. There are different seasons down here where more fish are prevalent. Pelagic species, dolphin during the summer time, from April, May, June, July. Those are strong -- there's a lot of other fish to be caught during that time as well as tarpon, lot of other sport fish down here that can kind of support the keys. Could consider a deepwater closure during those months when there are other species to be caught. And it may not -- the months I'm not trying to zero in right now, but you understand what I'm getting at: the appropriate areas and try and make it a reasonable area. When there is a slow time period down here, then that's when you could have the deep drop open. We can look at that.

And then the last point I would make is I do believe, since the Keys are so unique and everybody I've talked to here today agrees that that is the case, we should seriously consider sector allocation down here and do some different management. At least state allocation, but even state, mainland Florida is still a lot different than the Keys, and I believe that there should be some strong consideration of sector allocation down here. So that's my comments.

George Geiger: Thank you sir. Roland Meyers?

ROLAND MEYERS 17B

Roland Meyers: Roland Meyers, I'm a commercial fisherman from Summerland Key, Little Torch. I'm going to submit some written testament later on but my concern today of course is the 240 depth closure. And my main concern about the 240 depth closure, although amberjack is not listed as one of the species is that I want to ask the council to not include amberjack in this 240 closure. It's a species that doesn't start down here commercially until we start at 240 and almost all amberjack fishing in Monroe County takes place from 240 out. So although it's not on your species I just would like to ask the council that it not be included. It's an

important fishery to quite a few people down here and it's a fishery that of course occurs outside of that. But I will be submitting written testimony on the rest of that, but that is what I want to touch on today.

George Geiger: Thank you sir.

DANIEL PORTILLO 17B

Daniel Portillo: My name is Dan Portillo, I'm a recreational angler and I'm simply here representing myself and my family. I would like to comment on 17B and I think I won't be long I think I'm just going to echo what a lot of the previous speakers have stated here before. I think part of the frustration is that we -- at least my perception -- is that this 240 and beyond closure is being based on data or science and yet your solution or your proposed solution at least appears to be somewhat flawed in that you continue to allow fishing for other species, which inevitably, if there's any logic in that process, would obviously lead to a total closure of all fish in the 240 or beyond. That seems to me like a logical conclusion. I think that would have a severe impact, and again, it seems like for this area it's -- not only will it affect the commercial and charter boat guides but it is a way of life for a lot of the people that live here. I know when I was stationed here over ten years ago, part of the reason my wife and I decided to stay was because of the fish. And we really have nothing else down here. It's not like we can go deer hunting or anything else. So I would hope that a decision with such a big impact would be based more than just on the best available data, and instead a scientific and validated data. Thank you.

George Geiger: Thank you sir.

DOUG POLETTI 17B

Doug Poletti: Doug Poletti, Key Largo. On 17B, with the over 240, the fact that one gentleman was discussing with the tuna thing. We said we can't make an assessment unless we have data, you know, it's tough to make your decision unless you have data: if we don't have accurate data on a Warsaw that we're trying to protect here, then how do we make a decision to shut down people's entire livelihoods or even -- forget about their livelihoods, just shut down a fishing when we don't have the data that that's even going to help what we've done, that there's any impact on it? That's number one.

And you know, I do have a lot of history on data acquisition. I was an engineer for Boeing and I did data acquisition when I was an engineer for Boeing and if we did our data acquisition and made our decisions predicated on a lack of data like could possibly be made here, I mean they'd be falling out of the sky right now 'cause you cannot make a decision without the -- and I don't mean that as derogatory, that's true. I mean I'm an engineer and it's done -- there's a reason, everything is done what we call in a deliberate fashion. And it seems like it's not done in a deliberate fashion.

And also I want to address to Mr. Geiger: the fact that -- this one sort of blows me away, that you're surprised that someone didn't show up, a commercial fisherman or sport fisherman or charter fisherman didn't go for a three-week assessment; you're clearly out of touch with what we have to do. I mean I wouldn't expect you to show up somewhere to do an assessment on one of our boats or anything else for three weeks on your time without pay and cover your food or your fuel or your mileage back and forth. It's just not done that way. We're out there trying to do our thing and that's -- I can say that's probably why are fisheries management's where it is right now.

George Geiger:

Well number one, the people who said they were going to show up are volunteers; they said they were going to do this. The three-week process is not one in which you, a fisherman, participates all three weeks. They participate in the data workshop, they can participate in the assessment workshop or participate in the review workshop. It could be that they'd participate in all three, but for the most part they participate in one week. And it's been said the majority of the fishermen should be there for the data workshop -- that's the important one.

And so when we go out we ask people. We ask people who are members of our AP -- I mean we don't twist anybody's arm. And we do recompense for travel and expenses -- they get per diem. And it's a voluntary thing. And we have people show up. The red snapper stock assessment, I believe, is the first one we have not had fishermen representation.

Doug Poletti:

I just -- to leave and go away from our businesses --

George Geiger:

They volunteered, sir. If they didn't intend to and they didn't want to leave their business for one day, they should not have volunteered, which would have allowed us to pursue other people who might want to have participated, and would have participated.

You don't say you're going to do something, especially something of this criticality and then not show up. So yeah I'm disappointed.

As a matter of fact, it goes beyond that.

Doug Poletti: To what?

George Geiger: Well to where we have now people complaining that nobody was at the stock assessment when we made every possible avenue available and attempt to get them to appear. And then we're being criticized for fishermen not attending?

Doug Poletti: Neither here nor there. I don't know how many fishermen hear could leave for that period of time and take part in the process, that's all. I don't think they could.

George Geiger: Well I don't think everybody can either. But my point is, we had volunteers who said they would and then they didn't.

Ben Hartig: Well to address this: it has been talked about; it has been talked about paying people to come. I would much rather see industry sit down and actually pay a designated person to come to the assessment, at least at the data workshop. You don't have to flood them; the idea is not to flood the assessment with a whole bunch of people; the idea is to have a few key people there with long-term knowledge of the fishery that can impart their knowledge to the assessment scientist. You only need about three people 'cause -- well actually four -- you need a recreational.

There's four tables that break out in the data workshop so really, if you want to cover it you would need one fisherman at each table, and that's all you need. You need four fisherman for that one week. And for the commercial sector, you know, the guys throw two fish or what they caught every day and do a pool for somebody. I mean you know, certainly that could pay for it. In the recreational sector you could do something similar or actually get together and have a fund, a designated fund that was arrived at by maybe, you know in some kind of festival, seafood festival or something.

George Geiger: It's all a moot point now because based on the red snapper stock assessment we are changing the entire SEDAR process, where instead of having meetings for a week away someplace, at Charleston or Savannah or where the meeting happens to occur, we're now going to conduct webinars. So there will be pre-meetings, when people who are appointed to this SEDAR review

panel, the data panel, the assessment panel or the review panel will meet several times via webinar, and the entire process will be conducted via webinar, not requiring anybody to travel.

The hitch there is that a fisherman may have to have the technical ability to access the webinar process and be willing to participate, and you probably will have to do so from on land. So it's still going to require some sacrifice, but certainly not the total sacrifice. And a lot of the data input that they can provide will be provided before the meeting, as opposed to, depending upon having the data presented at that meeting.

So I can tell you the fact that there were no fishermen at that red snapper stock assessment was not just -- I'm not -- I can't speak for the entire council, but we've altered the entire SEDAR process to ensure that we have better fisherman participation at future SEDARs, and we're doing it via this webinar process. And I don't know how else we can get better participation.

Doug Poletti:

Okay. And like I said, that was one issue; the biggest one is how we would make a decision when we don't have data that we're going to base the decision on, as far as it goes for the Warsaws.

George Geiger:

But we do have data. The problem is that Kitty Mitchells and Warsaw are overfished. They've been carried as being overfished for nigh on eleven years now. There is a grading process each council undergoes in terms of how many fish stocks you've got that are overfished and undergoing overfishing, how many fished you've managed successfully and have taken off that list, and based on the success rate of the council in doing that, Congress takes action. And I can tell you, the failure of the councils in general, around the country, all eight of them, in terms of ending overfishing on the stocks that have been identified thus, resulted in Magnuson-Stevens being re-authorized in the condition it was re-authorized.

Doug Poletti:

But I will say they're not overfished by the over 240 in this zone. That's what I'm saying: they're not overfished by the over 240 in this, whatever you want to call it: Fort Pierce south or the Monroe County line south -- that's not it. And you have no data to show it is because anyone here that fishes is going to tell you -- that's not it.

George Geiger:

Well do we know historically what the landings were? Because they're not catching them today, you know, just as a rhetorical question.

Doug Poletti:

I guess, sir. The thing is, if you're going to make -- if there's going to be a decision to be made to shut down an entire fishery -- in fact shut down guys' entire businesses, and you're going to make that decision based without data and the guys in this room will tell you we're not getting the Warsaw's there, and you have no indication there is any, and you know I mean how do you make a decision like that? How does that decision ever come to being that: "Well we have no indication that they're even catching Warsaw's here," any indication if you walked on one of our boats and fished on a boat and sat there and did the deep drops over here, you're not going to see a mortality rate on the Warsaw's here, but yet we're going to shut down this fish and this fish and this fish and this fish over no data that shows it.

And in fact the reality, if there was data that would show it, you'd see that it's not going to do anything; it's not going to help. And that's a heavy decision to make, and when you and your friends and your friends are trying to send their kids to school off no data and it's a bad decision, I mean that's a heavy thing to take as a government to go out and impose that.

Now if we need to go out and do something to save the Warsaw's, then do something to save the Warsaw's, but don't do something that's not going to save the Warsaw's and destroy the fishermen, and the communities and the economics of what's going on here, 'cause you have no data to do it. If you had data to do it it would be bad data, because how many people catch the Warsaw's in 240 and up here? No one. That's it.

Ben Hartig:

I see your point. And the point is well taken about using a 1999 stock assessment as the best available science to shut down the fishery now. I see that. Do we have Warsaw and speckled hind on a SECAR trajectory to be assessed? I don't know -- I can't answer. There's a lot for us to try and remember, and I don't know. But having a one fish possession limit per boat for the last eleven years should have given Warsaw and speckled hind some ability to rebuild to some degree. It should have. I mean that's a very very restrictive limit. Unfortunately the best science that the SSC had was looking at the 1999 stock assessment, and based on the time frame that we have to act, we have to use that assessment. It's the same box that used to be this big that's now this big that we have to make our recommendations for management. And like George says, we have to act on the law and we have to act based on that limited data set when the assessment was done in 1999 for those two species.

Doug Poletti: I understand that, but you wouldn't stop, like ban weed killer in your yard to save a Warsaw grouper and that's about what you're doing by stopping this; we're not hurting the Warsaw groupers there. And by sitting there and saying, "Well we have a stock assessment and it hasn't rebounded," I accept that; maybe the Warsaws are very badly hurt. But what might be imposed under 17B isn't going to do anything to help the Warsaw population in this zone, and that's all I want to make sure is crystal clear in everyone's mind.

George Geiger: Well I can address this, and I to catch, and I have caught a lot of Warsaws. I've caught probably ten or twelve over 300 pounds and hundreds of other Warsaw groupers, and most of the Warsaw groupers that I have caught were in 240 feet and deeper --

Doug Poletti: And where is that at?

Ben Hartig: Up to 580 feet. Just above you and right off of -- actually West Palm Beach all the way to Fort Piers. And I have caught some Warsaws in shallower water, but by far the majority of Warsaws, their area of abundance is in that 240 to 360 feet. That's where they live. They just take over the -- they're the major top reef fish predator in the deepwater as goliath grouper is in the shallow, just as you do to the deeper water they take up that niche -- they're the top reef fish predator in that 260 -- 240 to 360 foot depth.

Now I have caught them as deep as almost 600 feet on a wreck off of Stuart, but by far the majority of my fish are right down the line on that area in that 240 to 360. So certainly drawing that line will protect Warsaw and speckled hind; there isn't any doubt in my mind it'll do it. But at what cost? By prohibiting all fishing to all fishermen, that's a pretty high cost to protect two species where we've already set aside areas in those depths as insurance policies, I disagree with George a little bit about why we did it. But in my view they're just insurance policies about having those fish in the ocean in perpetuity. So that's my experience in almost 40 years of fishing in those depths.

Doug Poletti: And I don't doubt that to the further north, 'cause I did longline off of Daytona when we were doing that and we got the Warsaws. But down here it's just -- I mean you're -- we're trying to save something we're not hurting anyway and I just don't see -- I mean there has to be a zone assessment because there's no data that's going to help anything; it's going to hurt people.

Ben Hartig: I appreciate it. Thank you.

JEFF WEEKLY 17A

Jeff Weekly: I'm Jeff Weekly, editor of *Florida Sportsmen* magazine. I want to comment briefly on 17A and 17B. Our position at a magazine is at this point pretty well known. We've printed our opinions in terms of the red snapper assessment and the proposed management. And it's our feeling that there's sufficient reason to question the assessment and ample reason to delay any type of implementation of a full closure on this fishery 'til we get a better handle on what's going on.

There's a lot of evidence that the numbers of adult fish that are in the population may be underrepresented in the assessment. There's been some independent reviews of that that have indicated that there is reason to question certain aspects of the assessment. And at this time, with all the things that the recreational industry is going through with the problems facing the birding industry, the charter industry, the tourism industry, closing red snapper season would be devastating.

Secondarily some of the additional measures that have been on the board if they do in fact determine that something needs to be done for red snapper, broad closures to all bottom fishing would be devastating and I think unnecessary off the South Atlantic coastline, particularly the depths from 90 to 240 feet of water -- those are depths that are inhabited by a very wide range of species that are targeted by a very wide range of methods. And fishermen are fully capable of targeting specific species to the exclusion of others. To tell a fisherman that he should not be allowed to fish for any benthic species because of a concern over by-catch of red snapper -- many of these fishermen will tell you that they can change their gear, change their locations and target gray snapper, gag grouper, amberjack, trigger fish, cobia -- a huge range of other fish.

The red snapper tend to show site fidelity in certain areas and prefer certain baits and prefer certain areas of the water calm. So for the recreational fishermen that I talk to, from my own experiences and from the charter boat men that I talk to, it doesn't seem necessary to create area closures for the protection of red snapper.

If in fact the scientific and the legislative and the management community determines that a red snapper wholesale closure is needed -- if that goes through I think that would be -- I don't think any additional measures would be needed to curtail the harvest of red snapper by the recreational sector. Can't comment on the commercial sector; not very familiar with those fisheries for red snapper. But from the rec side I think it's safe to say that these guys could shift over to other species that are currently managed under different plans.

JEFF WEEKLY 17B

Jeff Weekly:

Amendment 17B, regarding the deepwater species: I'm concerned that we spend a lot of time and effort in establishing these deepwater marine protected areas. That was a multiyear effort, and there was opposition to it in certain areas, and there was a lot of consensus that was arrived at among various user groups, in some cases user groups that previously may have disagreed on certain terms, and they've come to accept these areas that were implemented recently. And we've really yet to hear what the results of those current closures are, this East Hump, the St. Lucy Rocks off Stewart and the Northeast Florida zones in addition to North Carolina zones.

These, from what I understand, were created to protect the nursery zones for snow groupers and speckled hind and also Warsaw groupers in here. And I think that some careful analysis of the results of those marine protected areas needs to be brought to the table. I think we need to understand what's going on in those areas, perhaps use those areas as a measuring stick, if you will, to look at these fish populations to help guide further decisions on these fisheries.

I think that the effort on the recreational sector for the deepwater fish I think it's dropped off dramatically and I think that probably would be reflected in the next incarnation of the surveys. This industry's been hit really hard and for people to buy \$3,000.00 to \$5,000.00 electric reels to enter this deepwater fishery, that's been a pretty tough nut to crack for a lot of people this year.

That said, those deepwater fisheries are very valuable to the recreational sector, and it's an important part of the charter business for a lot of captains, particularly off Miami and all through the Keys to have an opportunity to deep drop. These guys

aren't looking for a large number of species, they're primarily looking for one catch to set off a day of mixed bag fishing.

So for the recreational sector to be allowed to catch one snowy grouper -- that's a meaningful catch for these guys. To close this stuff down with an inadequate understanding of the results of this chain of MPAs that we've established, I think that would be short-sighted and detrimental really to the whole management cause.

I think that's basically all I wanted to say today. My comments are again are typically on the record in the magazine, but I wanted to say something while I was here in town, the Florida Keys. And I appreciate the council coming down to listen and I appreciate the attendance of residence of the Keys and charter boat men and the commercial fishermen as well.

And George is going to ask me any questions?

George Geiger:

Thank you. I just wanted to make one point, Jeff. In terms of the closures, when the council embarks on these closures, if you look at the purpose and need for the closures in the purpose and need portion of amendment 14, which is the MPAs: it was not to protect juveniles, it was to protect potential/known spawning aggregation sites, but primarily to protect habitat. And those were jointly considerations. And it was really -- we never anticipated achieving anything in terms of mortality reduction from closing those areas because there's no way to measure it. You can't measure that you don't really know based on who's fishing on a particular site or what comes off of that site

So it was, as you said, a multiyear process, but the intent was basically one of feeling good about doing something in terms of protecting known spawning aggregations and site fidelity habitat on which spawning aggregations have been known to occur. So whether we'll ever find out what benefit in terms of increased biomass we get from them, I doubt if we'll ever know because there's never been a benchmark established as to what was there or what you were achieving in terms of biomass before they were put in place.

Jeff Weekly:

Understood. I was just suggesting that we ought to at least look at the possibility of finding some way to quantify what's occurring in those areas on a year-to-year basis, before we make broad conclusions about those fisheries as a whole, because you have areas of site-specific fish that will, from all we know about these fish, they will live out their live histories in one area. The snowy

groupers, from guys I've talked to, will recruit to a wreck as small fish, and they will remain on those areas. And if we have some idea of what might be in those current MPAs and some method of sampling them, it might serve as a useful tool to suggest what's occurring elsewhere.

George Geiger: Thank you.

STEVEN LEOPOLD 17B

Steven Leopold: My name is Captain Steve Leopold, I'm a charter boat captain in Islamorada here in the Florida Keys and have been for the past 20 years. I'm currently the president of the Islamorada Charter Boat Association, have been for the past six years.

It is my belief that fisheries management is very important to our industry. Myself and the Islamorada Charter Boat Association membership have always supported bag limits and size limits to protect our fisheries. The direction the National Marine Fisheries Service over the past two years is on a path of destruction for the charter boat business in our area.

This direction will trickle down to all our local businesses, hotels, real estate, just to name a few. No consideration has been taken by the National Marine Fisheries to the economic condition of our industry. Look out the window when you drive by, if you ever do: charter trips in our area are down 30% to 50%. Fewer trips: less fish caught. Use that in your stock assessments.

The current closures, of course, will help the fish stocks, but these drastic measures that have been implemented, and more soon to be implemented, are certain death to many businesses. Bad timing, bad management.

Restricting bag limits and size limits are a compromise that will work for both fish and fishermen. In the 20 years of speaking and these public comment opportunities I've always believed my voice was heard, and I always pass that on to other charter fishermen: "Speak up, they'll listen." I have grave doubts the past few years. The National Marine Fisheries has become a political body that does not listen to the user groups it's affecting. If the National Marine Fisheries keeps pushing forward on their current path, charter fishermen will become an endangered species.

There's a few things that I've brought up over the years that I haven't seen any motion, any word of that I think it important for our local fishery here. I've brought up the fact that I believe the bag limit on yellowtail for charter fishermen, recreational fishermen is way too high, and the size limit is way too small. On my boat, if I have six people on my boat I can catch 60 yellowtails. The stock is healthy. On that track I believe it's not going to be healthy down the road, speaking again for recreational and charter fishermen.

And like I said, I've been saying this for eight years now, at least, to look at that, the bag limit, size limit. What I asked before was that there be a minimum size of 14 inches and a boat limit of 30 fish. Just as a measure, because down the road I hate to see that we look to a yellowtail snapper closure. And I think everybody would agree in our industry that that's plenty of fish, and you don't need to keep these real small fish.

On another fish species that I think has gone unprotected and possibly down the road to be another problem would be the black fin tuna. I brought up along, again, the same amount of years the fact that there is no bag limit, there is no size limit, we've proposed before and quite a few times that the -- we weren't really certain of a bag limit, but something that's a reasonable bag limit, and the size limit: there is no size limit. A reasonable size limit: we looked, just doing some research just amongst us we found that a five-pound fish has already spawned once, so make a minimum size on that fish and like I say, a bag limit that we can live with.

We see on many occasions very small fish, large numbers of very small fish being killed. Again, a proactive measure that might save that fishery from closure. I believe a lot of these closures, because this wasn't looked at in the proper time frame, and that's why there's closures now.

Another thing that I believe is on the right track is sailfish. We've all agreed, and everybody has gone to circle hooks on the sailfish. And I don't know if that has helped, but we've had great numbers of sailfish down here; it's gotten better every year. But you pass something that you could use a circle hook, but people can still lift this fish out of the water and take it out of the water for pictures, slam it on the deck of a boat, hold it up for a picture as long as you want. Well circle hook doesn't matter at that point. I'd like to see that fish not be allowed to take out of the water; we take our pictures swimming along the side of the boat just to help those fisheries out.

I think there's a few things that are overlooked and like I said, I've brought it up; I'd like to see somebody look at those -- at least those three species are things we keep bringing up and never hear anything about, just to avoid drastic measures in the future. I plan to do this as long as I can get on my boat and drive it. And really, in a nutshell I don't support the closures down here; a very restrictive bag limit and restrictive size limits -- I think that is the key to fisheries management here, and people management, business management, where we can stay in business. If somebody calls me up and says, "Steve, can you take me grouper fishing?" I can't take you grouper fishing. And it's not easy to say that -- to turn down one trip in these economic times; it's very hard for me to do, but I have to do it.

That's all I've got to say and I appreciate the time to come here and speak.

Ben Hartig:

I appreciate it. The black fin tuna issue is one that the council has tried to deal with. Unfortunately we're caught in the Catch-22 of the setting ACLs and that sort of thing. We've tried to deal with it in the coastal migratory pelagics. It is on our list suite of species to identify for bag limits in the future, so we will at least address some of your concerns on black fin tuna in the future, but I will tell you, going ahead with that, that are problems when you don't have any data for a species of going ahead and setting catch limits for that species, and they may come back to bite us in the butt by not having the necessary data to manage it in a correct way. But we are looking into managing that species, but it is -- Congress has put us in such a box that it makes it problematic to take a species which you know is a data-poor species -- doesn't have much data, and trying to manage it. I mean because then you have to set up -- I you add it to your list of species that you're actually going to manage instead of just collect data, then you're going to have to set catch limits, and when you do that, that can be problematic, as you're seeing with the suite of species we're dealing with now.

Steven Leopold:

Right. Well like I say, it's going to bite us.

Ben Hartig:

People want to be proactive on the council, I mean especially -- most of the people would like to have proactive management. But right now Congress is throwing a monkey wrench into being proactive by throwing in the catch limits **and not** being able to manage the species without any data

Steven Leopold:

Right. Well does Congress hear what we have to say?

Ben Hartig: If you talk to them they will; if you talk to Congress and enough of the fishing industry gets together and tells Congress that this new authorization is not working, it can have an impact. There's a number of bills in Congress now -- there's three or four bills of various different configurations that deal with red snapper or with reauthorization of Magnuson dealing with catch limits. So there is some interest in Congress. Has there been enough public outcry to warrant those bills ever getting to the floor? That I can't tell you. But I will tell you that the council is in a box, we're in a box because of Magnuson and you're looking at most of these heinous regulations because of that.

So if somehow we could have more time, more than one year to reduce overfishing, that box would be bigger and we could have some more options to consider on these species to deal with. So basically we can't lobby Congress, you can. So in the best interests of the fishermen, I mean get together with your Congressmen, tell them about the impacts this is going to have monetarily, and for the charter fleet in particular and the recreational fishery it's incredible economic impacts that there are going to have on the fisheries. So --

Steven Leopold: I feel we've given a decent effort as far as notifying, especially on the grouper closure --

Ben Hartig: Okay.

Steven Leopold: Congress, and it seems to get nowhere. What -- in helping us out, what is the most, in your opinion, the most effective way to get through? Shall we join larger groups that lobby? I mean for us, a small group, to fund lobbyists to go and represent us personally, for us to do it ourselves is an impossibility. It's throwing money away.

Our association is a fair-sized association, fairly-organized, but we feel we've hit dead ends all along the way. And I guess that's politics. But in your opinion, what would be the best way? Is it to go with these national organizations that lobby for us? I don't think we can do it ourselves, and we're desperate. We're going to be put out of business. And I'm frustrated because I don't know the right way to do it, the most effective way. So what is the most effective way for us to do it?

Ben Hartig: Basically, like I say, we're in a box because of Congress. Now I will tell you that in my experience with management history over

the last -- since I guess it was 1980 when I first got involved in all this process I watched both the South Atlantic Council and the fishermen on the South Atlantic Council and the fishermen on the Gulf Council. Now there are fishermen in the Gulf who have direct access to their Senators and go and see them all the time and they have not a real champion of fisheries but they have someone who listens to their concerns and they have been able to be effective at the Congressional level.

In the South Atlantic we haven't done it that way -- we kind of respected the chain of command that goes along with managing fisheries and until this point it's kind of worked -- we've had some major success stories in management. We've been able to rebuild kind and Spanish mackerel and I would say, although some would disagree, that amberjack's have made a significant comeback under the management that we put in.

So we have good success stories and that's what Congress needs to hear. We have success stories based on traditional management, not based on having end overfishing in one year. That's a really important consideration. And that -- the big group, I'm not sure yet. I'm not sure if the RFA is the answer to dealing with all the recreational problems that exist. It's a big group, there's a lot of diversity in the industry between where they were based out of and started and the Florida Keys. So I'm not sure, but they are certainly going to Congress and making their points now.

But like I say the only way to change it is by congressional action. We can't do it. So that really is your only out right now, to try and get management back to reality as far as I'm concerned.

Steven Leopold: Okay, well I appreciate you -- thank you.

George Geiger: I have a question for you: how many vessels are in your association?

Steven Leopold: Well I'm not going to go by our membership; I'm going to say there's -- charter boats in our area, there's probably about 80 charter boats -- that are concerned but not active.

George Geiger: Has your organization attempted to enact boat limits less in size limits, larger -- boat limits less than those currently in mandated rules and regulations?

Steven Leopold: I can tell you that there's a good number of -- I can't say 100%, but there is a good number of people who are very much -- have their own limits. And abide by them.

George Geiger: Has your association tried to get all the charter boats to abide by some common --

Steve Leopold: We have, and especially with the black fin tunas, we've always mentioned peer pressures is probably the most effective tool that we have. And it's brought up at our meetings that way, to self-regulate in that -- we're never ridiculous -- I'd say the vast majority is never ridiculous with what they keep and throw on the dock.

George Geiger: Now -- and I've got to tell you frankly: I've worked with Bill Kelly over the last seven years, and this is the first time I've heard anything about a yellowtail change in size or bag limits. Now what I would suggest you do if you want that to be an action item is sit down and write a letter under your letterhead -- your charter boat association letterhead and make that suggestion to the South Atlantic Council to become an action item at some point in the future.

Steven Leopold: Okay I was here last year at public comment, spoke to Tony Iarocci, I told him then, I've told him numerous times. I don't know how to go beyond that. I mean I have said it many times.

George Geiger: Write a letter under your charter boat association letterhead with your suggestion and size alterations, and that way it'll become a part of the official record. This is part of the official record. But there's so much of this between North Carolina and the Keys and what people are keying on are comments associated with the amendments that we're here to talk about. I'm allowing this discussion to go way beyond because there are brand new people who are new to the process and want to express concerns and issues and we don't have an overwhelming crowd so I'm entertaining pretty much an open field of discussion.

Steven Leopold: I appreciate it.

George Geiger: And I'm telling you, the way to get something on the council agenda is to write us a letter. Please.

Steven Leopold: All right. I have brought it up before, though.

Ben Hartig: No, and I appreciate that. And not only writing a letter, but follow up. I mean after you write the initial letter, then what you need to

do is ask whoever is in charge, whatever staff member's in charge, probably Rick, and reef fish, asking: "Can we have this included in the scoping document for the next time we go around with reef fish? So --

George Geiger: Well I guarantee you've got a champion in me, but I want a letter to be able to hand out and use as the battering ram for other council members to take these things under consideration. So I'm not going to let it slide, but I need your letter. Please.

Steven Leopold: Okay. But our association has also done -- there's -- I don't think it's under your jurisdiction but in the marine sanctuary. We've given up areas to fish that we were allowed to fish in. So we're a group that wants to see the right thing done, but I'm -- you probably haven't seen a whole lot of us here because we feel that we're just getting bowled over -- a lot of us.

George Geiger: And understand that the council here is everything you say -- we listen. Just because we listen -- we listened to Bill for years as an AP member and a contributor and he represented you guys very well in the council process. Unfortunately, as has been said earlier, our hands are pretty much tied in this process currently, and because you say it and we may all believe that that's the way we'd like to see it go, we also take an oath of office, and there's law that we have to adhere to. And if we try to go off in a direction that's not lawful, we've got an attorney sitting at the table who will very clearly point that out, and we just can't do it; I mean it's counterproductive. And to think that we can just throw our hands up and say, "No, we're not going to do anything," if we don't do it, the secretary of commerce is going to do it. And if you've ever seen a secretarial amendment, that's why this process is so much better. You don't want a secretarial amendment. Thank you.

Steven Leopold: Thank you very much.

MIKE WEINHOFER 17A

Mike Weinhofer: Good evening. My name is Mike Weinhofer, I'm here speaking on behalf of -- first off, I've fished over 20 years as a charter boat captain in Key West and I'm here speaking on behalf of the Key West Charter Boat Association.

Speaking to 17A, B and 18: Key West is unique, more unique region than any other district that you manage. We are the only district that is set up this way. As a regional zone we are the only one that fishes the Atlantic and the Gulf in the same day. In Key

West, in five minutes I could fish the Atlantic and the Gulf. The problem with a lot of these amendments, that 240 depth in the Florida Keys is killing. A lot of the wrecks that were paid for by federal funds: the 310 wreck, the 420 wreck off of American shoal light are paid for by federal funds and we're not going to be able to fish them. That's a major problem.

You can look at Key West and the Florida Keys as an example because of the gag closures: less than ½ of 1% by your numbers were caught in the Florida Keys and yet we have a formal closure for al grouper. If it was done as a regional closure, as North Carolina has been it would be much different -- I'm quite certain.

There are a lot of things in reference to the Florida Keys: that 240 depth we don't catch the species you're restricting in less than 500 to 550 feet of water. And I understand to change that line from one region to another is difficult, but unfortunately in the Florida Keys we don't see that; we don't see those fish unless they're 500. Some fishermen will tell you we don't see them in less than 600 feet of water. So there's a large disparity between us and other regions.

So what I've like to see between 17A, 17B and 18 is see us as a separate regional zone, managed differently. There is no other region quite like ours. Is that something in the future that may happen? Is that a reality? I don't know. I hope it is. That's about all I have to say about it. That's the crux of what I'd like to see.

George Geiger: Thank you sir.

ROB HARRIS 17A

Rob Harris: Good evening.

George Geiger: Good evening.

Rob Harris: Long time since I sat with you all. For the record my name is Rob Harris. I also sit on the South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper Panel. I was there when a lot of these proposals were originally discussed. Some of the things that I see are not met with what I believe to be the crux of what happened at the AP except you recall here, when we discussed 17 specifically we talked about it for 2-1/2 days.

There is some things in here that I think need to be addressed and I don't think I'll get much argument. Because of the fact that some of the primary things that are driving these factors are the science

and the MSA. The science is driving the closures because of the fact the MSA says we have to do something because the science says have to do something.

Looking at some of the specifics in 17A: the science itself has been questioned; it's been questioned openly, publicly, it has been taken to independent survey and independent review. Right now there's at least three studies out there that I know of that counteract and come up with different figures than what came up during the SEDAR. I know that Dr. Hester's was taken to the SEDAR and that was one that even the scientist from the SEDAR panel itself looked at and "Well you know we're going to have to look at these and figure it in."

That in my mind automatically question whether or not they were using the appropriate data, if there were not formulas that were better that they could be using. Most recently Dr. Waldener and Chesidens came out, did another one. And these are professors and marine biology, so they also are at the top of their game when it comes to this. Also calls into question the data that was used for the SEDAR.

The one common denominator here, from all of these studies, to include the SEDAR itself is that we need to do a new benchmark study. We've got to go out and we've got to find out what's out there. While we were at the meeting in Charleston, the Wave I and Wave II numbers were put up from Northeast Florida. Those numbers were greater than what the SEDAR said there were fish left in the ocean.

That in itself tells you there's a problem with the numbers. Then I can't remember the other gentleman's name that was on the SEDAR committee -- if you could help me out there?

George Geiger:

John Carmichael?

Rob Harris:

I believe it was him. Then we came up and addressed that fact that we were seeing larger numbers of fish caught, versus what was said to be in the ocean. His explanation for it was that we were seeing just a strong year group move in, that those fish were in a year group ages four and five. From the Waldener studies, the majority of those fish were in the eight to twelve year range. So those fish weren't even calculated in to what he was explaining to us at the panel itself.

So one of the things that we really need to look at is going back, looking at the science, if we have to we need to go and make changes to the MSA. I brought it up at the meeting up there that if we can't do it and we're trying to use best available science and we're questioning our own science, the obvious thing to do is to change the MSA.

A couple of weeks ago there was actually a house panel discussing the MSA. Hopefully that will come out and make some changes that we need to, so Congress is listening, we're just going to have to keep telling them that from the scientific side we need to provide better data, because right now what we're doing is we are shutting down fisheries and creating for us here -- and I'll just use Florida alone because of the fact this is where I live and fish: a \$5 billion impact to the economic in the State of Florida by shutting down this red snapper fishery. Those numbers come directly from the State itself, so it's not anything that I'm just pulling out of the air.

Also up there we talked about the commercial versus recreational take. The number that was set -- and it was highly contested, was a 40/60 split, and that's what came out of the AP going forward. I believe that that number is too high, because while we were there at the AP I asked the commercial members: "How many boats do you have the red snapper is a directed fishery?" The answer was: zero.

To me, that should be their allocation, because the for-hire industry has boats that specifically target red snapper, and that's their main job when they leave the dock is go catch a red snapper. I myself would be willing to compromise and say a 25% commercial, 75% recreational. If they don't catch them as a target species, there's no reason to give them a large chunk of the percentage, at least in my opinion.

There is also, within 17a, the amendment, there is an option, and I want to say that it's option 10 that discusses closing down the entire fishery year-round and coming up with a special use sector that would be used where you could actually harvest grouper and red snapper from. And it goes on to mention breaking up into three sectors: the commercial, the for-hire and the recreational, and splitting them out and then doling them out a lottery-based system for permits and tags. If I'm not mistaken the number is 1,000 tags. And like 280 of those will go to the commercial sector, 298 to the for-hire industry and the remaining 400 and some-odd will go to the recreational. And it'll be based on a lottery.

I think that that is the worst way that you could ever imagine to manage a fishery is by a lottery. We're talking about a public asset out there -- it's the public's fish. The recreational guys are the mainstay and that's what generates everybody's interest in fishing.

So that's all I have to say about 17A. Moving on to 17B --

ROB HARRIS 17B

Ben Hartig:

Certainly, to question the science is very healthy. It's very very healthy to the scientific process. We've got Dr. Hester and he have Ray Walders and the other gentleman, Chesser (is that his name?), who also weighed in on red snapper and that's healthy -- it's healthy to get different points of view and it also gets our assessment scientists to look at things in different ways. And almost all of Dr. Hester's points have been reviewed by our assessment scientist.

There's one in particular that I haven't seen an answer yet, but that's the only one. The rest of his major comments have been addressed and answered, to me, in a satisfactory way. They were able to counter most of his arguments based on the assessments. This is a good assessment -- it's a very good assessment. It has a lot of ages in it, we've got a lot of species -- numbers, as far as looking at the numbers of fish, it's one of our better assessments as far as looking at the numbers of fish in an assessment. And the ages come out basically -- if you look at the graphs, I mean everything's right at three and four. I mean the preponderance of the catch is right there at the very youngest ages, where they first become -- are able to be caught at the size limit -- at 20 inches.

Now the size limit has helped. What we put in years ago: that 20 inch size limit has helped bring the fishery to where it is today, better than it was in the past but not to the level that it was in the early years. Now the council -- not so much the council but myself, I mean I looked at the assessment when I became a council member, I have a little bit of background in assessment science just by going to three different assessments and knowing how the assessments are done, and I saw some problems in the assessment.

So what I have done is I've gone to the council and asked them to have a workshop on looking at the old data that was put in, that is, to bring together some old people to ("older" people) to get the history of what occurred during those years, you know, how much

recreational effort was there, I mean given the technology of the day without any recorders to speak of or anything besides lower NA, which was very difficult to come by, how much effort was actually on those species during those times? So that's going to be done. The council is going to look at that old data with a group of people.

The other thing that I saw was that there weren't any recreational/commercial fishermen at the assessment that had a long-term knowledge of the fishery. So when you discuss release mortality, the scientists are there discussing it by themselves without any input from fishermen so that you couldn't get the back and forth, which I've seen in other assessments where in king mackerel especially, talking to fishermen you come up with a compromise number, based on the experience in the room.

George Geiger: I've got to interject there. And recreational and commercial fishermen both were identified, invited to come to that stock assessment, at council expense, and opted not to. So it was not because they were intentionally omitted, overlooked or sequestered from attending this stock assessment; we had a complete suite of commercial and recreational anglers who were supposed to attend who opted not to.

Ben Hartig: And I will agree with George, and when I asked fishermen "Why didn't they attend the assessment?", they said, "Well why should we?" We've seen the best fishing we've seen in years. We thought the assessment was going to come out looking good; we didn't know it was going to come out looking bad." That's not a real excuse not to attend an assessment, but I've had that same feelings, "Why didn't I get my king mackerel data together?" My 30 years of catch history that I introduced into the wrong part of the assessment, frankly, to be of any use, based on what I was seeing on the water with king mackerel at the time that I thought there was no way they would see any problem with king mackerel, based on the historic nature of what I've seen over the last 30-plus years. So I can understand it. Go ahead.

Rob Harris: I just want to -- this is for George. All right, you say that the recs and the commercials did not show, that they were invited, that you were going to pay for them. Were you going to pay their daily wages and how long is this assessment take?

George Geiger: Well the assessment process is a three-week process. You have --

Rob Harris: So you're asking a commercial guy and a recreational guy to take three weeks out of his making his living to go up there --

George Geiger: We're asking for volunteers, people who want to participate in this process.

Rob Harris: Okay. And you're willing to pay them?

George Geiger: Not their wages.

Rob Harris: So just their room and board?

George Geiger: Their travel expenses -- just like you're attending the AP.

Rob Harris: Right.

George Geiger: They would be recompensed exactly what you are for attending the AP. And --

Rob Harris: And you're surprised they didn't show?

George Geiger: Well quite frankly after they said they were going to show, yes.

Rob Harris: Okay.

George Geiger: I mean if you're not going to show, why not say you're not going to show so we can go out and find others who would? But if you commit to something -- yeah, I'm quite shocked and disappointed.

Rob Harris: Okay. Sorry Ben.

Ben Hartig: No and I'll wrap this up. The importance of coming to a SEDAR assessment cannot be understated. I've gone to three and I have given up the resources to go. And it's not insignificant. But I feel the rewards of being there and participating with the scientists were well worth the lost income to participate in the process, at least at the data workshop, at least take that one week. And basically industry needs to figure out how to fund these different people that need to come to these assessments, because it is crucial to have knowledgeable fishermen, people who actually full-time on the water who make quite a bit of money on the water -- they need to have those people at the assessments, the ones with the most knowledge about the fisheries so they can impart the most knowledge on the assessment scientists and we can get the best assessment we can possible get by using those people and quite frankly industry needs to come up, like the charter boat

association: "Hey," you know, "We'll fund you for the week to go," I mean you get all the charter boats together and do it and the commercial sector the same way, you know, "Hey," you know, "We have different commercial organizations, we need to put this person," you know, "forward. We hired our own stock assessment scientist. The commercial fishermen in South Florida hire their own stock assessment scientist to go to the king mackerel stock assessment, Doctor Frank Hester. And we did that because we knew MSA had change and the only way to get input into -- to get the best assessment we could possible get was to have our assessment scientist in there, asking the questions at the assessment that needed to be asked. So I'm taking way too much time of your guys, but I can't overstate the importance of having someone at that assessment, a knowledgeable fisherman, regardless of what you think the status of this doc is and I'll be the first one to say that because they need to be at their SEDAR assessments to help the assessment scientist make a better assessment and it does do it, from my experience.

George Geiger:

I could do on about a number of the statements that you made in your comments, but it's -- I think Ben summed it up pretty much.

Rob Harris:

Well then from the public comment side of it, if you feel that that's one of the better assessments, then I'm really concerned for the state of the fishery. The size limit: I don't believe that it's working because of the fact that we talked and we discussed such a high release mortality. As we push people out into this deeper water and force them to go from originally a twelve-inch minimum size limit, then it got bumped up to a sixteen, and then continued. Now we have forced those people into deeper water to seek out these bigger fish, knowing that they're going to kill them, and even Dr. Roy Crabtree, who sits both councils, Gulf and South Atlantic, specifically left venting out of the South Atlantic ruling, but kept it in on the Gulf side.

So if we're using best available science, why don't we go back and make changes when now the practice of venting as a release mortality eliminator, why don't we go back and revisit that and then adjust the numbers?

George Geiger:

Venting was included in the Gulf of Mexico, **FMP**, nine months, almost a year prior to a study, probably the first really the first real comprehensive study on venting, and the results of venting. That was published and was the prime consideration for the council, taking and deleting venting from our FMP.

So Crabtree did it -- Dr. Crabtree wrote it. He deleted it from Amendment 16, that we've sent forward, but it was done with council approval, based on the scientific study that came out long after the Gulf Council took their actions.

Rob Harris: So we're saying that works in the Gulf and not in the Atlantic?

George Geiger: No, the Gulf Council was not privy to the scientific information that has been published prior to them including venting in their reef fish FMP.

Rob Harris: Okay, so that becomes as the general public perception that once you, as a council, take things, you don't give it back because you had your lead scientist, Dr. Crabtree, removing it from the South Atlantic but not going back and retracking it from the law in the Gulf?

George Geiger: Once an FMP is approved by the Secretary of Commerce it becomes an FMP. To change it, they have to take framework action and include that action in another FMP, which they probably will do.

Rob Harris: I just wish it was easy as saying "best available science" like they tell us.

ROB HARRIS 18

Rob Harris: Obviously those of us down here in the keys because of the fact that we're discussing deepwater grouper closure. The first thing that we have to look at here is, aside from the science -- I'm going to set aside the science and the MSA restrictions, 'cause we can admit that those are things that have to be looked at. But looking in through those, it is my belief that because of the area that I live in, because of the lack of data on the speckled hind and the Warsaw, that it should remain a *status quo*. I don't see a reason to change it, I don't see anything that supports changing it. When we start talking about tilefish and snowy grouper, the one thing that catches my eye here, and I've talked with some of the legal minds that are working on this, the one thing that jumps out at me right now is the commercial/recreational allocation limits.

We're talking about a 97 to 3: 97% going to commercial, 3% going to recreational, there's a national standard out there that applies to these type things that says everything should be fair and equitable; that is not fair and equitable. When we talk snowy

grouper we're looking at 95% to 5% -- that is not fair and equitable. That has nothing to do with anything with catch shares, that is just a pure giving the commercial market all of the recreational fish. So that is the very first thing that jumps out at me there.

To talk about closing off 240 and beyond: we, the council itself is dealing with a very large area of water. From the Carolinas to west of the Tortugas you cannot take and manage an area that large, that vast, as one whole unit. At the council meeting when this came at the AP we discussed it. And of course when it first came up as "close down 240 and seaward," I was shocked that it would even be considered. I looked across the way there at the commercial fisherman out of the Carolinas -- nobody had a problem with it.

Why didn't they have a problem with it? Because 240 feet of water for them is three-and-a-half hours away -- they don't fish that. Their only question was: if you shut down 240 can we still go there and catch vermillion snapper? And they were told "Yes." And they said, "Oh, well then I don't see the problem." And that's when we spent, if you recall, considerable amount of time as I tried to tell them what it's like being down here in the Keys, and sitting in 240 feet of water, talking on my cell phone, watching everything go by, they can't do that. Just like that, the council itself should not manage us the same way that you do them.

We've dealt with this time and time again, I won't rehash the Amendment 16 stuff with the gag grouper -- that's on and by the wayside. But the only way that you can effectively try to do anything like this is to -- you have to look at regional management. You cannot take and clump us in with the North Carolinas of the world, because we're not. The rules change essentially from about Fort Pierce south, and that's where you need to look at -- if it takes it, Miami south, because that's a line of demarcation for a lot of things -- to include Gulf side and Atlantic side. So that's one of the things that really needs to be looked at.

And just to go back and reiterate: the fact that the specked hind and the Warsaw grouper, I believe that option one, which is the *status quo*, is a way to go until we have better science on it.

George Geiger:

One comment that I have to address that you made that -- just to dispel this in your mind: the fair and equitable section in Magnuson has nothing to do with allocations -- nothing. Fair and equitable refers to the pain of reductions in effort and mortality in fisheries, have to be shared "fair and equitably amongst sectors and

the States." So you cannot disadvantage one state over another, you can't disadvantage one sector over another. It has nothing to do with allocations. The allocations for snowy grouper and gold tilefish are predicated upon catch history and landings. And in the recorded history of those fisheries, the commercial sector has landed -- and I'm not attested to the fact that those numbers you gave are right -- I think they might be one or two percentage points off -- but be that as it may, we'll take them at you read them, but it's based on catch history.

And I can tell you: a year and a half ago when I was chairman of this council I instituted a process whereby we undertook a fishery management plan to address allocations, and how allocations are derived in fisheries. Okay? And right now I just told you it's based on catch history. Is that the best way to do it? I don't know. That's why we undertook and FMP to try and determine the best way to do it.

In the course of public hearings in the State of Florida, tell me how many people do you think that came out to speak in terms of allocations?

Rob Harris: Myself.

George Geiger: Three. Three. At three public hearing locations in the State of Florida. And consequently the attempt to work on allocations via an FMP were dropped by the next chairman.

You know, this is a process, and when you talk about people not attending a process and becoming involved in the process, you're a professional. The things we do affect you professionally. You need to become involved. And I admire the fact that you're on the AP, but we really need to embrace a larger community, which is why I've entertained a lot of discussion on topics other than just those amendments that we're talking about today.

But -- and I'm a recreational guy. So I like the allocations the way they are? Hell no. I tried to do something about it and got no support.

Rob Harris: But it's something that still needs to be looked at because I think that when push comes to shove, the fair and the equitable, whether it's your interpretation or mine are going to be left to the legal minds -- fortunately the council --

George Geiger: And that's a legal interpr- --

Rob Harris: The council has got a legal team that handles those matters for them.

ROB HARRIS 18 (2)

Rob Harris: This is where the council is looking at extending its range up north of the Carolina border. I personally am completely against this, because of the fact that, like the ones that we just discussed, I don't believe that the South Atlantic council is adequately managing the area that it's in charge of right now, and to add to that area I think would be a great disservice to the public.

When we start talking about limiting the participation of the golden tilefish, which I know, for that northern region golden tilefish is a big, both recreational and commercial fishery, which is -- and I don't know why it is the council would want to absorb that into its management area, but I think that it has something to do with that. Those numbers would further skew those of us that live down here, because of the fact that we in this area are fighting to have our own management region and the council is looking to expand its control further north when we want it to be not as far south. That's all I had on that.

George Geiger: Thank you sir. Anybody else have a card, wish to speak? Anybody wish to speak again?

OWEN KOGAN

Owen Kogan: My name's Owen Kogan, I'm an engineer and a recreational fisherman. And the recreational fishing side, it seems to be an endangered species now. And I don't go out commercial fishing; I did a long, long time ago, I had a license and stuff for it, and it wasn't the life I wanted and wasn't what I wanted to do.

But as far as recreational fishing, I mostly want to go trophy fishing. I don't care to fill the boat with a large number of fish; I'm looking to win tournaments and catch just that one trophy fish that wins. There's only one place for me when I go fishing: it's first place. I don't fish; I don't want anything else.

Now as far as all the stock assessments and stuff go and all the different plans: I got a different type of secondary type outlook on this -- not the main thing. This is a problem I've seen in the fishery, mostly in the recreational and the charter fishery, and some

of it's been in the commercial fishery period. What we have in the fishery prob- -- not all of it -- there's a small amount of it that's giving the black eye to the rest of the industry, is what we have is a fishery problem is a behavior problem. And some of it is, I will call it Exhibit A -- and it's a behavior problem and an attitude problem.

Exhibit A: the Great Poach of 2008, are you familiar with that?

George Geiger: I don't believe I am. Do you have something there?

Owen Kogan: Yeah, I'll just bring all these to you.

George Geiger: That's okay, just comment on them; we'll read them as --

Owen Kogan: Great Poach of 2008, or Great Poach of '08 was a charter boat captain Rob Hammer, a commercial lobsterman, **driver** and co-conspirators went out there and committed the biggest poach in Guinness Book of World Record.

George Geiger: I'm familiar with that -- yes Ben is --

Owen Kogan: Are you already familiar? I don't need to discuss any more. All I'm saying is there is a behavior problem and it's giving a black eye to the industry and a loss of confidence in honest fishermen like me.

There's another one which is a little anecdotal, but I have to show it because it shows a attitude in a fishery; no longer trying to value the fishery, you may have seen this -- this went viral across the USA: shark on a train. You remember shark on a train? Well last year two homeless bums fishing off downtown Miami seawall caught a six-foot nurse shark. They took this nurse shark by bicycle and by metro rail, they dragged this live nurse shark across town. You know it? Okay. And they took it for not the purpose of eating it, they took it for the purpose of selling it to buy some booze or some drugs. And no one wanted to buy it so they finally left it in the middle of an intersection.

"Well," he said, "one nurse shark, it's not going to hurt the whole population." But this is what my relatives up north were calling me about in Miami. This made news across the country -- another behavior problem.

Right now we passed that law about the four-month grouper closure, I believe. Okay well I just got a Exhibit C. In the mail I

got brochure from the Yankee Headboat, operates out of Key West, it's a seasonal boat, then it goes up north another time of year in the summer and fishes up north, off of New England.

Well there's ten pictures in here, and three of the ten pictures of them for the winter season are holding up big black grouper. That's a no-no. They got the wrong attitude. They shouldn't even be thinking about it, because you can't keep that fish. And it's showing the customers: "Hey, we're catching big black grouper, among other things," so they, even on the brochure they mail out during the closed season: black groupers.

I mean this is a secondary thing that's going to show that what people think about the laws. And it can go on. There's other things pertaining to the Great Poach of 2008 and that kind of behavior in a commercial fishery. I believe there should be no felons -- not active felons, but felons who have served their time: no felons allowed in the commercial fishery because of untrust in confidence. I mean you don't have felons selling mortgages, selling stock or working the firearms stores, for obvious reasons.

Also we need, on the people that are engaged in fishing for a business, not recreation but engaged in fishing for a business, because of the high amount of trust and efficacy and verifiability in it, on these we need something close to what would be considered a class three federal fishing license, analogous to a class three firearms license. If I want to be a gun collector, I want to buy machine guns and silencer, you fill out a federal paperwork and they do a background check to make sure you're not a criminal. Or else these people will put false information into the system, lie about logbooks, etc. and what they caught, and sell fish at back doors of restaurants.

I mean a small part of it -- the news that people see, and they go, "Why should I follow the rules when the scofflaws are not?" Going back more like the Poach of 2008.

Some of these fishing zones you have in these plans to close these large areas up north -- I don't know if it's a 17, 18 A B or C, but I'm looking at this and I say if you do this, you're going to have a lot of boats in the doghouse. And as soon as they open the grouper season up you're going to have a lot of large commercial boats racing down here to derby fish our ass off the water. They're going to come down by fleets of them.

I've seen this happen once before. It was called the Miami Beach Mackerel Wars. Do you remember that?

Ben Hartig: I remember it.

Owen Kogan: I'm asking him if --

Ben Hartig: I don't know if George does or not.

Owen Kogan: George? Well --

Ben Hartig: He might have not been in the country at that time.

Owen Kogan: Okay well back in the late '70s -- during -- this also went across the news, across the country, it went viral. During the '70s, the early '70s, the mackerels were -- the Spanish mackerel were intercepted by net boat in Fort Pierce area before they could make it down. So all of the mackerel were being filtered out. One year, I guess due to bad weather, 'cause it was blowing like hell, the net boats couldn't get out, the mackerel skipped Fort Pierce, they came right to Miami.

And I was fishing off Haul Over Pier and I was catching one mackerel after another -- you could walk down the beach and catch them; there was thick bait and mackerel, bluefish, jack cravals, and I mean there were actually swimmers and surfers being bit on the hands and feet by these fish, 'cause that's how thick they were.

Well the net boats came down from Fort Pierce, including some of them flying Jolly Roger black pirate flags with the skull and crossbones and literally took sets right out from under that pier within I would say a sinker's throw away. And in result people threw sinkers at them, there were people on the crew and _____ of boats exchanged gunshots with sinkers, throwers on the pier, marine patrol couldn't stop it 'cause it was too rough; Coast Guard had to come out and metro Dade police came to the piers and that went on for a few days. And then the mackerel boats couldn't get the price they want, so they said, "Screw you," and they dumped 30 tons of mackerel in the Miami River, let them rot, according to *The Miami Herald*.

This was like a behavior, that if you put these plans into implement, maybe what they need in these boats up there, if you're going to put these areas off limits, you have to have a home port tether. So these boats could only go a certain distance out of their home port. And if they're in the doghouse they have to stay in the

doghouse, not come down and be like a line of elephants in the circus fishing our waters out and derby fishing us off the water. 'Cause soon as it becomes the opening minute of the season we're going to have the derby fishing from hell down here. So if you want that, that's going to be what's going to happen.

Unrelated thing but since national marine fisheries handles it: are you familiar with lobster trap or pop-ups are, the little float pop-ups? There is no good legal reason to have those, 'cause if you want to know what they've been used for, go call customs and DEA. Everybody's who's smuggled and dropped something in the ocean to pick it up later, they should have used these things, and the world will be better without them. Longlines, illegal traps -- they all use that technology, and it's another one of these things where you've got bad people behaving badly; those should be outlawed. They're only used by criminals, maybe with the exception of very few people, otherwise.

Okay, I also hear that in the Gulf -- I know this is an Atlantic meeting, I hear in the Gulf they're contemplating the unthinkable: re-introducing fish traps. Please tell me it's not so.

George Geiger: It's not so yet.

Owen Kogan: Yet?

George Geiger: What they did was --

Owen Kogan: Okay and --

George Geiger: Reef fish committee made a motion to consider the trap rule. And it was passed by full council and they're going to discuss it. However, what comes as a result of that we have no idea.

Owen Kogan: Okay, contemplating the unthinkable was like during the Cold War: contemplating limited winnable thermonuclear war; it just does not work. We don't have the Soviet Union anymore but we don't have to worry about that. But don't contemplate unthinkable, 'cause if you put fish traps anywhere -- first of all the groupers in the Gulf come around the corner of the peninsula, up the east coast, and if you put that out there there's going to be a tremendous devastation to fishery and the actual law-abiding fishermen are going to throw up their hands and say: "After all this we quit and we're not going to follow any laws." That's my friends, who are recreational fishermen.

George Geiger: I will encourage you to attend the Gulf council meeting when they have public hearings on this and express your opinions to them, please.

Owen Kogan: Okay. As a recreational fisherman fishing down here 45 years I saw what the traps did back in the late '70s or early '80s, and if you're going to put traps out there you might as well call up the government and set off some neutron bombs out in the reef and kill everything, 'cause you're going to do the same thing.

Okay, one more -- a few more things. I said about the behavior: I've seen down here too long with boats, with commercial and charter boats, "This is my wreck, this is my reef, this is my ocean," and try to ram people and cut their lines off. I mean this all due to -- because the fish are being sold. I had one really far out -- I'm not saying go there, but you want to extrapolate your studies out to infinity where they're headed. I would just say a simple way to take care of all these rules is make snapper and grouper a commercial-only species for Southeast United States. Commercial boats can only have snapper and grouper on board, and everything else is a game fish. Separate church and state. That way you can keep track of it, you can count it, and it's accountable. I'll give up snapper and grouper to fish for other things. Anybody ever come up with that idea?

George Geiger: I don't believe so. I think that's a novel idea that's been proffered forth here and I'm sure Ben will take that back to the council.

Owen Kogan: Yeah. I'm just saying if $A = B$, $B = C$, then $A = C$. I mean you can use these same mathematical models all work: no more far out than anything else you got.

And then one other thing I'm in favor of: catch shares. And the catch shares will be per fish, not per pound, the catch shares will be sold at a public auction annually. I'm not talking red snapper only, I'm talking all your major fish. It'll be decided on a public auction to anybody who wants to buy them commercial or recreational, it'll set a price on fish.

Fish are a resource, just like if I was to put up an oil well in my back yard -- forget about the Coral Gables zoning, I mean they would go nuts. But if I put an oil well and I struck oil, I'd have to many federal agencies after me to pay royalties and rights on that oil.

- George Geiger:* Okay Owen? What I want to do right now is -- you've gone kind of far afield on me. And I want to just make sure -- a gentleman walked in and I want to make sure he gets an opportunity to comment on what we're taking comments on. So sir -- are you going to make comments?
- Aaron Brower:* Just a couple quick, short comments, that's all.
- Owen Kogan:* I just wanted to say the catch shares. That was studied a while back. I'm in favor of catch shares, very simply because fishing is a privilege, not a right. And that's about basically --
- George Geiger:* And we end on a note of agreement. Thank you.
- Owen Kogan:* What?
- George Geiger:* We end on a note of agreement.
- Owen Kogan:* Do you have any -- did I say anything that was interesting or educational?
- George Geiger:* You said many things that were interesting, several things that were educational, yes sir.
- Owen Kogan:* Okay.
- George Geiger:* And I always appreciate having you come and make comments at our public meetings.
- Owen Kogan:* I hope you address it.
- George Geiger:* (Sigh)
- Owen Kogan:* I mean after the Great Poach of 2008 I'm afraid to see what comes next.
- George Geiger:* Gotcha. Thank you, Owen. Yes sir?

AARON BROWER 17B

- George Geiger:* Okay.
- Aaron Brower:* Hi you doing George and Ben. Thank you for your time. My name is Aaron Brower, I run the *Killer White* charter boat on

Islamorada. I'm also on the board of the Islamorada Charter Boat Association. I just have a couple quick, short comments.

I would like the council to take into consideration the dates that they're choosing to close these areas, Amendment 17B, I believe it is, the deepwater fishing dates and so forth that is heavy traffic time for us as far as our tourism, and probably the most we've ever fished. And I don't think that they're taking that into full consideration -- I think they need to consider that.

Also I think they need to get better numbers from our area. As far as closing our area of fish, I think they need to get better numbers. I don't think, from talking to -- I forget his name now downstairs --

George Geiger: Gregg Waugh.

Aaron Brower: Thank you -- Greg. I don't think that they have as accurate of information as they could have for Monroe County, our area specifically. I think pretty much what they're trying to do is fine -- I understand what they're trying to do, I understand that your hands are tied because of the acts in place and so forth. But I think our area needs to be looked at a little more extensively because of how many businesses here thrive on what you're looking to close down on us. And that's pretty much all I have to say.

George Geiger: Thank you, sir. Did you complete a comment card?

Aaron Brower: I did downstairs.

George Geiger: Okay. Do we need to get it? Okay, thank you sir. Appreciate it. Anybody else want to comment?



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Aaron Brower

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-522-0374

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

228 Oleander Dr Tavernier FL 33070

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Killer White Charter Boat

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
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Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ALLAN BRADEN

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-852-8477

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

219 PLANTATION Blvd

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Fishing Guide

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
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November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

RICHARD E. BERRY

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

664-5518

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

P.O. 404 ISLA, FL. 33036

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

KEY LARGO RODS

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
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YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

DAVID CONWAY

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305 304 2586

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

16 S. VIA LUCINDIA DR. STUART FL 34996

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

FLORIDA SPORTSMAN

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
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DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ALEX CHESTER

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-234-5187

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

12200 SW 74th CT MIAMI, FL 33156

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

SAFMC - SSC

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



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November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

KIP DOUGHERTY

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305 451-8908

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

PO Box 1716

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

EVERGLADES FISHING CHARTERS

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
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November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Leda Dumire

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

93 Marina Ave Key Largo FL 33037

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Pew Env't Group

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



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YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Robert JASTERZBSTKI

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

309 GROUPE TRAIL Key Largo FL 33037

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

recreational

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



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YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Elizabeth Lutz

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-296-5949

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

6800 Maloney Ave. #48 - Key West, Fla 33040

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
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DATE OF MEETING

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YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Alexandro Laurel

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

786 417-6231

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

10829 SW 240 Lane Homestead FL 33032

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



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YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ETHEL NETTLETON

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305.246-3217

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

6802 Maloney Ave #46 Key West, FL 33040

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



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DATE OF MEETING

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YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Alan Sherman

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

786-436-2064

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1286 NE 99th St. Miami Shores, FL 33138

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

"GET EM" Sport Fishing Charters Inc.

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



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YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

CATHERINE WHITTAKER

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

12 Coconut Drive, Key Largo FL 33037

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

FWRI -

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Kevin Wadlow

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

FLA Keys Keynote

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

ROB HARRIS

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-587-6718

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1970 N. ROOSEVELT BLVD

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

SAFMC SNAPPER/GROUPER AP

COUCHY JOE'S MARINE & TACKLE

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Doug Poletty

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305 942 9614

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

18 Center Ln

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

"BLUE HOV" LLC

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

MIKE Weinhofner

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

22985 Calico Jack Ct Cudjoe Key FL 33042

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Key West Charter Boatman's Assoc.

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

STEVEN LEOPOLD

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-393-9955

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

P.O. Box 1137 ISLAMORADA, FL 33030

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

ISLAMORADA CHARTER BOAT ASSOCIATION

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Daniel R. Portillo

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

(305) 295849-1482

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

23910 Overseas Hwy Summerland Key, FL 33042

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

NA

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
 4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
 NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

ROLAND MEYERS

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1471 STATE RD 4 A

Little Torch Key

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
 (PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
 IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

JOE MESSER

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

PO BOX 420363 350 WESTSHORE DR.

SUMMERLAND
KEY, FL 33042

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

MURRAY SHATT

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-797-4603

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

P.O. Box 420488 Summerland KEY, FL 33042-0488

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

WADE GOART

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

(305) 872-5481

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

2113 SAN MARCO DRIVE BIG PINE KEY FL 33043

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
 4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
 NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Chris Johnson

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

(305) 743-5305

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1263 Marlin Dr. Marathon, FL 33050

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Seasquared Charters

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
 (PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
 IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Bruce Andersen

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-451-9578

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

580 Bont. Ave Key Largo FL 33037

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Capt. Easy Charters / Islamorada charter boat association

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

BRIAN BOYLAN

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

29 NORTH DRIVE, KEYLARGO, FL 33037

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

NA

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

John B Jones

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305 582-7679

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

6800 MAHONEY Ave #46 Key West FL 33040

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Douglas Poletti

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

18 Center Ln Key Largo FL

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DP Fish "Blue Hoo"

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

JOSEPH F. GALLAGHER

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-393-7895

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

P.O. Box 500971 MARATHON FL

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
 4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
 NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

OWEN A. KOGAN

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-665-3785

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1127 MANATI AVE

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

recreational fisherman

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
 (PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
 IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Bob Jones

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

1118-B Tallahassee, FL 32303

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

SEFA

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

LARRY WREN

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-360-4900

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

137 Fontaine DR. TAVERNEER FL 33070

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

ISLAMORADA CHARTER BOAT ASS.

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

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PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

Tom Hill

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

16741 SW 278 ST

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

KEY LARGO Fisheries

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Jeff Weakley

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

772-219-7400 x116

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

2700 S. Kanner Hwy. Stuart, FL 34994

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Florida Sportsman Magazine

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Sue Codrington

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

954 925 9074

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

4201 N. Ocean Dr. #305 Hollywood FL 33019

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE)

Miami Herald

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE) Key Largo, FL		DATE OF MEETING November 10, 2009	
YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT) Cammy Clark		TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE) 305-742-9687	
MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE) 216 Coral Road			
BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT (IF APPLICABLE) Miami Herald			
DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT? (PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY IF AVAILABLE)	Amendment 17 A	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
	Amendment 17 B	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO
	Amendment 18	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
4055 FABER PLACE DRIVE, SUITE 201
NORTH CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA 29405

PUBLIC COMMENT ATTENDANCE RECORD

Snapper Grouper Amendments 17A, 17B and 18

LOCATION OF MEETING (CITY & STATE)

Key Largo, FL

DATE OF MEETING

November 10, 2009

YOUR NAME (PLEASE PRINT)

Mark Sett

TELEPHONE NUMBER (& AREA CODE)

305-432-0047

MAILING ADDRESS (PLEASE INCLUDE STREET OR BOX NO., CITY, STATE, & ZIP CODE)

PO Box 2580 Key West FL 33045

BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION YOU REPRESENT, (IF APPLICABLE)

Keep Radio Group / World of Boating / Scuba Rest

DO YOU WISH TO MAKE A STATEMENT?
(PLEASE ATTACH A WRITTEN COPY
IF AVAILABLE)

Amendment 17 A

YES

NO

Amendment 17 B

YES

NO

Amendment 18

YES

NO