



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Charlie Phillips, Chair | Captain Mark Brown, Vice Chair
Gregg T. Waugh, Executive Director

AGENDA Spiny Lobster Committee

Westin Jekyll Island
110 Ocean Way
Jekyll Island, GA 31527

Monday, March 5, 2018 – 12:30 P.M. (Times subject to change)

Approval of Agenda – Jessica McCawley

Approval of December 2017 Committee minutes – Jessica McCawley

1. Status of Spiny Lobster Catches vs. ACL (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)
 - a. Letter from NMFS regarding 2016/2017 landings – Christina Wiegand
2. Status of Amendments under Formal Review
 - a. Spiny Lobster Regulatory Amendment 4
3. Spiny Lobster Amendment 13 (*Attachments 2a-2c*)
 - a. Review scoping comments – Christina Wiegand
 - b. Review draft options paper – Christina Wiegand
 - c. **Committee action:** review and approve actions and alternatives; modify the document as needed – Jessica McCawley

Other Business – Jessica McCawley

Adjourn – Jessica McCawley

Committee Members

Jessica McCawley, Chair
Ben Hartig, Vice-Chair
Chester Brewer
Chris Conklin
Roy Crabtree
LCDR Jeremy Montes

Attachments

Attachment 1a: Spiny Lobster 2016/2017 catches

Attachment 1b: Letter from NMFS regarding spiny lobster ACL overages

Attachment 2a: Spiny Lobster Amendment 13 Scoping Comments
Attachment 2b: Draft Spiny Lobster Amendment 13 Options Paper
Attachment 2c: Spiny Lobster Amendment 13 Decision Document

Staff: Christina Wiegand

OVERVIEW

Spiny Lobster Committee

The Committee will approve of minutes from December 2017 meeting and agenda.

1. **Status of Spiny Lobster Catches vs. ACL – (Attachments 1a and 1b)**

Description: Council staff will present an overview of 2016-2017 landings (commercial and recreational) for spiny lobster. Spiny lobster harvest in the EEZ off Florida and in Florida waters is closed from April 1 through August 5, except for the two-day recreational sport season at the end of July. Spiny lobster harvest in the EEZ off Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina is open all year. **Attachment 1a** includes 2016-2017 landings, which exceeded the Annual Catch Target (ACT) of 6.59 million pounds. Accountability measures for spiny lobster require the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils to arrange a review panel when the ACT is exceeded. In June 2017, the Councils approved Regulatory Amendment 4 which would increase the ACT to 8.64 million pounds. **Attachment 1b** contains a letter from the National Marine Fisheries Service stating that given Regulatory Amendment 4 is currently in rulemaking, they feel that a review panel at this time is unnecessary.

Required Committee Action: None.

2. **Status of Amendments Under Formal Review**

Description: Spiny Lobster Regulatory Amendment 4 was approved for formal review by the South Atlantic and Gulf Councils in June 2017 and was transmitted for formal review on July 12, 2017. The proposed rule published on February 2, 2018, and the comment period closes March 4, 2018.

Required Committee Action: None.

3. **Spiny Lobster Amendment 13 – (Attachment 2a-2c)**

Description: A bully net is a type of gear for harvesting spiny lobsters that generally consists of a mesh net with a long handle. Participation in the bully net fishery has steadily increased in recent years. Constituents expressed concerns to Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) about increased participation in the open-access spiny lobster bully net component of the spiny lobster fishery along with growing conflicts between recreational bully netters, commercial bully netters, and other members of the public such as homeowners. Based on stakeholder input, FWC approved a set of regulations that would help quantify participation in the commercial bully net fishery, while continuing to allow entry into the fishery, and address other stakeholder concerns.

The Spiny Lobster Fishery Management Plan had included a protocol and procedure for Enhanced Cooperative Management for spiny lobster, including circumstances under which NMFS can update the federal regulations with no formal action required from the Councils. The protocol and procedure need to be updated before federal regulations can be revised to align with FWC regulations.

At the December 2017 meeting, Council staff presented an options paper for Spiny Lobster Amendment 13 which contained actions that would update federal regulations to align with State of Florida bully-net regulations and update the protocol and procedure for enhanced cooperative management. Additionally, the Committee reviewed a table of additional inconsistent regulations between the State of Florida and the Code of Federal Regulations. Items that could be updated in the codified text next time spiny lobster is revised and items that would require Council action were discussed. The Council approved a motion to add actions addressing bag limits, degradable panels, and artificial habitat in the EEZ off Florida to Spiny Lobster Amendment 13.

Status of Amendment: Draft options paper.

Required Committee Action: Review draft options; modify as necessary; approve actions and alternatives to be analyzed.

Other Business