

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

**LIMITED ACCESS PRIVILEGE
PROGRAM COMMITTEE & WORKING GROUP**

**Renaissance Orlando Airport Hotel
Orlando, FL**

June 10, 2008

SUMMARY MINUTES

LAPP Committee Members:

Rita Merritt, Chair
Dr. Roy Crabtree
Mac Currin
George Geiger
Susan Shipman

Robert Boyles
David Cupka
Dr. Brian Chevront
Tony Iarocci
Tom Swatzel

Council Members:

Duane Harris
Mark Robson

Lt. Brian Sullivan
Dr. Wilson Laney

Council Staff:

Bob Mahood
Kim Iverson
Kate Quigley

Mike Collins
Rick DeVictor
Myra Brouwer

Observers/Participants:

Dr. Tom Jamir
Dr. Jack McGovern
Kay Williams
Kate Michie
Dr. Stephen Holiman
Hal Robbins
Robert Preston
Tricia Choe
Karen Raine
Libby Fetherston
Tom Burgess
Jim Reeves
Julie Defilippi
Buffy Baumann

Monica-Smit Brunello
Bill Sharp
Dr. Joe Kimmel
Dr. Bonnie Ponwith
Eileen Dougherty
Otha Easley
Bruce Irwin
Dave Allison
Bill Kelly
Dan Whittle
Jeff Oden
Beth Curry
Scott Zimmerman
Robert Cardin

The LAPP Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened in the Vienna Ballroom of the Renaissance Orlando Airport Hotel, Orlando, Florida, Tuesday afternoon, June 10, 2008, and was called to order at 1:48 o'clock p.m. by Chairman Rita Merritt.

Ms. Merritt: We're bringing the Limited Access Privilege Program Committee to order. The first item on the agenda is the Approval of the Agenda. Do we have any changes or corrections? Seeing none, the agenda will stand as is. The next item is Approval of the March Committee Meeting Minutes. Are there any changes or corrections? Seeing none, we'll accept the committee meeting minutes as mailed. The next item is a report on the results of the conversations with the tilefish fishermen and Kate Quigley has those results and she'll present them now.

Ms. Quigley: I'm going to go through the presentation that you received in your briefing book. I've just added one slide to the beginning of this presentation, to give you an overview of the tilefish fishery. Just as a reminder, you also have something called Attachment 8 that was included in the second briefing book that gave you a little bit more background on the fishery and responses of the fishermen, in addition to what I'm going to present here.

Current management of the commercial tilefish fishery is as follows. Commercial quota is approximately 295,000 pounds. There is a 4,000 pound trip limit until 75 percent of the quota is met and thereafter, there's a 300 pound trip limit. There's a longline fleet and a hook and a line fleet. The longline fleet fishes starting in January, until the trip limit drops, typically. However, there are some longliners that continue to fish after that.

The Florida longline fleet starts in the winter, typically, and then the North Carolina/South Carolina longline fleet starts around March/April or whenever the weather allows. Then there's the hook and line fleet, which in my conversations, they've told me they start fishing typically in the fall, sometime September or October. Some of them will start fishing earlier in the year, but many of them fish in September or October, when other fisheries are closed.

Here's a histogram graph depicting how many vessels participate and at what level. On the Y-axis, there's number of fishermen and on the X-axis, there's amount of fish landed, on average, from 1999 to 2006. This is based on logbook landings of tilefish.

What you can see is that there are four people that land 30,000 plus pounds, on average, from 1999 to 2006, four people that landed between 20,000 and 30,000 pounds and so forth. What you can see is that there are very few people that participate at a level of 10,000 pounds or above. The people who do participate at 10,000 pounds or above, those are longliners and then you've got hook and line fishermen that participate around 5,000 pounds to 10,000 pounds.

There are approximately 240 vessels that have caught at least one tilefish pound, on average, from 1999 to 2006, based on the logbook data. I spoke informally with fishermen with average logbook landings of golden tilefish of 500 pounds per year or greater over that time period and when I spoke to people that harvested less than 500 pounds, on average, they told me that basically tilefish was a bycatch for them and it wasn't something that they targeted and so that's why I chose the 500 pounds.

I spoke with twenty-six fishermen who managed or owned thirty-three vessels. The fishermen I spoke to landed, on average, 92 percent of the total catch of golden tilefish over the period 1999 to 2006. There are a few people that I was unable to reach that did have significant historical landings of tilefish and if I had been able to reach them, it would have been around 98 percent or 99 percent.

The owners of approximately 206 permits were not spoken to, due to inability to contact them, expired permits, or landings were below 500 pounds per year, on average. Approximately 156 vessels landed less than 100 pounds per year, on average.

Mr. Geiger: I apologize for interrupting you, Kate, but I'm trying to get my mind squared away, again, with nomenclature. The tilefish permits are issued to vessels, correct? It's a vessel permit?

Ms. Quigley: These vessels own snapper grouper permits. They landed tilefish, but there is no tilefish permit.

Mr. Geiger: Again, I think it's a vessel permit, issued to the vessel. When you talk about interviewing twenty-six fishermen, are you interviewing twenty-six permit holders, owners of the vessels, and not potentially captains or crew members?

Ms. Quigley: Correct. When I say twenty-six fishermen, I am talking about people who own permits or who manage permits. There are some people that manage three to five vessels or permits and so they manage three to five vessels and so that's why there are less fishermen than vessels mentioned here.

Ms. Williams: I have a question. When you're interviewing the fishermen, and I know you're speaking of golden tilefish, do the fishermen in the South Atlantic catch gray tilefish and if they do, is that included? I know I've been trying to get some information on the gray tilefish, because I'm told in the Gulf area they actually land both, but there really hasn't been an assessment, per se, on gray tilefish.

Ms. Quigley: I don't think so. There's blueline tilefish and golden tilefish, but I don't even think gray tile -- Gray is the same species as golden? As blueline? Okay. Mac says that gray tilefish is the same species as blueline tilefish. From what I understand, that is caught in a different trip. I'm not sure. They mentioned it a separate -- They did not target those together, I didn't think, but I could be wrong about that.

When I spoke to these fishermen just informally, I provided them with background information on LAPPs and an update on council consideration of LAPPs. The fishermen were then asked if an LAPP is something they would like used in management of golden tilefish and I was fortunate -- The fishermen that I spoke to, they knew quite a bit about LAPPs already. They had received the North Carolina Sea Grant mailing and they had done quite a bit of reading about LAPPs. They had checked out our website and so they were already familiar with LAPPs, most of them were.

Just a couple of regional characteristics, I spoke with eighteen longline fishermen, fifteen hook and line fishermen. There were three permits located in North Carolina, one longline and two hook and line. There were five South Carolina permits, four longline and one hook and line. There were twenty-two Florida permits that consisted of ten longline and twelve hook and line and two New York permits and one New Jersey permit and those were both longline vessels.

Just a reminder, not all fishermen contacted currently target golden tilefish. However, all had average historical landings of golden tilefish higher than 500 pounds per year associated with their permits.

Before I give a summary of the results, I just want to make one thing clear. When I asked them, is an LAPP something that you would like to see used as a management tool in the tilefish fishery, they gave me a yes or no answer and I went ahead and I tallied two different results. Under one assumption, I assumed one vote per vessel and so that's easy to go ahead and tally, how many yes's did I get and how many no's did I get by permit. The other type of result that I got was one vote per pound landed, on average, 1999 to 2006.

If they said yes, I took a look at their average landings 1999 to 2006 and said, okay, that's the number of yes votes that this individual gets. If they said no, then whatever the average was that they landed over that period of time, that number of pounds, were the number of no votes that that individual got. I did this because in referendums in the past, it's been based on historical landings. However, there have been people who have made good points that maybe that's not the way you want to do it and maybe you want to have one vote per person and so I tallied two different types of results.

If we go ahead and assume one vote per vessel, 63.6 percent of the people that I contacted were in favor of an LAP for the tilefish fishery. That was twenty-one vessels. 21.2 percent, or seven vessels, were opposed to an LAP and then there were five vessels, 15 percent, who said that they were only for an LAP if there was a new stock assessment done or they were only interested in sector allocation. When they stated that they wanted a new stock assessment, there is a stock assessment review planned for 2010.

Mr. Currin: Kate, just out of curiosity, and you may or may not know this, but you mentioned that there were several individuals who held multiple permits. Could you categorize how they felt or voted in this? Were they more inclined to favor an LAP or less inclined?

Ms. Quigley: There were two people that I spoke with that managed multiple vessels. One of the persons was in favor of an LAP and the other wanted a new stock assessment.

Dr. Chevront: Since we're talking about the results here, in looking at this, I was wondering -- You made the comment about some of these people had average landings of at least 500 pounds, but maybe had not fished in recent years. My concern here would be would they be in favor of an LAP, even if they're out of the fishery now, because they were going to get an allocation, perhaps, that they could then turn around and sell?

The reason why I ask this question is because I had done something similar in North Carolina

with our summer flounder permits and there were guys who were not fishing their permit, but if it became a desirable thing to buy the permit, they were definitely in favor of allowing something to go in that they could sell the rights to their permit. I was wondering if you had encountered anything like that in doing this survey.

Ms. Quigley: I did and the responses were -- I'll tell you the responses in just a moment. I just wanted to remind you that Attachment 8 -- I just wanted to let you know that it tallies how many active participants there are in the tilefish fishery and I just wanted to let you know that in 2006 there were nine longline participants and there were eleven hook and line participants. Just to let you know there were twenty participants.

The longline vessels that had not participated for two or more years were, in general, in favor of the LAP and there were some people that hadn't participated since 2006 and so they hadn't fished in 2007, but they had fished all along, 1999 to 2006, and they had boat repairs and they had other things going on that prevented them from fishing. They were also in favor of an LAP.

However, there were hook and line vessels that had not fished for three or four years that were against implementation of an LAP, because they had very small historical landings and they knew that if they got back in that they would have almost no allocation, but if they could get back in under a trip limit management system, then they could go ahead and fish like they did years ago.

People who had large historical landings were for the LAP and those who didn't were against the LAP and that was pretty much how it all settled out all the way through. The people who got good initial allocation were in favor.

Mr. Currin: To that point or to Brian's question, Brian, I think it's important to keep in mind that some of the hook and line people at least have not been able to fish at least the last two years, because the quota has been met. They've been disadvantaged in that way and that would certainly affect some of the analysis.

Ms. Quigley: I'm going to give some more information about that in just a bit. That's true and so there were just -- Because it's been brought up, I'll just explain now. There were two different issues I want to bring up. In some of the past recent years, the fishery had gone from a 4,000 pound trip limit down to a 300 pound trip limit before the folks in North Carolina and South Carolina could fish. That's one issue. They had no landings because the year just didn't work out that way for them. Then there were hook and line vessels who didn't have any landings, because by the time it rolled around to September or October, when they traditionally fished, the fishery was closed.

If there's no more questions at this point, I'll move forward. Assuming one vote per vessel, these were the results and then assuming one vote per pound landed, on average, the results were very similar. Where previously under one vote per vessel there were 63.6 percent in favor of an LAP, under one vote per pound landed, on average, 61.6 percent were in favor of an LAP and 21.9 percent were opposed and 16.5 percent only were in favor of an LAP if there was a new stock assessment or they're only interested in sector allocation.

Mr. Geiger: Kate, have we calculated the value of this fishery in gross terms and have you done a calculation of what the administrative recovery costs would be at 3 percent and was that an item of information that was provided to these fishermen or permit holders when you were making your inquiries as to their favor of LAPPs or non-favor?

Ms. Quigley: I did not make that calculation. That can be done if we go ahead and assume some ex-vessel prices. That calculation was not done. One thing that a couple of fishermen spoke to me about, these are longline fishermen, was that they thought that the price of tilefish would go up after implementation of an LAP.

Just about everybody thought the price of tilefish would go up if the season was spread out more and I asked them how much they thought it might go up by and they couldn't be specific, but there were some people that thought that they could market to restaurants, whereas right now they can't market it to the restaurants, because the product isn't available year-round.

They thought they could market it to restaurants and if they did that, then the price would go up quite a bit. If they did not market to restaurants, then they weren't sure how much it would go up by, because they are competing with tilefish coming from the Gulf and tilefish coming from the Northeast. Even those people who did not want an LAP, they were in favor of other programs that would spread out the season and that would provide them with a higher price. They wanted to be able to bring the product to market when those fisheries were not bringing in their tilefish.

Mr. Geiger: They did understand that there is a recovery cost of fees associated with the administration of an LAPP?

Ms. Quigley: Yes, a couple of the fishermen did mention that and that was contained in the North Carolina Sea Grant outreach materials and so they were aware of that. Several had had experience with other LAPPs and a couple of the fishermen were familiar with the Mid-Atlantic tilefish amendment that's being developed at this time, which also has a recovery fee.

I'll move on. These were the summary of the results. I went ahead and I split it out longline results, eighteen vessels, and hook and line results. Among the longliners, using one vote per vessel, 66.7 percent, or twelve vessels, were in favor of an LAP and two were opposed and four wanted a new stock assessment. Assuming one vote per pound, 61.8 percent were in favor and 21.5 percent were opposed and the others wanted a new stock assessment.

Here's some of the reasons given for voting in favor or against. Those in favor of an LAP liked the idea of a lengthened season. They thought it could provide a higher price. They also wanted to avoid the derby fishery. Just about everybody agreed that there was a derby fishery, even those that were against an LAP.

They wanted to avoid having to go out in bad weather. They felt like they were forced to go out in bad weather. The folks down in Florida, they got some pretty bad weather this January and February and then also the South Carolina guys that are currently fishing, North Carolina and South Carolina. They also felt the pressure to go out in bad weather, even in March and April.

Some of the people wanted to sell to restaurants and they couldn't do that under the current system. They wanted to see family more and they felt that they needed to fish in September through November and when the fishery is closed, they weren't able to do that. As I mentioned previously, South Carolina and North Carolina wanted to get, as they put it, their fair share of quota, which they were unable to do in recent years.

Those that were against an LAP, longliners that were against an LAP, felt that this would eliminate trip limits and that trip limits benefit the hardest workers, because the hardest workers are those people that go out for multiple trips. If you need to bring in more landings, you just go out on more trips and they would not be able to do that under an LAP, because the LAP would cap what the individual can catch and the only way to catch more would be to purchase more quota. They didn't like the idea of an LAP. They didn't feel that it would work for them.

I should mention here that for several of the people, they knew that we had this initial allocation model for the LAP workgroup and they asked if I could please run their numbers. If they gave me average landings, then I would go ahead and run their numbers for tilefish, to see what their initial allocation might look like under various methodologies. I took a look at the average of 1999 to 2006 and I went ahead and plugged in their numbers.

For those people that were against an LAP, it did turn out that they would fare better under a trip limit, as long as their vessels continued to operate and they had people to operate the vessel, that they would benefit more under a trip limit system than they would under an LAP, as far as how much they could land. The situation was there are several longliners that are fishing harder now than they have in the past and so therefore, their historical landings were lower than what they are currently fishing. For that reason, they were against an LAP.

Here's the hook and line results, fifteen vessels, assuming one vote per vessel. 60 percent, or nine vessels, were in favor of an LAP and 33 percent were opposed and 6.7 percent, or one vessel, wanted a sector allocation type program. Assuming one vote per pound landed, on average, 61.7 percent were in favor and 25 percent opposed and 13 percent wanted a sector allocation program.

The reasons the hook and liners gave were similar, but there were a couple of differences. Those in favor of an LAP, one of the main reasons that they wanted an LAP was because they felt that it would allow them to fish before the longliners met the commercial quota and the season was closed. They felt that they could get increased ex-vessel prices and they needed to fish September to November, when the fishery has been closed the past couple of years.

Hook and liners that were against an LAP felt that the current trip limit of 300 pounds was fine. They didn't like what they had seen LAPs do in Gulf red snapper and other people felt that without increased enforcement that LAPs will not have conservation benefits. Just one thing I want to say is longliners that were against the LAP were against it because they're fishing more now than they have in the past and so they would not benefit under an initial allocation. They would benefit more under the trip limit system that current exists.

The hook and line folks that were against an LAP had very, very small landings and they wanted

to get back into the fishery. They had been out for several years and wanted to get back in and so different reasons for different gear groups.

This is just to review the LAP Workgroup informal questionnaire that we went over last March. It wasn't asking the same questions, but just to review the results. The LAP Workgroup response to the statement that they see a strong potential in adopting a LAP program for the snapper grouper fishery, 55 percent agreed, 18 percent disagreed, and 27 percent were undecided and this was of eleven individuals.

LAP Workgroup response to the statement that the council should move forward with development of alternatives for an LAP program under an amendment, 46 percent agreed and 18 percent disagreed and 36 percent were undecided and that's what I have for this presentation. Are there any other questions?

Ms. Merritt: Thank you, Kate. That was a very, very thorough job of polling the tile fishermen. One question that I've got that I brought up with Kate earlier that has come before me has been is there any recreational component at all in the tilefish fishery and I think we didn't really find that there is much of any, unless it's just an incidental kind of thing. Does anybody else have different information in that regard?

Dr. Chevront: I think you're probably correct when you're talking about golden tilefish, but let's make sure that's the one that we're talking about and not blueline, because those are caught along with snowies. If we're just talking about golden tilefish, I think you're correct.

Ms. Merritt: Yes, we are. This is strictly the tilefish fishery and as the numbers will show, as Kate brought up, the percentage that seemed to be interested in going forward with an LAP are -- I guess you might call it more of a representative group than we had in the full fledged snapper grouper LAP. They are involved with multiple species and different types of fishermen. This is a much more concentrated group of only commercial tilefish fishermen and the percentage who were in favor of going forward just seems to be much more heavily weighted on the side of going forward, but what we need from you though is your opinions on that.

Dr. Chevront: I think there is a -- It appears, from what Kate has presented to us, that there is majority support for this and we had thought that might be the case when we discussed this, I believe, last March. Not wanting to lose the momentum that we had made with the LAP Workgroup, we had thought about the potential of moving on with golden tilefish as maybe our first experiment or foray into this area and one of the arguments that was used is that when you're dealing with a limited access program, no matter how good it might sound to us as managers, it's not going to be successful without some buy-in from the fishermen.

At least we have an example here where we do have the majority of the participants in the fishery seem to be supportive of this. At this point, just to get something on the table for us to start to discuss, would this be an appropriate point for me to be able to make a motion or something, to give some direction to council staff?

Ms. Merritt: Thank you, Brian. There is a gentleman in the audience who would like to speak.

Do you want to come to the microphone and identify yourself?

Mr. Geiger: Point of order. You've got a motion on the floor.

Mr. Preston: My name is Robert Preston and --

Ms. Merritt: Excuse me, sir, just a moment. On the point of order that there is a motion, did you actually state your motion?

Dr. Chevront: No, I haven't actually stated a motion yet. I asked if it was appropriate at this point to make a motion.

Ms. Merritt: I thought since he had his hand up that it might be something which might change things. Go ahead, sir.

Mr. Preston: I'm a longline fisherman and my name is Robert Preston and I own Chances Are Fisheries and this year, my one vessel, the Three of a Kind, caught 71,947 pounds of the quota. Now that's roughly 33 percent and I'm against the LAPs, strictly because it's going to destroy the fishery. If this goes on, we'll have a whole conglomerate of small owners of the quota, all over the country, and the people that have been producing tilefish -- I've been fishing for tilefish since 1976.

I pioneered the longline fishery of tilefish, myself and Joe Plosterman. Between the two of us last year and this year, we've caught 50 percent of the quota and we're both deadly against LAPs. We'll have all these people that have 500 pounds here or a hundred pounds there or 200 pounds here. All of them will amount to a large percentage of the quota and we're going to have to buy them out or lease their quotas, in order to make a living.

It just doesn't make any sense to me. If South Carolina has always caught 30 to 40 percent of the quota, we need to allocate that 30 to 40 percent to the Carolinas. It's a different fishery, different grounds, and then give Florida their fish. That's all I have to say.

Ms. Merritt: Thank you, sir.

Dr. Chevront: With all due respect to Mr. Preston -- I understand what you're saying, but I think one of the things that this committee has talked about in the past and with our LAP Workgroup is that we can design any kind of an LAP to help keep those kinds of problems that you're describing from happening or becoming an issue that would, in essence, force you to buy those or we can limit the number of shares that people have or we can limit -- There's all kinds of ways that we can deal with that.

I think it's really important that we have that kind of information like you're talking about, with the fears that he has, with what could happen in the fishery, that if we do decide to go ahead and consider an LAP in this fishery then we would have to consider all the ramifications. We could design an LAP that would take care of the potential problems, I would think. If not, then we could stop it. That's all perfectly possible.

At this point, I would like to make a motion that we give direction to council staff to develop a snapper grouper amendment that would include the development of some type of an LAP program for the golden tilefish fishery. The purpose of this -- I guess we could probably stop the motion there, but the purpose of this would be basically to end the derby and extend the fishery.

There's lots of things that we could consider putting into this FMP, whether it's to design the IFQ -- Sector allocations, there's all sorts of stuff. Starting the seasons, split seasons, one for hook and line and one for longline -- There's just so many different things that could go into such an amendment and I think it's worthwhile at this point for us to consider these things seriously.

Whether we decide we're going to go ahead with this or not, I think we need to work it out. We need to try to make it happen and see if we can develop an IFQ-type program that is acceptable to fishermen, as well as meets our conservation goals.

Ms. Merritt: Do we have a second? Thank you, Susan. Discussion?

Mr. Swatzel: Just a question about the motion. I'm assuming when you say tilefish that you're talking about golden tilefish, correct?

Dr. Chevront: Solely golden tilefish at this point.

Mr. Geiger: I guess I would speak to the motion and say that you can end the race for fish, but we may be beginning a race for these LAP programs. We've got a fishery here that's undergoing overfishing and they're in a rebuilding plan and we have to have annual catch limits set by 2010 and we don't really know what this fishery is going to look like. We don't know what any of our fisheries are really going to look like until we get these ACLs in the mix and begin to apply them and see how much of a fishery there is even going to be.

The motion is fine, but until we know what the fishery is going to look like, it might be a bit early to embark on this, especially in light of the fact that after the last meeting we actually took staff time and apportioned it out on other programs, aside from this exploratory effort to go out and see if there is any acceptance within the community to go towards the LAPP program.

What I would submit now is we would have to revisit the staffing issue, because we've got staffing issues that we made an agreement with the regional office to have part of Kate's time represent and this is going to take up now more time than we had originally bargained for. We've got a staffing issue and we've got a fishery that we don't know really what it's going to look like until we establish the annual catch limits for it and the fishermen's attitudes may change once they see what the fishery looks like with ACLs applied. I would speak in opposition to the motion at this point.

Ms. Merritt: Thank you, George. That was one thing that we had talked about earlier on, was the fact that by going with the smaller fishery and that a lot of the hard work, the groundwork, for developing a LAPP has already been done by the workgroup and having those guidelines for

them has already minimized the amount of time, hopefully, and the staff effort that would be taken up.

Dr. Chevront: I appreciate Chairman Geiger bringing up those comments, because it reminded me of the fact that I didn't address that in my motion. What I would really like -- I want to get this on the table. I don't mean that this is something that we have to deal with right now. There are a lot of other things that are going on that are taking staff time.

We may not -- I don't know what the work flow is like, but I would certainly like to not let this go. Let's try to see what we can -- We can put it in the hopper or we can put it in the queue or however we want to describe it, but we've got other pressing things that are coming before this council that do need to take staff time. I just don't want to let this go. I would like for us to work it into the schedule wherever it seems logical.

Ms. Merritt: Did you want to change the way your motion is worded?

Dr. Chevront: Yes, maybe -- Robert just gave me an idea. Maybe just to begin -- Instead of develop at this point -- Saying develop right now makes it sound like it's something that we want to start on right away. Maybe if we could begin the process or -- I just don't want it to go off the radar screen and I'm not quite sure how to put it in and if somebody could help with the wordsmithing.

Ms. Shipman: I support the motion, as well as the timing. I appreciate what Chairman Geiger has reminded us of. At the same time, I think this is going to be the most discreet and least complex of the segments of the snapper grouper fishery that we could develop a LAPP for. I think we'll learn a lot as we go forward with this, as timing and other pressing and mandated priorities allow.

Clearly the ACLs and all that -- That's a mandate and we've got to move forward with that and so this needs to come into the queue, I think, behind that, wherever we can work it in, but I'm very supportive, for all the reasons that were stated by the fishermen as to the reasons to do this.

Ms. Quigley: I just wanted to bring up the fact that Dr. Crabtree had suggested back in March that -- Perhaps this is a way to move forward without developing an amendment just yet. He had suggested development of some sort of workgroup, some sort of tilefish fishermen's workgroup, to move ahead and perhaps hash out some alternatives.

Dr. Crabtree: That's kind of how we took the biggest chunk of the work on designing the red snapper IFQ program and the grouper IFQ program in the Gulf, was to pull together a group of fishermen and let them start putting it together. I'm going to support the motion, too. We certainly have a lot of work on our plate now, but I agree with Susan that this does seem to be a good candidate to develop the program and I would like to keep some level of attention going on it.

Mr. Geiger: **In that light, I would like to offer a substitute motion, that we convene a golden tilefish LAPP working group to investigate development of a golden tilefish LAPP**

program.

Dr. Chevront: Actually, just to show some solidarity with that, I'm going to second that motion. George, I think that's a good idea and, Roy, I appreciate that. My main goal with this was let's keep the ball rolling forward and this seems to be a way that maybe we can get some of the work done by a workgroup and not let it go. I certainly will support that.

Ms. Merritt: Is there any further discussion? **Seeing none, all those in favor say aye; any opposed. Seeing none, the motion carries.**

Dr. Chevront: Do you now need to vote on this as the main motion? That was just the substitute.

Ms. Merritt: Thank you, Brian. **I'm going to read the motion now as the main motion: Convene a golden tilefish LAP Workgroup to begin development of a golden tilefish LAP program. All those in favor say aye; any opposed. Seeing none, the motion carries unanimously.**

Mr. Geiger: I guess my question is -- He's on the telephone. Maybe Joe can help. My question is in regard to the red snapper IFQ in the Gulf of Mexico. Was there a discussion of crew shares and did they have crew members, non-permit holders, but people who work in the fishery, serve on the workgroup?

Dr. Crabtree: I don't think there were any crew members who were not permit holders on the workgroup, but I can't say for sure and we did not ultimately award any allocation to non-permit holders. There may have been discussion along the way by the working group about that, but it wasn't done that way.

Ms. Merritt: Does that answer the question, George?

Mr. Geiger: To that point, I guess, Duane and I were just up in Alaska and had an opportunity to interface with the Northwest Pacific Council and they have a very large crab ITQ program and they're in the throes now of some issues arising from the fact that the only people who got crab shares in that ITQ program were processors and boat owners and the skippers and crew members who had vested time and interest in the fishery, who originally were supposed to be included, did not get included in the final program and now they're in the process of revisiting it all, because of the potential for litigation from crew members and captains who believe they should be included in that program. I was just asking if the Gulf of Mexico had crew shares in their program for red snapper and I don't even know if we have crew members in this or --

Dr. Crabtree: Before the IFQ program, there were historical captains and Kay can remember back and I think some of them ultimately got red snapper endorsements along the way and Kay may know better than I do what discussions took place, but in the end, to be eligible for IFQ allocation for red snapper, you had to have landings and a permit. I don't know if Kay --

Ms. Williams: There was a couple of things. When they discussed the crew members, in the

Gulf, you have to have a commercial reef fish permit in order to sell a red snapper IFQ. A reef fish permit is tied to a vessel and so therefore, none of the crew members, unless they owned a vessel, would be able to do anything if they had an IFQ share in the first place.

When they looked at the IFQ shares, they looked at logbook landings. Those logbook landings normally belong either to the owner or to the operator. In the historical captain part of it, I think there only turned out to be seven or eight and these were people that lease vessels. However, the fish belong to those captains. They were in control of the boat and shares and crew members and hiring and firing. They were just like almost an owner/operator, except I guess you could say they rented the vessel or leased the vessel, whichever term that they used back then.

Even to this date, because there's no way to show or tie any type of a share with a crew member, because they often change vessels quite often, that's why they weren't considered in the red snapper IFQ fishery.

Ms. Quigley: I'm going to need a little bit of guidance from the committee. I was hoping we could have some discussion about what the workgroup, what the Golden Tilefish LAP Workgroup, would be tasked with, who would sit on the workgroup, and some sort of timeline for convening that workgroup.

Just to let you know, the tilefish fishermen that I spoke with, I told them that after this meeting I would give them a call and update them on what occurred and that it might be a possibility that some of them could serve on a workgroup, if something did go forward.

Dr. Chevront: I think it's kind of our intention that this workgroup would be convened as soon as is feasible, so that some of this work can get started, so that once the council's workload would allow it, we would have something in place that we could start to consider as we think about an amendment.

I think, Kate, you're doing -- When you're contacting those people after this meeting, I think it would be important to find out if some of them are interested and maybe at our September meeting we can then think about naming names and I would like to find out if Mr. Preston would like to be involved in this, because he's got some differing opinions, but I'm not going to put him on the spot here.

I'm just saying that I think what would be good is making sure we get people of different opinions, including those who are opposed, as well as those who are in favor of the concept of developing a LAPP, on this committee, so that we can hear all those different points of view. Some of the things that we would probably want them to discuss would be things like how do we decide initial allocation, seasons, do we have a separate start for season for hook and line versus longline, the idea of regional management, allocation between the two main sectors, can you do something like put more than one permit on a single vessel or combine quota shares or something? There's just so many different things that we could come up with of things that we might want them to consider.

Ms. Merritt: Many of those are also laid out in advance for them and so that's something

probably Kate can use as a starter.

Mr. Robson: The suggestion about having different points of view about a program itself is good, but I guess then we need to be clear, are we asking this workgroup to decide whether they want to move forward with a LAPP or is the assumption that yes, there would be a LAPP and we want them to create the details of that? We need to clarify that, I guess, and then beyond that, obviously we would want to have cross-sectional representation from different gear types and somebody from the high end and somebody from the low end of production. We've got a definite difference in viewpoint, depending on how much their historical landings were, and so we want to get cross representation there and then geographically, of course, that kind of a representation.

Mr. Iarocci: Mark touched on a lot of the points I was going to make.

Mr. Geiger: We have a motion that we're going to move forward with this, but we still have the issue coming forward of annual catch limits, which will define what this fishery looks like. What the fishery looks like after ACLs are put in place may have a bearing on what the people eventually decide to do.

We're not that far away. By December, we're going to have to have these catch limits defined. Why can't we just wait and in the meantime, we can possibly ask staff to maybe outline the questions that remain to be asked, based on the work that has been done by the previous working group, and it would also give members of council an opportunity to determine maybe how large this committee needs to be and what the representation should be.

It's difficult right now to come up with names and determine who those people are, because all we have are numbers. I think if each of us had an opportunity to talk to Kate and find out who those people are and how they participated and where they came from, it would give us then an opportunity to pick and choose to make sure we had geographic representation of processor, boat representation, that type of thing.

It's going to be difficult to do that at this meeting, without a lot more detailed information, to come up with a very balanced workgroup like we did last time. We spent quite a bit of time making sure we had everybody represented on that last group. I would think we would want to try to do the best we could with the limited numbers that we have to work with to try and get that done as well.

Again, I don't think we need to rush to this thing. Perhaps we can put it off until the next meeting and give Kate an opportunity to put some information for us together, so that we have a better understanding of what this fishery looks like.

Ms. Quigley: I just want to let the committee know when I called these people to ask them how they felt about LAPPs, I also asked them, would you be willing to serve on a workgroup and they gave me an indication about whether they thought they would have time or not. What I can do is between now and September is I can give them another call and tell them that yes, this really is happening and are you still interested.

I can ask them that again, but I would need some guidance as to what you might want the distribution to be among regional areas and between longline and hook and line and between processing and harvesting and also I would like to provide them with some sort of timeline, because they can't really tell me whether they're available to serve or not unless I give them some sort of timeline or number of meetings that they might be required to attend.

Mr. Cupka: To Mark's point, I don't think we've made the decision that we're going to do this. I think we've made the decision that we're going to try and move ahead to explore it. We've said all along that if the fishermen don't buy into this that it will never work and I think until they sit down and try and devise something and put together a LAPP and then see themselves whether they think it's going to work or not, then I think that's the proper time to make the decision on whether to do it or not.

I would see this as a decision to move forward to explore it and see what the fishermen can put together and if they think it's going to serve their needs, as well as serve our needs and responsibilities.

Dr. Chevront: I think one of the things about this workgroup is it would not be nearly as intense as the snapper grouper LAPP workgroup that we had. Those guys were meeting basically every month or every other month, I believe. It was a pretty intense process and until we can see specifically where on the horizon that this might fall out, that the council would be ready to consider it, I don't see the need for a rushed schedule like that.

A once a quarter meeting, I don't know, that might be feasible at this point. I totally agree with George in his comments about the ACLs are going to have a huge impact on how this is going to play out and these guys aren't going to really know what to do and they might be spinning their wheels until they find that out.

Kate had asked questions about timing and potential makeup of this. I think we need to make sure that we have probably -- We need to have processors on there and I'm not so sure that the geographical distribution of processors, unless there's some difference between states and how the fish get processed -- I don't know this fishery really well, but I would think that the geographical location of processors is not as important. I think what we do need to do is to look at probably at least one longliner and one hook and line fisherman from each state, if that's feasible to do.

Mr. Geiger: I think Kate has already outlined what needs to be done. If you're going to talk to these folks to see if they're willing to serve and I would presume you're going to talk to everybody again, even if they indicated a no, because if they hear the council may be interested, they might want to participate now, even though they were a no.

Then you could identify who those people are and what they do. You could provide us with a laundry list of names of who they are and what they do and it would give us then an opportunity to pick and choose from that list of names as to who would formulate the committee. I think that's a logical thing. We could do that at the September meeting. We would have a better idea of where we're going with ACLs by then and we might be able to schedule a meeting before the

December meeting or certainly before the March meeting.

Mr. Cupka: Also, I agree with George. Until we see what's going to come out of this ACL process, it's going to be somewhat difficult to look at some of the issues, but I think in the meantime that we can use that time between now and then to work with the fishermen, to start educating them, and we've already said we're not going to put it on a real fast track anyway. I think it will be an opportunity to lay some groundwork and familiarize them with some of the options that might be available. Hopefully by that time we'll be far enough along in the ACL process that we can put it together.

Mr. Currin: I think we've got a good model, Kate that was developed and improved and modified with the suggestions of the fishermen from that first effort, with the workgroup. I also feel -- As somebody said earlier, I think we're way far ahead of where we were when we started with that first one and unless you have some other ideas regarding the specific differences in this golden tile fishery that might not be applicable to some of the methodology and the way you approach that first workgroup, I would certainly suggest that that be used.

As David said, I think what we want from these people is to design a LAPP, a possible LAPP. Then we can come back in and certainly I would encourage us to have some sort of formal referendum with the folks involved in the fishery, to make sure that we've got good buy-in from the group.

Ms. Quigley: From what I understand, the committee would be asking a workgroup to discuss the appropriateness of a LAPP for the tilefish fishery and designing a LAPP. That would be the same task that the Snapper Grouper LAPP Workgroup received. I'm seeing nodding heads. We can go ahead and I can let them know that that's what the workgroup would be tasked with.

One thing that they will want clarification on is Attachment 8 contains some suggestions that tilefish fishermen both in favor and against an LAP for the golden tilefish fishery -- There's some things that they mentioned as possible management options and they will likely want clarification on whether these other things can be discussed, just as the Snapper Grouper LAPP Workgroup wanted clarification on whether they could discuss sector allocation and these other things.

Some of the things that they mentioned, falling short of a LAPP, were a different opening date, some sort of golden tilefish longline endorsement, a golden tilefish hook and line endorsement that would be tradable. They've discussed allow for two or more permits to be temporarily placed on one vessel. None of those is strictly an LAP type program.

Another person mentioned a voluntary LAP and then a full golden tilefish LAP. We can discuss that in September though. There's no rush to discuss that at this point in time, but if people have opinions, it might be good to bring them forth now.

Mr. Boyles: At risk of going over ground that's already been plowed and sown, Kate presented us information today that roughly two out of every three votes indicated their interest in pursuing development of this tool. I'm just curious as to down the road and I'm sensitive to the workload

issues that we've got as staff and as council.

Am I sensing we're holding back or are we going forward? We sat here in March and we talked about a sense of does the industry want to do this? Staff have done the polling and roughly two-thirds have said yes, let's explore this and we still seem to be kind of moving very, very slowly along these lines. Am I missing something? Are we going to find ourselves here at the same place this time next year?

Mr. Harris: I'm not on your committee, but I'll speak to that, because I think it goes back to what George was talking about earlier and that's the operations plan that we voted on at the last meeting that lays out the timeline for all of the council staff and what they're to be working on over the next several months or a year.

Some of Kate's time was dedicated to LAPP, but not nearly as much as was planned in the past, based on the response that we got from the industry. I think to the extent that she's got time to work on this and supervisory personnel within the council allocate that time for her to work on it, I think that's what we're looking at. Otherwise, we are going to need to go back and revisit the operations plan and make some other decisions.

Mr. Boyles: To that point, I guess my question is -- I'm keying on the phrase "the appropriateness of this" and are we going to go back and ask industry about the appropriateness? Are we going to plow that ground? I guess that's the question I'm really looking for.

Ms. Merritt: I see what you mean, Robert, but if I'm not mistaken, what has been on the table, and I don't know if I'm jumping the gun here on presentations, but there are other options for them to explore as well. My impression of what I'm hearing is that we explore appropriateness of a LAPP and there may be something else that they may want to explore or say don't explore anything.

Mr. Iarocci: Robert, to that point, I think we have to go back to that. Right now, I'm listening and hearing from the fishermen and I'm hearing this meeting and talking about different forms of LAPPs and not a full on ITQ LAPP, but fishermen right now -- Once we come ahead within a year and you say are we going to be at the same place at this table in a year, I think once we start developing where we're going to move forward with these ACLs that fishermen are going to come forward and say, hey, we might want -- They'll come forward with a LAPP, similar to what these tile fishermen are looking to explore.

One thing when we do -- If we're going to have a meeting and I think we're going to hear from Bruce Irwin shortly on something similar in a different fishery, but we've got to make sure we've done a lot of groundwork on this, whether you want to call it an ITQ or a LAP. Different people call it different things.

This is a different area with fishermen that are still right now confused about what this is. We've got to make sure we move forward clearly and that, once again, we're not developing or we're having them come to a meeting and get those fishermen right off the bat -- I highly recommend you get them a fisherman friendly and you put some nice publications together to these guys of

what is on the table already and what they can consider.

Mr. Currin: Robert, I can't answer your question and I understand the sense that you're getting and I have the same sense and am unsure as to how quickly we might be able to do that, for some of the reasons that Duane and George mentioned. However, I think by taking the action we've taken today and we're moving, at this point, as fast as we can go.

We can't do anything until we get this group appointed. That's not going to happen until the next meeting. At that point, there may be some additional reasons to either speed up or to slow it down, depending upon staff workload requirements and where we are with ACLs. That certainly is going to play into this whole thing and may change it drastically, but I'm committed to at least take the next step and then take a step and reassess and take a step and reassess and see where we end up.

Mr. Boyles: This is my last comment on this matter. My point in raising the question is what is our decision point? At what point are we making that decision? I made the comment probably a year ago that we certainly were interested in moving forward and the condition that I think I placed on my support was if the industry is interested in this.

We've gone and we've winnowed it down and we've been very, very specific about looking at golden tilefish and we've done the surveys. There are a lot of questions out there and there are a lot of unknowns out there. I'm just wondering for my own edification, at what point do we pull the trigger? I'm asking that not as a rhetorical question, but just to remind us where we are with the process and when we'll get to that point, where we're at the brink and have to make a decision.

Dr. Crabtree: I think, just to get at what Robert is talking about, when you put together an amendment; the purpose of it is going to be to address problems in the tilefish fishery with overcapacity. An IFQ is one way to do that and there may be other things you would want to look at. You would have to develop the amendment and then somewhere in that process, you would make the decision of this is the program we want, but to put the amendment together, you're going to need this working group to give you the basic outline and principles for an IFQ kind of program.

Ms. Quigley: One thing I can do is I can reword things a bit. I'm going to propose this wording as direction for council staff: Golden Tilefish LAP Workgroup tasked with discussing and designing an LAP program or other management tools appropriate for improvement of the golden tilefish fishery.

Ms. Merritt: I see lots of nodding heads. Does anyone have a problem with that? I think that's nicely done. Thank you, Kate.

Ms. Quigley: I don't think I have anything else at this time. What I will do, before the September meeting, is I will speak with the tilefish fishermen, all of them, those for an LAP and against an LAP, and ask if they're interested in serving on a workgroup and I will collect details about them. I think I've already got most of those and come back in September with that

information for you.

Ms. Merritt: Thank you, Kate. Next on the agenda, we have Bruce Irwin, who is a little bit surprised that he's having to do this this afternoon. He's been on the road since three in the morning, but he warmed up with an earlier presentation and so we're looking for -- It's having to do with a property rights management program. It was Attachments 4 and 5. That's the background on that in your briefing book.

Mr. Irwin: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Really, a lot of what I was going to say has been touched upon on the golden tile issue. I just want to give you a brief summary of what we've been doing in the Keys. After the Jekyll Island meeting, we had stated or I had stated there that I really thought we would like to look at a regional approach to our management for our fisheries in the Keys.

I also heard that in the May public testimony in Key Largo. I heard that several times, fishermen get up and say we would like to look at a regional approach for our fishery. We went home from the Jekyll Island meeting and the fishermen got together and formed a committee to look into different options and how they want their fishery managed in the Keys.

We tried to balance the committee as well as possible. There's highline producers, very high end, and very low end and a range all in the middle. What they did was they kind of said what are the options and what are we looking at and I told them basically some of their options and they really wanted to know more information. They wanted to be educated and they wanted to learn more about what's out there for them.

That's why I'm here today, to request Kate's time and effort into looking into the different options for managing our fishery in our region. I think she could do this and a lot of educational things can be done by Environmental Defense. They have the resources and the willingness to educate fishermen on the options that are out there.

I would like to get this started. I would like to see it started as soon as possible and really, that's really basically what I have. Our committee is already formed. I know I heard you guys say you wanted to form a golden tile and you wanted to pick the people. We went home and we got on it and our committee is together and ready to go to work, really.

Mr. Iarocci: Thank you, Bruce, for taking the time to be up to represent the industry down there, both organizations. We've been talking about this since the LAPP group was formed and then we did go back and we have been forming different committees down there and we formed a snapper grouper committee of fishermen and looking at the different types of approaches, from ITQs on down to this regional approach of fisheries.

We did discuss the different options and I think at this time, because we are looking at ACLs as one of the things we're trying to get the fishermen in our area up to speed on, the ACLs coming down the line, and be able to do this and I know we've already -- Duane, I heard your comments earlier about the timing and stuff and I think it won't take a whole lot of time out of Kate's schedule.

I think she can prioritize and keep us up to speed on the council aspects, but working with ED and the fishermen and getting some of the publications to the right people and seeing how we could look at a regional approach in our area -- I highly support that and hope we can move forward with it.

Mr. Robson: Are you talking about reef fish in general or what are we -- Is that basically it?

Ms. Shipman: Tony, a question for you all. Are you looking just at the South Atlantic area or are you looking at the transition into the Gulf as well or just our area? If you're fishing both sides, it seems like a reef fish program might potentially need to encompass both, but I don't know the degree to which it could, because I'm not that familiar with all the Gulf management systems.

Mr. Irwin: That's a good point. We haven't really thought of that, but that's -- That's a good point. I would anticipate you would have to include some type of it, because some fishermen fish on both sides on the same trip.

Mr. Geiger: Bruce, thank you for your presentation and thank you for taking the initiative to investigate this process and take it on. That's great leadership. What I'm hearing is like one meeting of Kate's time and there would be preliminary telephone calls in advance of the meeting, in an effort to ensure that she comes down armed with the right information to help do whatever it is you're requesting her to do? We're looking at one meeting down there?

Mr. Irwin: I would definitely think one meeting would go a long way and start and maybe at a later time maybe bring her down again, to go through the different methodologies of maybe some kind of allocation scenarios or maybe you want to do a two afternoon meeting, where she could meet with them twice.

Generally, I see people go to meetings and they take what they learn from the meeting and they go and they learn more as they think about it and then they would like to ask questions and have -- For that, I think that would be a real good start, one meeting and come down there. You're right that the phone calls -- Let's get it lined up to where we can make the most efficiency of her time.

Mr. Geiger: To that point, Bruce, I want to reiterate the importance of pre-telephone calls and pre-meetings before the meetings, so that you maximize your effort while she's down there.

Mr. Currin: Bruce, I understand what you guys -- I think what you guys are after and I applaud you for getting the group together and thinking about it and I hope you don't take this the wrong way or I hope I don't put you off, because I think it's a great effort and I encourage you to continue with it.

I guess my concern is -- Fishermen from North Carolina and other areas for a number of years now have come to the council and said we would like to be treated as a separate entity and we would like state-by-state quotas and we would like regional quotas and we would like something and that's just with respect to maybe one or two fisheries.

The council so far, although in 16 -- We have an option in Amendment 16 to perhaps establish Florida and Georgia together and North Carolina and South Carolina together in the gag grouper fishery, but the council has seemed to be very hesitant to move down that road and NMFS has not been very supportive of those sorts of approaches. I'm trying to weigh that against what we're considering doing now with a subgroup of the state of Florida for the snapper grouper fishery.

This has nothing -- I'm not making any comments about whether it's a worthwhile idea or not. I see a lot of merit perhaps in going that way, but I see it steamrolling, perhaps, if we start going down this road with other groups and other states and other fisheries that see this as an effort of the council and coming before the council with a similar proposal and then we've got more groups than we can manage, more cats than we can herd, trying to do that.

It's just a word of caution and I haven't thought about it enough, I guess, to this point to really feel comfortable with whether this is the appropriate way to go or even a workable way for us to go. Just some hesitancy on my part, because of the implications that it might have.

Mr. Iarocci: To Mac's point, I also -- I've talked to North Carolina fishermen and different people, talking about this regional approach for a while now and times have changed. I've talked to Roy about this and I've talked to the chairman of the council about this and I know it's a different road and a different tack, but it's something we've done with kingfish, with setting lines and stuff like that, but you've got to look at the uniqueness of the south Florida fishery, especially the yellowtail and the mangrove snapper fishery. They're the primary fisheries down there.

It's a shallow-water fishery. It's a hook and line fishery. It's a clean, good fishery with very little bycatch. There's no problems with this fishery and it's something that we want to separate out and look at and try to do the right way and look at it differently. I think at this opportunity, at the time we are, especially coming up with an ACL, we might be able to develop something and move forward with it. I think the time is right to do this.

Mr. Currin: Tony that makes me feel a little more comfortable, if you're talking about the yellowtail and gray snapper fishery. I was under the impression that we were talking about all the reef fish fisheries in the Keys. That's a unique and very localized fishery and I would be a whole lot more comfortable with something like that than trying to drag in all the species that are common between at least southern Florida and North Carolina.

Ms. Quigley: I've just got two comments. Bruce and I have had some preliminary discussions about this and I think two meetings would be appropriate, one to provide them with information about various options, such as cooperative sector allocation, LAPs and RFAs, not that these are real options the council is willing to endorse and willing to do, but to provide them with information about these types of programs and then some sort of second meeting would be to see what types of realistic options exist for them.

Just to let people know, Bruce has spoken to some sort of regional management and the reason that he came to -- He spoke with Gregg and I and the reason that he's doing this during this LAPP Committee is because we had talked about -- He had brought up sector allocation, which

is something we've discussed in the past, which is an LAP type program.

We've discussed LAP and RFAs and discussed the idea of cooperatives. They don't know what direction they're going in. They might not be going in that direction at all, but they could be and that's why it's being brought to the table here. I just wanted to let people know that and Eileen Dougherty is scheduled to give a presentation on sector allocation next and that's just one type of program that I think Bruce and his group were considering.

Mr. Geiger: Of course, there is another option and that is to take these very unique fisheries that occur very localized and geographically localized in the Keys and turn them over to -- Give responsibility to the State of Florida to manage. I don't like that look, but there is an opportunity. The council has managed yellowtail well and black grouper is another species that occurs down there that's geographically isolated. That's a whole other option.

Ms. Merritt: I've got Roy and then Tony, but I would like to interject at this point -- Kate did mention that Eileen's presentation is coming up and since we are running a little over time so far, I'm wondering what the committee feels about either moving forward with that or letting her do that at a later time, perhaps in September. It's a presentation on sector allocation programs. Does anyone have strong feelings?

Mr. Geiger: Rita, you have until four o'clock and we wouldn't want to miss Eileen.

Ms. Merritt: That's a good thing.

Dr. Crabtree: I'm more comfortable -- Regional management worries me some, but when you talk about trying to manage the yellowtail snapper fishery in the Keys, that, to me, is not regional management. The whole fishery is down there and I don't have any problem with George's suggestion of looking at delegating it to Florida.

We need to find a way to have that whole yellowtail snapper fishery come under kind of one management regime. Delegating to Florida would be one way and having either the South Atlantic or the Gulf Council remove it from their FMP and allow the other council to manage it throughout its range is another way to get at that.

That, I think, is fine to look at. Where regional management starts worrying me is when you start saying we're going to have one piece of the quota here and one piece here and one piece here and then that becomes a difficult thing to do and very demanding on resources. That's my comment on it.

Mr. Robson: I'll reserve judgment on that for now, but I think we may be getting into some discussions related to snapper grouper fishery management as a large group, as a group of fish, with some very difficult questions we're going to be facing.

I'm kind of reserving judgment on how I might feel about a regional approach, particularly for some of the Florida fisheries where there's a huge economic impact and possibly a very different type of fishery occurring than maybe other parts of the council region, but I do share some

concern about splitting up and regionalizing fisheries too much. I also agree that we should certainly keep the options open to manage some of these local fisheries at a state level, if it's appropriate, and yellowtail is one we've discussed before.

Mr. Iarocci: Roy, we had lunch today with Bill and Mark and these were some of the topics that we had talked about for the future, but in other fisheries, also. When you look at the data at the SSC that -- Doug Gregory has been presenting some stuff on what's going on in south Florida and I agree with you that it's one of the topics and we've talked about having you and Mark both come down and meet with some industry leaders and talk about what we could do with the management, the state, the federal management, in the south Florida area, because it is a very unique area and we do have our species --

I think this group right here putting this meeting together with the options to bring them on the table and bring the industry to the table, to show them what we have to work with or what we can do in the future, once an ACL, once that number is developed -- I think it's a good start for this area and I hope we can move forward with it.

Ms. Merritt: Is there any other comment? Bruce, I really appreciate all this. It's so rare that we get anyone out of the user groups that want to put in the time and the effort and all of the losses that occur when you take this kind of initiative to come and speak with us and travel to whatever location we happen to be at at the moment. I would like to get some guidance now from the committee as to what we give the staff as far as supporting this proposal or not.

Mr. Iarocci: Do you have enough direction from the committee to move forward with this or do we need to make a motion or is it pretty much -- Do we need more discussion?

Ms. Quigley: I believe I'm hearing support for staff time, as available, to attend a couple of meetings and provide them with information and is that correct? I'm seeing nodding heads and so we can move forward.

Mr. Geiger: One meeting and two if necessary, really necessary.

Ms. Merritt: Eileen Dougherty, who is with Environmental Defense, is going to give us a presentation regarding the sector allocation program.

Ms. Dougherty: As Rita said, I'm Eileen Dougherty and I'm with the Environmental Defense Fund and I wanted to first thank the LAPP Committee for the opportunity to give this presentation. The reason I was asked to give this presentation is I gave the same one at the LAP Workgroup in December of 2007 and so this is just the same presentation, so you guys can have the same information.

What this will be is a basic overview of sector allocation and some examples. If you have questions, feel free to ask those and also, if I don't have the answers right now, I can get back to you with more information. I want to start out this -- You have a handout, I believe, in your -- I don't know what attachment it is, but it's a comparison between sector allocation programs, regional fishery associations, and harvest cooperatives.

I just wanted to -- There's not a huge body of evidence out there as to what a sector allocation is and one of the best examples is in New England and so I just wanted to call you attention to this upfront and just make some distinction between what we talk about when we talk about sector allocation, harvest cooperatives, and regional fishery associations.

Basically, they are covered under different legislation. Sector allocation programs are most often regulated through regional councils. Harvest cooperatives are regulated through the Fishermen's Collective Marketing Act and regional fishery associations are formed after an initial allocation and are covered under the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act.

Just to give you some basic -- When we're talking about this, it helps to have a little understanding of that, so you can look at sector allocation. What is a sector? Basically, the definition of a sector comes from New England and a sector means a group of persons holding limited access vessel permits who have voluntarily entered into a contract and agreed to certain fishing restrictions for a specified period of time and which has been granted a TAC in order to achieve objectives consistent with applicable FMP goals and objectives.

It's a very specific definition. There are more -- You'll see in some of my examples there's a more broad sector allocation, which means that a council has taken a group of fishermen and allocated a certain percentage of the quota and divided up that fishery.

How is a quota allocated? Generally, a quota is allocated to a sector or sectors based on aggregate catch histories of harvested stock for vessels participating in the sector. The years used to determine the allocation vary from region to region and so that's based on the specific fisheries. In general, dealer reported landings data are usually used to determine that catch history.

I covered a little bit of this, but the MSA does not set parameters for sector allocations. Rather, regulations are specified specific to the region. For example, in New England, sector allocations are regulated through the New England Council. For the Alaska pollack fishery, it's regulated through the North Pacific Management Council and the Pacific whiting fishery is regulated through NMFS Northwest Region and the shore side sector of the fishery is managed cooperatively between NMFS and the state fishery management agencies.

To best illustrate the concept of sector allocation, I'm going to give you some examples. For the Alaska pollack fishery -- Prior to the American Fisheries Act, quota was allocated 65 percent to offshore and 35 percent to onshore. In 1998, the American Fisheries Act paved the way for a three-tiered sector allocation and the formation of a cooperative and the catcher/processor sector. This is a combination of quota being allocated to different sectors and then within those sectors, cooperatives forming.

What they did there was they allocated 10 percent to community development quota and that was taken off the top and 90 percent was split between three sectors: 10 to the mother ship sector, which is large processing vessels; 40 percent to the catcher/processor sector and those vessels are vessels that both catch and process; and then 50 percent to onshore sectors, vessels harvesting for onshore processing plants. Why did they create those? They were created to rationalize the

fishing activities, promote conservation, and enhance the utilization of the fishing resource.

For the Pacific whiting, they also defined sectors and allocated quota. They've allocated 34 percent to the catcher/processor sector, 24 percent to the mother ship sector, and 42 percent to the shore-based sector.

One reason that they did this was to improve the economics of the fishery. Also, in 1997, the catcher/processor companies formed a cooperative to optimize the use of that quota and why did they do this? Again, it was to help alleviate a race to fish that they were in, but they still have a ways to go there and so NMFS is considering ways to further reduce effort.

The best example of a sector allocation comes from looking at New England and the New England Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association has been instrumental in sector allocation in New England. It was formed in 1991. It has over 1,400 members. As some of you may know, the Executive Director is Paul Parker and John Pappalardo is also a policy analyst and he's on the New England Council.

I have actually their annual report, which some of you may be interested in looking at, which kind of goes through how they set it up and what are the specific goals of that, but they mainly focus -- The focus is on maintaining a healthy marine environment that supports a secure and viable future for sustainable commercial fisheries. They were instrumental in forming the Georges Bank hook sector.

What is the New England Georges Bank hook sector? It was formed in 2004 with fifty-eight fishing businesses signed into contract and so they are under a contract. The sector is allocated up to 20 percent of the TAC for the Georges Bank cod. I think in 2004 they had about 12 -- They were allocated about 12 percent of the quota. In 2008, they just re-upped that contract and there are nineteen participants receiving about 6.4 percent of the quota.

It follows the requirements as outlined in Amendment 13 to the New England Multispecies FMP and the sector members determine how to harvest the cod. What does this do? It allows for relief from trip limits, but they are still under days at sea. What did this do? One of the reasons that they were interested in going to a sector is that because of the regulations in Amendment 13, many of the fishermen felt that the economics of the fishery were going to be such that they weren't going to be able to fish and so they advocated for this hook sector.

It prevented a derby and it allowed for additional monitoring and research on bycatch and as of recently, they have been very instrumental in looking at video monitoring and looking at comparing that to onboard observer data and seeing how best they can monitor their fishery.

It allows for transfers and leases of days at sea. It has unified fishermen and has improved relationships between fishermen and the community at large and within the scientific community and also, in 2006, a Georges Bank fixed gear sector was approved and implemented and in 2007, the Georges Bank gillnet sector was approved and they also operate under days at sea.

What are the current rules? Sectors must submit a proposal a year in advance. They must

submit an operation plan and environmental assessment and a binding contract that govern the members. The council and NMFS must approve the proposals and allocation is based on a share of commercial catch, the five years prior to the beginning of the sector, and sectors shut down once the TAC is reached. Sectors, participating vessels, and individual operators and owners may be charged jointly or individually for civil penalties and permit sanctions.

What is under consideration right now? The New England Council is looking at authorizing sectors in all Northeast FMPs, but they are going to introduce those rules, the sector rules, by fishery. They're looking at hard TACs, as you know, for all species caught, fixed baseline for allocation and trading between sectors, and the two -- There's also a sector policy in place that was adopted in 2007.

As a part of Amendment 16, they have on the table right now over seventeen new groundfish sectors and so those are proposed right now and they -- I think the timeline for that had been anticipated to look at that more fully this June, but they have extended that a bit, but the likely start date for sectors still remains May 2010, with a sign-in date that while it was June of 2008, it's now to be determined.

What are the potential future regulations that are on the table? Amendment 17 would look at developing other management options, included, but not limited to, ITQs, area management, days at sea, a performance plan point system, party/charter limited entry, and approval of any new sector proposals or adjustments or modifications to existing sectors.

Right now, for the Georges Bank hook sector, they have a proposed modification in Amendment 16 and I think they were trying to look at pulling that out, so that they can make some modifications in advance of Amendment 16 fully going through.

Just to wrap up, I talked about some of the potential benefits and drawbacks of sector allocation. Some of the potential benefits is this option seems simpler and more responsive than traditional management, allows for flexibility in when, where, and by whom quota is harvested. Some sectors have seen economic gains as a result of the sector. Fishermen have more security as part of that sector and sectors can help end the race to fish, because they may lead to or couple with the formation of cooperatives.

What are the drawbacks? Administrative time spent on setting up sectors, monitoring and reporting requirements and the potential for added management burden with the monitoring, enforcement, and operation plan review. Sectors have to organize and govern themselves. Sectors can be punished for the action of one fisherman. Monitoring and implementation costs can increase for fishermen and alone, sectors often do not result in large economic benefits to fishermen, because of the lack of transferability.

You, of course, won't be able to see any of this, but I'm assuming that this presentation will be available to you and this is a pretty comprehensive list of additional resources. Again, this is a compilation of a lot of different sources of information, because there's not one specific guideline for sector allocation. At this point, I think if you have questions, I would be happy to take those.

Ms. Merritt: Anybody have questions or comments?

Mr. Geiger: Thanks, Eileen and Happy Anniversary.

Ms. Dougherty: Thank you.

Mr. Geiger: In your presentation, you mentioned that the Georges Bank hook and line fishermen had fifty-eight members and they just recently re-upped their contract and they're down to nineteen.

Ms. Dougherty: Yes and I don't know -- I'll let you finish your question.

Mr. Geiger: When I was in New England, I believe it actually is down to nineteen with only like five people fishing. Was there a reason for that, do you know?

Ms. Dougherty: George, I don't know the specific reason for that. I could certainly get back to you on that. I don't know if that is a reflection of the additional sector proposals on the table or not.

Mr. Iarocci: At one time, and I don't know about now, a lot of the guys had cut back. They had gone lobstering and out there, what it costs them for the bait and to rig the tub trawls and get that far off -- Dogfish were a real problem and they weren't catching enough cod to make it profitable enough to make the trip and so they had diversified in other things and are waiting to see where this goes. Like you said, Eileen, everybody and their brother is looking for a piece of that pie through a sector up there and the last three slides, when you said one fisherman can be punished -- These guys are forming these sectors and all of a sudden they're pointing the finger at we don't want you and we don't want you and then those people go and try to form another sector and it's a total fiasco up there.

Ms. Dougherty: I might have not mentioned this explicitly, but Amendment 16 does cover a more broad range of sector guidelines and so that's what they're sort of waiting on and they have the sector proposals on the table and also, the guidelines are included in that amendment.

Mr. Robson: Eileen, I was curious about the -- You mentioned the charter, there was an issue with a charter action of some sort and what was it, for potential future regulations. Do you know what that's about, limited entry for party/charter?

Ms. Dougherty: I don't specifically know why they're addressing that, but I can find out for you.

Ms. Williams: Thank you for your presentation. I found it very interesting. I believe in the Gulf in what we're looking at now, as far as allocations and the way they apply in Magnuson, you really have two. You have commercial and you have recreational. We have different regulations for both sectors and we have different regulations for the longline fisheries, as to areas that they're permitted to fish in.

I don't believe we're looking at breaking out sectors. I think we're looking at guiding principles

of what we would use for allocations, because a lot of things have changed with the reauthorization, such as we used to be able to use multipliers. You would hear one sector saying our fish are more valuable and another saying that ours are more valuable and they would talk about different multipliers and how they extrapolate out.

With the new passage, it actually says you have to look at what that value is to that participant and that we will no longer be using the multipliers, as we had in the past. I'm sure you probably know what those sections are and if you do not, I'll be more than happy to share them with you, but I think when we're looking, like I said, at allocations, I think we're looking at guiding principles.

I think all the councils have used those. That's how we have the different percentages for the different sectors at this time and so I'm not certain -- In your presentation, were you just giving other ways for the commercial industry to take their piece of the pie, in order to regulate that, or just exactly where you were coming from as far as your point of view of your presentation.

Ms. Dougherty: The point of this presentation is simply an educational presentation to you guys, based on extensive research on my part on sector allocation. I'm a little confused -- Basically, what this is is this is not, number one, allocation between recreational and commercial and also not as defined in the definition. It's basically a group of commercial fishermen who would enter voluntarily into a contract with each other.

They would get a percentage of the TAC, based on their landings, and they would be able then to, based on a contract, be able to manage that however they saw fit that fit with the guidelines that the council laid out.

Ms. Williams: One good example is an IFQ, is that right?

Ms. Dougherty: A sector is a little bit different than an IFQ. Number one, a sector is governed by guidelines that are set out by the councils and the IFQs are managed -- IFQs or limited access privilege programs are regulated under the Reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act. The sector allocations don't allow for sale of quota, but they do allow for fishermen to cooperatively manage that part of the TAC that they have.

Mr. Robson: I was thinking about that earlier, because there was something you said about transferability. You say that they're not able to do that. In other words, they're not able to transfer quota share from outside a sector into that sector, but a system could be set up where the participants in that sector can sort of barter or trade or give away or sell their own shares within that sector to each other and is that right?

Ms. Dougherty: Yes, it allows them to come up with agreements on how they want to fish that quota. For the Georges Bank hook sector, they actually have to make decisions by consensus and so they come together and they say how do we want to fish this quota and they have specific guidelines on how they come to those decisions. My understanding for sector allocations thus far is they have not allowed for the sale of quota to someone else. At the same time, they can work within the group to decide how they want to fish that.

Ms. Merritt: I think it was Eileen or Kate that mentioned to you earlier that Attachment 4 does give you a comparison of the three different types, the LAP, the regional management, and the sector allocations. If you take the time to look over that -- You might have to read it a few times, like I did, to try to understand the differences there. There really are some pretty significant pluses and minuses amongst them and I guess that would depend upon what group would be most applicable to help sustain their fishery. Thank you so much, Eileen. I appreciate it and I'm glad we had time.

Mr. Currin: One last question, Rita. Eileen, how specific and detailed are the plans within a sector? I guess what I'm getting at there is are they so detailed that they specify who and when within the sector may fish or how they fish or is it loose enough so that if Fisherman A and B said I'm going to stay on the hill today and you go catch yours and mine for this period or whatever, so that they have that kind of flexibility within the plans or are they really, really specific on how these guys can operate?

Ms. Dougherty: To that question, for the most part, the plans cover more broader issues, number of days at sea and what that means and sector call in. It outlines the goals, both biological and monitoring and reporting. It's more -- They are specific in terms of what they need to deliver and what their goals are, but it's not so specific that it outlines exactly how the fishermen need to fish. Whether they have full retention and species trip limits and hook size and limit, just to give you some examples, and closed areas and whether they can fish in those and gear restrictions. It's more on that sort of higher level.

Mr. Geiger: One other advantage, Mac, is they get to fish in places where other people can't, because they get a quota share and they open up specific areas that are closed to draggers and other sectors and allow those hook and line people to actually fish in those areas.

Ms. Merritt: Thank you very much. Since we do have this extra time, we'll go on to our next item on the agenda, which is a discussion of the outreach efforts. You might remember we did have some discussion about this back in March and I believe that's in Attachment 7.

Ms. Quigley: At the March meeting, the council had asked council staff to talk with Sea Grant staff and to see about some sort of active outreach on LAPs and so Kim is going to lead the discussion on getting some more clarification on exactly what that means and where we can go from here.

Ms. Iverson: I thought it might be helpful just to kind of quickly reiterate where we've been with our outreach efforts since the change in what was initially the Controlled Access Committee that then became the Limited Access Privilege Committee, just to take you back through that little walk. Back in January of 2007, the Controlled Access Committee moved forward with forming the workgroup that we're familiar with and have referenced.

The follow-up with that, we had a newsletter that came out in the winter of 2007, following that meeting, that kind of focused on an overview of LAPPs and what they are and the types of limited access privilege programs and what the council was looking at in forming a workgroup. I just bring this up because since that newsletter, we've had other newsletters that have followed

up with the workgroup meetings.

I scrolled down just to show you that we did go over and talk about, in this particular newsletter in the winter of last year, about allocation issues, as well as the workgroup, where LAPPs had been demonstrated in other areas of the country and the workgroup that was formed.

That kind of prompted us to go ahead and add an additional section to our website and I will bring that up here shortly. That website section, I think most of you are familiar with it. Kate and Myra and I worked closely together to come up with kind of an overview of what the limited access privilege program is, in general. We started a separate section of our website for the workgroup, with profiles of the workgroup members, schedules, meetings, and at about the same time as we were developing the pages on our website, the workgroup formed an outreach subcommittee, sort of, there again, refreshing your memories.

Amber Von Harten and Scott Baker of Sea Grant, Extension Agents that were members of the workgroup, headed up that effort to develop outreach materials separate from the council, separate and kind of on the outside purview of the council, and developed fact sheets and other materials that were distributed in hard copy, as well as online.

The LAPP Workgroup Outreach Subcommittee also recommended that this website be developed and the workgroup information be available. We've posted all of the meeting information and briefing book materials, so that fishermen that were interested in following along with the workgroup could see the process and have access to that working document that was developed in nine meetings over a twelve-month period. It was a very intensive time.

I bring that up because one of the other things that came out from this workgroup meeting was possible fishermen's forums. I've spoken with Amber Von Harten and the intent was to have some of those fishermen forums early on in the process, but as it was mentioned earlier, that was such a very busy meeting schedule and those fishermen forums actually were not held. Two out of the three things that were recommended, the website information and having it available and having the workgroup information, the workgroup profiles, available for the public to see what was going on -- All of those things occurred and the fact sheets. I take you back and refresh your memory there that the fact sheets were posted online.

It was one of the first times we also did them bilingual. Myra translated those and we had them in Spanish as well as English and so all of these things are posted on our website over the right-hand side of the screen. Its cut off just a wee bit, but those fact sheets and other information is there, information about the wreckfish ITQ and referencing to that.

I wanted to kind of just remind you of what has been done. We also had an information and education Advisory Panel meeting back in August of last year. Amber Von Harten from Sea Grant came and Kate came and presented to the I&E Advisory Panel. They formulated some very general recommendations, but we followed on that. We emphasized both the benefits and the drawbacks of LAPPs and that any program must come from the fishermen and they should have the information that they need in order to make a conscious decision on whether or not they wanted to proceed and have fishermen from other areas involved in any sort of development.

One of the things that Cathy Sakas, who serves on our Information and Education Advisory panel, said that kind of struck home with me and I quote: If it relates to your health or your wealth, people will listen. That was one of the things that was key in developing the outreach materials and we did get a lot of questions and I did get a lot of phone calls and we did distribute a lot of the fact sheets.

Certainly I would redirect the questions to the area council members and I think you heard from your constituents and had the questions and the concerns. We had the focus group meetings and we've had opportunity to have public input. Along those lines, at our March meeting, we had a - - I think the committee had a very detailed discussion and then the council made a motion to continue outreach efforts.

At that time, I went back and talked with Amber Von Harten, who headed up that subcommittee from the workgroup. During the discussion of the outreach activities for the LAP programs and continued outreach efforts, there really wasn't a lot of direction that was given.

Sea Grant's name was mentioned, working cooperatively with Sea Grant to get information out to the public, but Amber has asked -- I had asked if maybe she could attend this meeting, but she had another commitment. She's actually on the MARMAP vessel this week and so I'm hoping that she's taking lots of pictures and photographs and having a wonderful time, but she wanted me to bring back to the committee and ask for more detail on what it is the committee wishes to do in addition to the outreach efforts that I've just gone through very quickly and to get a little more input, a little more direction, from specific outreach efforts and what your target audience may be.

We've certainly kind of targeted the general fishing population and primarily snapper grouper fishermen with our earlier outreach efforts, but given the decisions and the discussions that this committee has made on the golden tilefish fishery and taking that into consideration, what specific outreach efforts you would like to see, thinking of some of the goals and objectives and your target audience and what we can do to pursue outreach.

Amber has been working with me -- I would just remind the committee that Amber has been working with me on -- South Carolina Sea Grant specifically has been working on a publication for MPAs. Given that the Notice of Availability on Amendment 14 published last Friday, I think we're going to be expediting that document here soon and we've also discussed the need to have a lot more outreach on annual catch limits, accountability measures, and other things for the public, these pressing issues that we're dealing with on a continuing basis.

I just mention that because it, as always, comes up as staff time and certainly Sea Grant's resources are limited. Funding and that type of thing is limited and so I just ask that you keep that in consideration.

I also wanted to mention that between the March meeting and when the motion was approved to continue outreach for LAP programs that a DVD has been developed. We have a copy of the DVD that actually was delivered FedEx Express this morning and if the committee -- I'll leave that up to Kate and to Ms. Chairman, if she would like to see that DVD or see pieces and parts of

the DVD, as far as an outreach tool.

The intent is to take -- The DVD is actually three components. It's an overview about the council and then an introduction to LAPPs that Gregg Waugh did a very informal interview with and then Kate did a voiceover for a PowerPoint presentation and so I didn't know if Kate wanted to have that shown at this time.

Ms. Quigley: I think we can run through it. Kim, if you want to try on your computer, to see if it will open, I can walk through the different portions of it. This was just completed. What we plan to do is make copies of this DVD and distribute it to LAP Committee members and then a little while later distribute it to all permit holders. That was the original plan. We would make copies within the council office and send those out.

As Kim said, it consists of Gregg giving a presentation on status quo, what people can expect over the next five years as far as commercial quota levels, and then I give a presentation on the basics of LAPs and provide them with an update on what has happened since the March meeting.

When you put the DVD into your DVD player, into your computer, DVD drive, this is the screen that comes up and there are three different options. There's What are LAPs, What's Next, and About Us. There's also an introduction that starts automatically, typically, of Gregg giving just an overview of what's contained on the LAP DVD. Kim, if you could just click on "What's Next". This is the presentation that Gregg created.

Ms. Quigley: We're not going to go through the whole thing, but this is just an idea of what's contained on the LAP DVD. Here's just to give you an idea of what's contained on this DVD and so, Kim, if you can go back to the menu. Back on the menu, there are two other options. There's an overview of LAPS and then there's an about us section that rolls through several photographs and we have the maker of the DVD talking about who the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council is and the South Atlantic Region.

Ms. Iverson: I apologize. I'm a new Vista Operating Systems owner and not by choice.

Ms. Quigley: Anyway, this gives you an idea. Maybe we'll just leave it at that and you can figure it out on your own. We're having a few problems here. This just gives you an idea though of the type of outreach that's already been completed and so what we need from you is guidance on what further outreach do you want.

There had been some discussion about some sort of active outreach, similar to what was done in Rhode Island as far as section allocation, but that was not LAP-specific. That was sector allocation and so is that the type of thing you're looking for? Are you looking for a sector allocation type workshop? If not, what are you looking for? That was a major undertaking, just to let people know. That took over a year to plan and it involved Sea Grant and the New York Port Authority, I believe, and state personnel and NMFS staff. That's a rather large undertaking and we want to find out if that's really what you're talking about and what you wanted it to focus on, if anything.

Ms. Iverson: I will have copies of the DVD in a playable format at the back of the table, if anyone is interested in seeing the whole thing or just scrolling through. There again, we will have this posted on the website.

Mr. Currin: Kate, in answer to your question, I think what you've done is great. I think having the material available on the website with the appropriate links and the DVD is easily distributable and should provide good information to people that are interested.

You can't force-feed people. You can't force this stuff down their throat, but having it available in a format that's accessible and easy and understandable, I think, is important. As far as responding, we just responded to a request from Bruce and the guys in Florida today about providing some time for them to discuss sector allocations. I think if we're just prepared and ready to do that sort of thing, as much as we can, given the staff time constraints, then I'm perfectly satisfied. Others may not be, but I think the effort has been worthwhile and we've got some good products and if we can remain ready to try to respond to individual requests as best we can, then I'm certainly satisfied. Others may not be, but --

Ms. Merritt: Thank you, Mac. I agree. I think you all just do a super job and you've been getting better and better at it all the time. I did mention to you earlier that I guess I have a special place in my heart for those people who do not like email and do not like the internet and they like their hard copy and so I had asked Kim a little bit about the mailing list that we use and how much of a burden that would place, in order to expand that sometimes to those people who are either non-permit holders who would be getting mailings and that kind of thing. I would like for Kim to address that a little bit, about the hard copy mailings that go out.

Ms. Iverson: I think what Rita is referring to is the fact that we've generally had about 3,600 contacts on our mailing list. We print around 4,000 hard copies of our newsletter and in the past year, we've just recently had opportunity to download and incorporate the snapper grouper permit holder list from the Southeast Regional Office website, as well as the king and Spanish mackerel.

I'm assuming that everyone has seen this, but on their website now, you can have immediate access to all the permit holders and it's a wonderful tool for reaching fishermen and it's highlighting specific permit holders, whether it be charter permits -- There again, we've used this for king and Spanish mackerel or the coastal migratory pelagic holders and snapper grouper permit holders.

When we conducted our focus group meetings, when we did our road show back in February and all the staff members were involved, Mike Collins was kind enough to take that list and incorporate it with our mailing list and try to eliminate duplicates, as much as possible. We were able to mail postcards of meeting notices about those focus group meetings and also about the most recent series of public hearings that were held in May to the snapper grouper permit holders, to those that held a federal permit.

We have discussed informally perhaps doing that with all of our mailings, to just keep that a standardized mailing list. I would have to go back -- I don't know off the top of my head the

exact number of permit holders that that would affect, but that is one way to reach a larger audience, certainly, through mailings and eventually hopefully eliminate some of the duplicative mailings that we're doing.

Mike has put forth a tremendous effort to do that, but I'm sure that there are still people that are getting two or three copies of a postcard or if you have multiple vessels under one name or that type of thing or corporation -- Certainly they're getting multiple copies, but that's an option. I can look into those numbers and get back with Bob and discuss that or certainly that's an option.

As far as reaching non-federally permitted fishermen, we could do that at the state level, with some sort of mailing list, shared mailing lists, and we've talked about doing that in the past. What I have been doing is emailing the state communications folks and asking them -- When we have these public hearings -- I have folks like Nancy Fish in North Carolina and Kim Amendola down at the Regional Office.

She's done a great job as far as helping to distribute that and we work together to distribute electronic information and postings on our website. We do that with the Fishery Bulletins, certainly, to try to post them as quickly as possible and share other information electronically, but when you start talking printing costs and getting into the tens of thousands of copies of information, then that can get quite expensive, but perhaps we can extend our current mailing list to include the federal snapper grouper permit holders and king mackerel holders, if that's what you wish.

Ms. Merritt: Any comments or questions for Kim or Kate? No? Seeing none, thank you. You all do a great job and I guess the fact that nobody has any suggestions must mean you're right on top of it. I thank everybody's attention and this committee is now adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 o'clock p.m., June 10, 2008.)

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South Atlantic Fishery Management Council 2007- 2008 Council Membership

COUNCIL CHAIRMAN:

George J. Geiger ✓
566 Ponoka Street
Sebastian, FL 32958
772/388-3183 (ph)
georgejgeiger@bellsouth.net

COUNCIL VICE-CHAIRMAN

Charles Duane Harris ✓
105 Demere Retreat Lane
St. Simons Island, GA 31522
912/638-9430 (ph)
seageorg@bellsouth.net

Deirdre Warner-Kramer
Office of Marine Conservation
OES/OMC
2201 C Street, N.W.
Department of State, Room 5806
Washington, DC 20520
202/647-3228 (ph); 202/736-7350 (f)
Warner-KramerDM@state.gov

Robert H. Boyles, Jr. ✓
S.C. Dept. of Natural Resources
Marine Resources Division
P.O. Box 12559
(217 Ft. Johnson Road)
Charleston, SC 29422-2559
843/953-9304 (ph)
843/953-9159 (fax)
boylesr@dnr.sc.gov

Wilson Laney ✓
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
South Atlantic Fisheries Coordinator
NCSU Campus
P.O. Box 33683
Raleigh, NC 27695-7617
(110 Brooks Ave
237 David Clark Laboratories,
Raleigh, NC 27695-7617)
919/515-5019 (ph)
919/515-4415 (f)
Wilson_Laney@fws.gov

Dr. Brian Chevront ✓
N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries
P.O. Box 769 (3441 Arendell St.)
Morehead City, NC 28557
252/726-7021 Ext. 8015 (ph)
252/726-6187
brian.chevront@ncmail.net

EILEEN DOUGHTNEY ✓

Dr. Roy Crabtree ✓
Regional Administrator
NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Region
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
727/824-5301 (ph); 727/824-5320 (f)
roy.crabtree@noaa.gov

David M. Cupka ✓
P.O. Box 12753
Charleston, SC 29422
843/795-8591 (hm)
843/870-5495 (cell)
dkcupka@bellsouth.net

Benjamin M. "Mac" Currin ✓
801 Westwood Drive
Raleigh, NC 27607
919/881-0049 (ph)
mcurrin1@bellsouth.net

Anthony L. Iarocci ✓
236 Guava Avenue
Grassy Key, FL 33050
305/743-7162 (ph); 305/743-2697(f)

Rita G. Merritt ✓
38 Pelican Drive
Wrightsville Beach, NC 28480
910/256-3197 (ph); 910/256-3689 (f)
miridon@ec.rr.com

John V. O'Shea
Executive Director
Atlantic States Marine Fisheries
Commission
1444 Eye Street, N.W., 6th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
202/289-6400 (ph); 202/289-6051 (f)
voshea@asmfc.org

Lt. Brian Sullivan ✓
U.S. Coast Guard
Brickell Plaza Federal Building
909 S.E. First Avenue
Room 876/ DRE
Miami, FL 33131-3050
305/415-6781 (ph)
305/415-6791 (f)
Brian.A.Sullivan@uscg.mil

ROBERT PRESTON ✓
(GOLDEN TILFISHERMAN)
BRUCE IRWIN ✓

Mark Robson ✓
Director, Division of Marine Fisheries
Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
620 S. Meridian Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399
850/487-0554 (ph); 850/487-4847(f)
mark.robson@myfwc.com

Susan Shipman ✓
Director, Coastal Resources Division
GA Dept. of Natural Resources
One Conservation Way, Suite 300
Brunswick, GA 31520-8687
912/264-7218 (ph); 912/262-2318 (f)
sshipman@dnr.state.ga.us

Tom Swatzel ✓
P.O. Box 1311
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576
(C/O Capt. Dick's Marina
4123 Hwy 17 Business,
Murrells Inlet, SC 29576)
843/357-1673 (ph)
tom@capticks.com

John A. Wallace
5 Buddy Beckham Road
P.O. Box 88
Meridian, GA 31319
912/437-6797 (ph); 912/437-3635 (f)
Ga_shrimp@darientel.net

BILL SHARP - FWCV ✓

MONICA SMIT BRUNELLO ✓

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LAPP Committee Meeting
Orlando, FL
Tuesday, June 10, 2008

NAME &
ORGANIZATION

AREA CODE &
PHONE NUMBER

P.O. BOX/STREET
CITY, STATE & ZIP

Tricia Choc

DOLOGC 202 482-4265

Washington DC

Dave Allison Oceana

202-833-3900

DC

Karen Raine

6CE/SE

Bill Koenig

305-394-5333

129 TRQUESTA ST TAMERION, FL

Libby Fetherston

DC-FL

Bruce Irwin

305-743-7938

1546 Eastward Ho Lane Marathon FL

Dan Whittle

919-931-9677

Tom Burgess

910-327-3528

Chad

252-986-2575

Hatteras, N.C. 27943

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
North Charleston, SC 29405
843-571-4366 or Toll Free 866/SAFMC-10

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NAME &
ORGANIZATION

AREA CODE &
PHONE NUMBER

P.O. BOX/STREET
CITY, STATE & ZIP

Jim Reeves/Fisherman 772-332-2828 14390 Orange Ave, Ft. Pierce, FL 34945

Beth Curry

"

"

Julie DeFilippi

202-216-5090

1444 E. 1st. NW, Washington DC 20005

Eileen Daugherty EDF 843-737-4466

2182 Edisto Ave., Charleston, SC 29405

Scott Zimmerman 309-619-0039

PO Box 501404 Marathon FL 33050

BUFFY BAUMANN, OCEANA 202.833.3900

WASHINGTON, DC 20036

Robert CARDI 772-460-2108

FT. P. FL.

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
North Charleston, SC 29405
843-571-4366 or Toll Free 866/SAFMC-10