

# Overview

## **Protected Resources Committee**

September 15, 2016  
Marina Inn at Grande Dunes  
8121 Amalfi Place  
Myrtle Beach, SC

The Protected Resources Committee will meet to discuss South Atlantic protected species and receive updates on associated regulatory/management actions that the Council should be knowledgeable of when managing South Atlantic fisheries. SERO Protected Resource Division (PRD) staff will report on (1) protected resources-related updates for the South Atlantic region, (2) Snapper Grouper Fishery Biological Opinion, and (3) Nassau Grouper 12-Month Determination. Following, the Council will be briefed by US Fish and Wildlife Service staff on the status updates for (4) Atlantic Sturgeon and Red Knot. The Committee will discuss potential action for each item, provide guidance to staff, and address issues under Other Business as needed.

### 1. South Atlantic Protected Resource-Related Updates (Attachment 1)

Staff from the SERO Protected Resources Division (PRD) will provide the Committee with an update on protected resources issues in the South Atlantic region.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Provide input on the updates, discuss, and take action as necessary.

### 2. Snapper Grouper Fishery Biological Opinion (Attachment 2)

Due to the SAFMC recommended action of reducing the spatial and temporal scope of the black sea bass pot fishery closure through Regulatory Amendment 16 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region, the snapper grouper fishery is being reviewed to determine its effects on protected species. The biological opinion, when completed, will include anticipated effects of reducing the black sea bass pot fishery closure, an incidental take statement, reasonable and prudent measures to reduce takes/interactions of protected resources, and terms and conditions. The biological opinion is expected to be completed so that the black sea bass pot fishery can open November 2016.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Review the comments and provide input as necessary.

### 3. Nassau Grouper 12-Month Determination (Attachment 3)

On September 2, 2014, NMFS released a finding that Nassau Grouper warranted listing as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. SERO Protected Resources Division Staff will give an update on the determination and next steps in the process.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Discuss and take action as necessary.

4. Updates on Atlantic Sturgeon and Red Knot Listing

Bob Beal, Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, and Wilson Laney, US Fish and Wildlife Service, will give an update on the Atlantic Sturgeon stock assessment under preparation by ASMFC and status of Red Knot Critical Habitat being prepared by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

**REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION:** Discuss and take action as necessary.