

**SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL**  
**SNAPPER GROUPER COMMERCIAL SUBCOMMITTEE**

**North Charleston Marriott**  
**North Charleston, South Carolina**  
**September 15, 2025**

**Transcript**

**Snapper Grouper Commercial Sub-Committee**

Jessica McCawley, Chair	James G. Hull, Jr.
Kerry Marhefka, Vice Chair	Trish Murphey
Amy W. Dukes	Charlie Phillips
Dewey Hemilright	Andy Strelcheck

**Council Members**

Tom Roller	Gary Borland
Dr. Carolyn Belcher	Judy Helmey

**Council Staff**

John Carmichael	Dr. Julie Neer
Myra Brouwer	Ashley Oliver
Dr. Chip Collier	Emily Ott
Julia Byrd	Dr. Mike Schmidtke
Dr. Judd Curtis	Rachael Silvas
John Hadley	Nicholas Smillie
Kathleen Howington	Suzanna Thomas
Allie Iberle	Christina Wiegand
Kim Iverson	Meg Withers
Kelly Klasnick	

**Attendees and Invited Participants**

Monica Smit-Brunello	Rick DeVictor
Chris Schieble	DeLaney Farrell
Sonny Gwin	Kristen Foss
Kathy Knowlton	

**Observers and Participants**

Other observers and participants attached.

The Snapper Grouper Commercial Subcommittee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened at the North Charleston Marriott, North Charleston, South Carolina, on Monday, September 15, 2025, and was called to order by Chairman Jessica McCawley.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. First up this morning, we're going to dive into the Snapper Grouper Commercial Subcommittee, and the committee members are myself, Kerry Marhefka, Amy Dukes, Jimmy Hull, Trish Murphey, Charlie Phillips, Andy Strelcheck, and Dewey Hemilright. All right. The first order of business is Approval of the Agenda. Are there any modifications to the agenda? I think -- Kerry, do you have an item for Other Business?

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes, and I think, under Other Business, we'll talk about -- Begin the discussions about the Florida -- Not Florida, and sorry, but the use of the word of "sale" as it relates to the ending of a trip, and let's just say that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Anybody else? Any other items, that we know about at this point, for Other Business? All right. Any objections to approval of the agenda as modified? All right. The minutes, and so we need to approve the minutes from the June 2025 meeting. Any substantive changes to the minutes from our last subcommittee meeting? Any objection to approval of those minutes? All right. We'll consider those approved. Then, next up, the first item is Updated Commercial Snapper Grouper Landing Analysis, and we're going to pass it over to Chip.

DR. COLLIER: Thank you, and let me pull up the Attachment 1 there, and so this is basically an update of the version that I supplied to you in June, I believe, and, in June, you had requested some additional analyses, but let me highlight exactly what this is looking for. The council was interested in looking at species that might be having short seasons, or being impacted by trip limits, and so what this goes through is it identifies the top-ten species, then it goes through the species that have trip limits, identifies whether or not those species are getting to the ACL, and then the final part that you all asked for was looking at where, maybe within the trip limits, some of these species are getting, and so we did an analysis for all the species that are getting to the trip limits.

Diving into the pretty pictures, we'll start at Table 1. You can see the top-ten species based on landings from 2019 to 2023. These are commercial landings. Yellowtail snapper is by far the highest-landed species, followed by vermilion snapper, and then following -- The lowest one in the top ten was blueline tilefish, at just over 100,000 pounds per year.

Looking at some of the species that have trip limits and whether or not they're achieving their ACL, you can see, for the most part, many of these species are getting close to their ACL, with the exception of maybe the jacks complex, which is at around 80 percent, as well as black sea bass, although I don't have that listed up here.

Going down to Table 3, and this is where you all had some questions on exactly where the commercial fishery was achieving trip limits, whether -- Trying to figure out whether or not the trip limit was preventing some of the ACLs from being met.

Once again, in A, we have all the species that have a trip limit on them, and this is for all trips, and then B is for SG 1 trips. For the most part, I had applied a 95 percent -- If people were getting to 95 percent of the trip, I was assuming that that trip was getting close to the trip limit. People are

not trying to go over the trip limit, and so they might stop before, and just I had created a false number, I guess, in order to do the analysis.

Now, if you go down to Figures 4, 5, and 6, and I'll explain using 4 a little bit. We were struggling, as staff, trying to figure out exactly what this means, and so, if you look at Figure 4, we have two examples, where I think it helps to identify what these things are doing, and so, in the top one, in red, we have a species that appears to be impacted by the trip limit, and you see that by you see decreasing number of trips getting to that 100 percent of the trip limit. On the X-axis down here is the percent of the trip limit, and then on the Y-axis is the number of trips, and you can see it just dive off at the end, indicating that people are stopping before they're getting to the trip limit.

For this other one, in blue, we have another species that doesn't appear to be impacted by the trip limit, because you see it drop in the beginning, but then it levels off, and so they're not getting close to their trip limit, and this was for a species that was fairly small, and also had a pretty big trip limit, and so they should have been able to fish longer and able to achieve the trip limit.

Then I broke it up. I have a bunch of different species here. All these have trip limits on them, and, Figure 5, these are some of the species that I did not think appeared to be impacted by the trip limit, maybe with the exception of black sea bass pot or blueline tilefish, but you can see, several of them, they really don't even get to 10 percent of the trip limit, even without -- Or they don't even get to 10 percent of the trip limit. Some of the species, like black sea bass pot, and there are several of them that are getting to 50 percent of the trip limit, but it drops down pretty quickly.

Going into Figure 6, this is where you begin to see species that appear to be impacted by the trip limit. The top one, or the one I think that most exemplifies it, is red snapper, a seventy-five-pound trip limit. You can see that they begin to stop catching the fish around 90 percent. At 95 percent, it seems to pick up.

Snowy grouper is another one that has a very low trip limit, and you can see that impact, and then, going over to gag, prior to the most recent ACL change, you can see it was fairly flat, but this pink line is 2024, and that's when the trip limit got more restrictive on gag, and you can see it beginning to have an impact there, and so that was the update for this information. Do you all have any additional questions in regards to this paper?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Chip. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes, and this is great information. I'm still wrapping my brain around it. Can we look at vermilion snapper in Figure 6, and so, if I'm understanding, reading the graph correctly, that actually more closely reflects the species in Figure 5, in my mind, and so it's not necessarily trip limited that's stopping these trips. Am I reading that correctly?

DR. COLLIER: Yes, you are, and I have an issue with being balanced, and so, if I were to put vermilion snapper in the above graph, you would have had an unbalanced graph, and so that's why it's down there. Sorry for my neuroses.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Other questions about this data? Amy.

MS. DUKES: First, Chip, thank you very much for doing this frequency distribution analysis. This is kind of exactly what I was after, and the juice was worth the squeeze, and so I really do appreciate your time, and I think I'm okay for questions. I just really wanted to say thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Amy. Other questions? All right. I don't -- Wait. Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Thank you, Chip. Does any of this change with state-by-state, looking at what's landed in state-by-state, versus lumping all this together, because, in some states, the impact might be greater than others, and I would just -- It all looks -- You know, because if the trip impact affects a few fishermen in one state, to me, that's just as important of looking at the trip variance, or something like that, and I was just wondering.

I don't think there needs to be any additional information, but just wondering about that for in the future, looking at where, state-by-state, what fisheries happen, because I believe that's going to be able to tell us what's going on in a better picture. We've got the SG 1, and different things like that, but to look at really what's being landed in each state I think would help, given the brevity of our industry, and what's left. Thank you.

DR. COLLIER: Thank you for the question. I did not dive into the details of how state-by-state - - If different states were achieving the ACL or not. I think that could provide some additional information, and I'll look into it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Any other questions? All right. I don't see additional hands. I guess, thank you for this, Chip, and don't go far. We might have more questions, but, Mike, do we now need to dive into Amendment 60?

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Yes.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: All right, and so we're coming back to Amendment 60, and we've got a discussion document here for you, and so, initially, there was some background information, and there have been a few requests in previous meetings, just to kind of have recaps of previous meetings, and so you have links available to you to the June 2025 subcommittee report, as well as the Snapper Grouper Committee report from that meeting, and so those are all available for your reference there.

At this meeting, I'll give a summary of the scoping comments that were received. We conducted scoping from July 25 through August 8, in between last meeting and this meeting, and so I'll give a brief summary of some of the scoping comments, provide you the links where you can take a look at the actual comments themselves, and then we'll look into the actions that have been proposed thus far along the lines of this amendment.

What we're looking for, from the staff end at this point, is we're looking for direction from the subcommittee on what actions, and what range of alternatives, the IPT should develop in this amendment going forward, and so that's what we'll be looking for within this meeting, and then a brief recap and review of the timeline that we're looking at.

Getting into the scoping comments, as we've kind of done for the last several discussion documents, I kind of have them parsed out. One is addressing the major issue of the SG 1 permits, and the other addressing the major issue of trip efficiency, and so, for the SG 1 permits, we really had kind of two main questions that were posed to the public within this context. One was discussing the two-for-one policy, and what perspectives were on whether it should be removed, as well as what the impact of that policy has been on the fishery, and then the other was talking about, if the two-for-one policy is removed, is there some type of other requirement that should be put in place for being able to attain a SG 1 permit.

Regarding the removal of the two-for-one policy, there were mixed perspectives, and you can kind of see a bit of the breakdown of the reasoning for these different perspectives. There were some comments that were against removal of the two-for-one policy, and some that supported removal of the two-for-one policy, and, like I said, there are brief rationale in the bullets there, but I would also encourage you to look at the actual comments themselves, to get a bit more detail on what these stakeholders felt for their perspectives.

Next, looking at the possibility of some different requirement, if the two-for-one policy is removed, what would be a different requirement to acquire or retain an SG 1 permit, and there were a few comments that did support some level of activity, or a participation requirement, if the two-for-one policy is removed, and there were also some comments that were against that type of requirement, and so, again, not really a clear, decisive voice from the stakeholders. It was kind of a mixed perspective on both of those issues.

Next, looking into trip efficiency, a lot of this discussion had to do with the possibility of dynamic trip limits. That's kind of the term that we're going with for the time being, and that could be either a step-up or a step-down, whichever form that takes, but that's what we're referring to with that term "dynamic trip limits".

We had a couple of comments that stated that the current trip limits were restrictive of their harvest. Some of the species that they identified were restricting were gag, red snapper, and hogfish. There were quite a few comments that did support the use of dynamic trip limits in some way, shape, or form. These comments did have some variation in the type of dynamic trip limit that they were supportive of. Some were in preference of a step-up, and some were in preference of a step-down, and some were in preference of kind of a mixed bag, depending on the species that you're looking at, but there was quite a bit of widespread support for the use of dynamic trip limits in some type of form.

There were comments that expressed some support for a non-target or out-of-season allowance for commercial harvest. There was a comment that specifically noted that it would be beneficial for this type of allowance for red snapper.

There were a couple of comments that stated opposition to any requirement for a hail-in and hail-out or VMS. That is something that has been brought up from the law enforcement end, in terms of being able to enforce especially the multiday trip limits, is where it got brought up within the last meeting. There were several comments that supported the allowance of multiday trip limits. A couple of them noted specifically vermilion snapper would benefit from that type of regulation.

Then there were a few comments that also supported changing the gear requirements that would allow transitioning between gear types and using multiple styles of fishing, or fishing for multiple species within a trip, and one of those comments did note that this type of action would be consistent with some of the executive orders that have been issued related to commercial fishing.

Then, finally, there were a couple of comments out of Florida that discussed the enforcement of trip limits, and this is something that I think is kind of motivating, and along the lines of Kerry's other business that is going to be brought up, and so I'm going to kind of park that for now, and that's something that can be brought up when we get to the Other Business portion of the meeting, and so I'll pause here and see if there are any questions about the comments that we received during scoping.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Mike. Any questions, and we can talk about some of these more as we go through each of the actions for the document, too. Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: It might not be to the comments of this, but I was wondering, in this analysis, was there anything done to show how many corporate permits there was, and how many singles there were, and in which state, and my reason for asking that is some of these things might affect one state more than others, and it would be interesting, and not to hold any of this up, but to see where the single permits, in what states they lie, and where the corporate permits lie.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: I don't think that we've looked at differences by permit type at this point, but that's something that, as we move forward with, you know, the analysis for this amendment, that we can take into account and present to you all as we develop it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Any other questions? Charlie.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, not really a question, but, to Dewey's point, especially for the corporate permits, as they get sold, the corporation often stays in the original state, and then it's registered as a foreign entity, or whatever, in the state that you're working out of, and so it may -- If you do a corporate, where they're registered, it may not tell you what you want to know.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: To that point, yes, and I'm in that same ballpark, a Florida corporate with a North Carolina Harvest, but I think it would just -- Maybe some way, if we look at the singles or something, just to see what the effect is, or could be, and where it's going to happen at or whatever, that movement. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Any other questions? Amy.

MS. DUKES: Since we're talking about permits, would it be okay to ask if some of these analysis are going to be more readily available for council staff to be able to do, based on the permit system in the SERO office being working correctly, functioning correctly, sir, Andy?

MR. STRELCHECK: Yes, and so thanks, Amy, for the question, and so, in terms of providing data, I think it depends on the type of data you're querying the permits database for, and so information about corporate permits versus individual permits should be something we can provide and readily available. I was going to update the council at my briefing later this afternoon, but I'll let the council know that we're working on our 2.0 system, to roll it out sometime in October. We

hope that that will fix a number of the bugs that have been plaguing the system up to this point, and allow for better querying of the data, like you're suggesting.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Andy. Other questions? All right. Back to you, Mike.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: All right. Thank you. Now we're going to be going down into the draft actions that have been discussed thus far, and so, at this point, we kind of have the information, and the questions, that were posed within scoping that are listed there.

What we're looking for, kind of coming out of the scoping phase of this, is whether you all want to keep this action and tell the IPT to develop it within the amendment, and then we are looking for guidance from the subcommittee on what should the range of alternatives be that the IPT is exploring within each of the draft actions.

First of all, looking into the action that would revise the two-for-one snapper grouper commercial unlimited permit policy, or, well, I guess we'll pause here and see -- Turn it back to the subcommittee, and looking to -- Do you want this action in the amendment, and what are potential alternatives that you want included underneath this action?

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes, and so I absolutely think we need to leave this in here. I think, for one action, it's as simple -- I know we like to have three, but I do think it's as simple as we have two-for-one or we don't have two-for-one, as a range of alternatives, if that's okay, but I think one of the things we need to discuss, under this permit issue, is this concept of --

I don't like this term, and this is not where I'm going, but I think you'll know what I mean when I say like use-it-or-lose-it, some sort of, you know, what is our vision, and this is something a little bit we'll get into later in the week, but sort of I would like us to be thoughtful about what our vision for these permits looks like in the future of this fishery. Are we, as a group, wanting to prevent, you know, sort of speculating, investing armchair, you know, owners, or not, and then, when you think about anything that has some sort of use requirement, then you have to, obviously, get into the weeds with, well, what if I had, you know, cancer, and I couldn't fish for two years, and like it gets very complicated, but, if we're going to include it, this is the moment to have a discussion about do we want to consider these permits in the future, how they stay in circulation, and how they're used, if that makes sense.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, that does make sense. Charlie.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Madam Chair, and, Kerry, I get it. We ideally want these permits to be fishing, but, on the other hand, how into the weeds do we want to get, and I would probably not be inclined to go to a use-it-or-lose-it kind of thing. I know too many people that just sit with boats, rebuilding them, I mean literally for years, and it's not just the boats. I tie boats up because I don't have captains, and I won't go into the reasons, that we all know, and so I wouldn't go into the use-it-or-lose it.

Plus, if you've got permits, or boats, for whatever reason, and let's say fish prices are down, or whatever the case may be, they kind of fill that void, and so, when you need the production, then

you've got boats that you can bring into production, and then, if you don't, and they're sitting there, you're not forcing them to put product on the market that the market may not need, and so I would be inclined not -- Just to keep it simple. Thanks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. Other thoughts? Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: The Gulf Council is wrestling with very similar issues with their IFQ program, in terms of, you know, how do you provide access to new entrants, and how do you ensure that the quota share is kept in the hands of the fishermen, and I think my recommendation is -- I think these are concepts worth pursuing. I think it will really bog down the amendment if we include them here, and I think it would be beneficial to streamline the amendment just by looking at the two-for-one policy kind of at face value, as it stands today. Then if we want to consider some of these other concepts, that those come later.

The other thing I'll note is, embedded in this is, you know, the decision for the two-for-one was related to goals about reducing capacity in this fishery, and so I think we'll want to have some discussion about what our goals are for the commercial sector, and how do they align with, you know, any changes to the permitting requirements going forward to meet, you know, any of those revised or new goals for the commercial sector.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Kerry. I'm sorry. Dewey, then Kerry.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I wouldn't be in favor of a use-or-lose-it. I believe there's -- As to what Charlie said, and some of Kerry's thoughts, that there's some more stuff that could be weeded out here, for discussion purposes, and my thinking in this is fishermen, that are commercial fishermen, or tend to do that, are not going to go buy permits if they can't make a living, or something to that aspect.

The other end of that is the speculative permit bank, and all the others, which I tend to -- I'm tending to -- I think on what the commercial fisherman's going to do, and how that permit is going to stay in commercial fishing hands, potentially, and not stacking, a permit bank, and all the other things, or going in to subsidize somebody's alternative fishing, and so that's kind of my thoughts on how to keep it simple, and move on, and, maybe after the next amendment, you figure out something else to fine-tune something, if you choose. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I just have a process question. Mike, the AP is meeting in October, and where would that fall, in terms of what they'll be seeing, as far as how fleshed out we get for them?

DR. SCHMIDTKE: So we were planning on having some time set aside for the AP to discuss this in October, and I think it would probably be in the range of showing them the actions, and the range of alternatives, that have been discussed at this meeting. If you would rather it be more fleshed out before it goes to the AP -- The timeline that we are looking at for this meeting, if I remember correctly, is to have -- Well, it's that there would be a draft amendment presented to you all in March, and so that would be potentially when you would consider it for public comment, and, I mean, there's the AP meeting in April, if you wanted them to see it then, but, if you want

them to see it earlier, then there is time set aside, within kind of the draft list, where they could talk about it in October.

MS. MARHEFKA: I'm comfortable, and I don't -- We don't need to rush it through. I think maybe what I was hoping we will do at this meeting, and I think what we're doing right now though, is removing anything that is a non-starter for this body, so that, when they see it, they can focus on, you know, maybe getting a little bit into the things we do want to do. Does that make sense? Is that sort of where we're at?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Jimmy.

MR. HULL: Thank you. Just to get warmed up here, so I really like what Andy said about trying to keep this simple. Do we want a two-for-one, or do we not? You know, don't get into the weeds on that, and, as far as the use-it-or-lose-it idea, you know, fishermen need flexibility, and so I hold a lot of different permits, and you guys already know all this, and sometimes I may not target a species for a permit for some period of time, but then, all of a sudden, I have to, and it's available, the resource is available, and so I do, and so, you know, I'm opposed to that. There could be another criteria we could come up with, that you know, the purchaser has to be a qualified -- How do you qualify them as a commercial fishing entity, and so maybe they do have some landings history or something that you have to look at. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Any other thoughts on the two-for-one? All right. We're going to move to possible Action 2, and so it seemed like there was a consensus that we're definitely putting Action 1 in the document. All right. Moving on to Action 2.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: All right, and next we'll be looking at Action 2. This is looking at a framework for dynamic trip limits. These would be those that vary throughout the season. You all have talked about, you know, one form of these trip limits would be step-ups, where a lower trip limit is in place at the beginning of the season, and that trip limit is increased if the landings have not reached a specified threshold by a certain time in the season, and there also could be step-downs, where you have a higher trip limit to start the season, and that trip limit is decreased if the landings hit threshold percentages of the ACL throughout the season.

I think some of the questions, and some of the things that the IPT would need some information on in developing this type of action, would include step-ups or step-downs, and, you know, do you want both or either of those to be included within the range of alternatives, and then, also, thinking about how general this type of policy would be.

Is this something where you all are establishing that the council would be incorporating this, you know, on a species-by-species basis, or would this be a general thing throughout the snapper grouper commercial fishery, and so kind of getting some information and discussion on how you would want these types of alternatives to be developed.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thoughts? Charlie.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, I think we're going to have to get a lot of feedback from Andy on this. You know, obviously, if we're not overfished, or not overfishing, something like vermilion snapper, my preference would be start with the higher trip limits, and then step it down if necessary,

because, if you do it the other way, and say we start at the lower trip limits, or the thousand, and then we have cold water sea in the summer, then we -- I don't care what we do, and we can't step it up enough to get the ACL, but, if we start high, and then drop it if we need to, that would be my preference, but I don't know how we're going to pick those numbers. Are we going to pick ranges here, say from -- Or are we going to work with Andy on what the numbers might work with, and so there's a lot of questions that I think Andy is going to have to help us answer. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: A couple points. We've done this before. I forget what we've had it -- Vermilion, right? At 75 percent, it changed, I think, and so I agree. I think your exact reasons for the step-down, versus step-up, is exactly what I was going to say, and so I agree with that.

I would like to point out that Mike made a note, which I'm very thankful for, a note that the harvest at or below the ACL is sustainable even with or without a rebuilding plan, and so, as long as we're in the ACL, it doesn't matter if it's a species that's being rebuilt or not. We just need to stay within the ACL, and I think it behooves us to reach the ACL, right, and so we don't want to discourage that.

As far as how we go about it, my preference might be a little clunky, but, in my mind, Mike, this is how I would want to do it, is we have the however many, the six, seven, eight species that have trip limits, and that we look at each species and decide what the top one is, what percentage, what it goes down to when it hits what percentage, and we do it species-by-species, of the species that we have trip limits for.

In the future, if we get a stock assessment for white grunt, and that was for you, and, if we get a stock assessment for white grunt, and we decide we need a commercial trip limit as a tool, then we do that within that amendment, and so I think we need to be specific to the species, and we don't -- It's not fifty-two of them, or whatever, and there's like eight or nine that I think we can do that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and I agree. I think we should be species-specific in this amendment, and then, in future amendments, it would just go with that. Okay. Andy, do you have any thoughts?

MR. STRELCHECK: Yes. Lots of thoughts. I have a few questions, but I guess, in terms of the dynamic trip limit, I'm trying to think how this could work that would provide maximum flexibility, and I almost see like a matrix for these species, where you could have a table that shows the trip limit at the start of the year, and then, whenever the step-down is, right, what the new trip limit would be, but it would be contingent on, you know, how much quota has been harvested by a certain time of the year.

For example, if you don't hit 75 percent until later in the year, you might have a higher trip limit to end the year than just an automatic step-down that forces you to go to some lower amount that might not allow you to harvest the catch limit. Similarly, I'm thinking about what happens if the trip limits were too restrictive, and you actually could have caught the quota, and is there a dynamic way that you could then allow the Regional Administrator, without having to come back to the council, to up the quota the next year to start the season, and so I don't know, without working

with my team, how we could design this, but I think there's some ideas there that we could focus on.

One bigger question, I think, to the commercial representatives on the council is we know we're in an environment where imports dictate a lot of the pricing of species, right, and trip limits are intended to make you less efficient, and, the lower the trip limit, the less efficient you are with regard to harvesting that species, and so, you know, is there any consideration about increasing trip limits at the expense of shorter seasons, and why, or why not, in terms of that would be good or bad for the industry, because it would make you more efficient on a trip-by-trip basis, but it may mean that there's less product available throughout the year.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and let's try to get those couple of questions answered. We were capturing the other things there, Mike was, on the screen, and so I saw Kerry, and then Charlie.

MS. MARHEFKA: To that, Andy, I mean, I don't know. Dewey and I are sitting here saying, and I realize everyone's business model is different, but I think, at least in the Carolinas, competing with imports is not sort of an issue for us. Our product is moving. There's much more demand than there is supply, and people may have different experiences, and maybe yellowtail or something is different, and so for me, that's not in my mind.

This body, the advisory panel, and many scoping meetings, we've had lots of discussions about the importance of having access to the fishery year-round, and for markets -- To keep the market available year-round, because what does happen, when you catch it up, even if it's efficient, is that fish is not available, and then you're creating an import problem, because you have nothing to source, in my mind.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. Charlie.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Maybe it's a little bit different in my world, because I have seen, especially when we haven't been catching something, and, all of a sudden, a lot of it starts coming in, it will crash the market, especially if the economy might be slow that particular, you know, season, and so you can cause some prices to drop if you bring fish in too fast, and it's a dance.

I actually had an importer call me last week and tell me that he was starting to buy more domestic fish, because of the tariffs, and they were cheaper than the imports. Now, is that going to stay like that? Who knows? You know, with the politics, and the tariffs, and all that other stuff, we have no idea, but, yes, you know, we still need to, you know, obviously concentrate on trying to keep the season open as long as we can, but catch the ACL, which we have not been catching, and maybe -- This might be, and I'm scared to mention it, but a time to talk about if, for some reason we don't catch the ACL, can we have some carryovers, and I hate to even bring the word up, but, you know, sooner or later, it's going to come up.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Fair enough. I heard the word "carryover". It's only 9:00 a.m. here, and I heard carryover. Okay, and so I had a couple more hands going up. Jimmy, and then Kerry.

MR. HULL: Thank you. For me, the idea of the dynamic trip limits is to affect the vessel, and the operators, of the vessel to be profitable and efficient. You know, I don't think we need to get

into trying to control the market, and be worried about that. If these vessels can't make money, they're going to disappear, and then we're never going to have any domestic product, and so, for me, it's all about helping these vessels to make more money, so that they can be profitable and, you know, stick around, and we can have production, and the demand for domestic seafood is really high, and so we need these vessels. The imports aren't going to take that away.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Well, since Charlie brought it -- I was actually going to say something like that, but you broke the ice. I can't remember -- For most of the species here, or several of them, we have split seasons. You know, we start January to whatever, end of June, and then July onward, and if you -- Is there the capability to carry over from the first part of the season to the second part of the season? I can't remember if we can already do that.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: For most species where we have a split season, yes, you're able to carry over from season one to season two, and not set up from year to year, but, within the same fishing year, yes.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I'm glad Charlie brought the word "carryover", and I was going to bring it up before the end of the discussion, but I think that's something that, you know, these ACLs are given, particularly the way SERO does the quota monitoring, where it's both forecasted ahead of time, and what's actually landed, and then it backtracks. We need this flexibility somehow to catch our ACLs, and so I don't see why there would be a problem with rollover, given that it's given to the commercial -- The ACL is given to you, and why not allow -- You know, I would like to see where like -- For instance, blue line, and we've left 7,000 pounds on the table, as of July 23, and we're not going to have that, and so what's wrong with the carryover part?

We're not talking tens of thousands of pounds of fish. You're not talking tens of thousands of dealers, and so we need to be more flexible in what's given to us, and how to harvest it, and so I think that's something that would be -- It may not be for every species, but I do think that we need to look at all options, for flexibility and with carryover. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: Just for Dewey's benefit, we are going to reopen blue line. We will likely be announcing tomorrow that it will be reopening next week, and so we are focused on trying to maximize the catch limit, especially when we fall short of harvesting the full catch limit, but, you know, point loud and clear with regard to -- I think looking at carryover is something that we had discussed in the ABC control rule. We haven't really come back to that, and there's some details, and nuances, with regard to kind of all the various requirements of how we can carry over quota, and the reasons for carrying over quota, and so it would be worth, you know, further considering here.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: To Andy's point, is there a type of template that shows, you know, like all the reasons, and like we've got to ask this question, but is there a piece of paper that says we can do carryover for this, this, and this, and we can't do carry over for that, that, and that, and somewhere, you know, that we know, as fishers, what could be done, and couldn't be done, or is it a case-by-case basis?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Mike.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: So, Dewey, that's spelled out in the ABC control rule amendment, and it is - - The way that that's written, it is on a case-by-case basis. Now, kind of hearing the conversation, and with the way that the subcommittee is talking about doing several species, those that have individual species trip limits, what this is forming into, in my head, is you all could potentially have an action that considers carryover for this group of species.

The way that the ABC control rule is set up is when the ABC is specified for a given species, say after a stock assessment, and you get the ABC value there, that it would be set to go into place with or without carryover, and so it would be, you know, kind of like an asterisk, or a point, you know, along with the ABC. The ABC is this number, and carryover is allowed for this species, and that's kind of how it would be formed.

In this sense, you could potentially have an action in here that states carryover would be allowed for these species at -- You know, at the ABCs where they exist right now. Obviously, we're not coming out of a new stock assessment for all of these.

Blueline is a kind of unique situation from some of the others, and there are -- Within the species that are here that have trip limits, we would have to look at those that have overfishing limits, because one of the criteria of being able to carry over is that an overfishing limit has to be specified, because you would be carrying over, within a given year, in the space between your ABC and your OFL, always making sure that you never exceed the OFL.

That is kind of the space in which carryover is allowed to operate from the ABC control rule, and so we would have to look into the species that we're talking about here, evaluate which ones have OFLs on the books, and which ones would have the capacity for carryover in that way, but, kind of coming out of the last assessment, because of the way that that resulted, we have an ABC for blueline tilefish from the most recent assessment, but an OFL, an overfishing limit, was not provided to go along with that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. We've had good discussion on this action. I think we're good here. We have a lot of thoughts, and maybe we can dive into the next action, and so, clearly, based on all this, we want to include Action 2 in the document. Okay. Yes.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: I guess, just clarifying, along with Action 2, do you all want us to bring back information concerning carryover for the same group of species that you're talking about in Action 2? I'm seeing heads nodding.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes. Heads are nodding yes.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Okay. Next, we're looking at the action that would consider establishment of multiday trip limits, potentially for a subset of snapper grouper species, and so some of the discussion that surrounded this action so far -- There was a kind of a concern potentially, from law enforcement, about being able to establish the -- Basically, the days that these fish were caught in, in the context of a multiday trip limit, and whether there would be some form of other requirement that would be connected to this action, or if law enforcement would be able to do it without something like a VMS or a hail-in and hail-out, and so that's just been some of the conversation that has surrounded this, and I'll look to the subcommittee for whether you want to include this action and what your range of alternatives should be.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Charlie.

MR. PHILLIPS Thank you, Madam Chair, and we've talked about this numerous times in the past, and we never could figure it out. You know, if we could put VMS on a boat and do -- You know, say pick some numbers on days, and things like that, you know, it's probably something that could possibly be done, but, on the other hand, if we get our trip limits right, I don't think we need to do this, and, if we can get carryover, so we're not going to lose any fish, and how simple do we want to keep this?

Is this going to slow up the timing of the amendment? Things like that come to mind, and so I'm -- I could live there, but I would like to think that we're going to fix it with our trip limits, that our dynamic trip limits is going to fix most of the problem, because, if you pick the trip limit up, say on vermilion, from 1,000 to 1,500 pounds, that pretty much takes care of, you know, a multiday trip, and so that's just my kind of initial thoughts, but I'm willing to listen.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Charlie, I think I agree with you wholeheartedly. I just want to make sure that I understand, and so, if we're talking about allowing multiday trip limits, it's more than to the benefit -- The boats that are already going out on multiple days, like my boat, would be held to 1,500 pounds for the whole trip, let's just say, for vermilion, if we change vermilion, but this would be to the benefit, and I'm not saying this is a bad thing, and I'm just making sure I understand this, but this would mostly be to the benefit of like the go-fast boats, the boats that are going out and taking one-day trips, and then they have two-day trips. Like I'm trying to picture how this works before I really weigh-in.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Mike.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: I think the way it's been brought up, at least within the advisory panel, has been within the context of probably something more like your boat, where it would be a boat that takes multiple-day trips, because, instead of being held to a single trip limit, if you are out for multiple days, then you would be able to catch more than a single trip limit. You would be able to catch say up to two trip limits within that trip, because you're out for multiple days. That's the way that it's been brought up within the AP discussion, and that kind of got to the council table as well.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Thanks for that clarification. That really helps me. I personally am not in favor of this. I think there might be a species that it may work for, but I think there are some species where you could really get yourself into big trouble. If you're letting a boat take a multiday trip limit on a gag grouper, and they landed on a gag spot, you could, in theory, wipe out a spot pretty easily, you know, and we have these limits for a reason, and so, you know, the way it stands now, I don't know that I'm supportive of it. I do think there's another way to get at it with the other things we're doing.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Kerry. Jimmy.

MR. HULL: Thank you. I just wanted to agree. I think, if we concentrate on the dynamic trip limits, it will take care of some of the issues that we're concerned about here, and not concentrate on this.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right, and it seems like the folks that have spoken were thinking we don't want to include this action in the document. Okay. I see heads nodding no.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Okay. Next, looking at the action that would consider establishing an incidental, or out-of-season, allowance for harvest, there was conversation about what species would potentially be included in this type of allowance, whether it would be, you know, just kind of a general poundage amount for any snapper grouper species, and there also would need to be a factoring in of any type of incidental, or out-of-season, allowance for harvest, in terms of the ACL.

Basically, if you allow fish to be caught outside of the season, then the ACL within the season would have to be reduced to kind of account for that out-of-season harvest, and so that's kind of some of the discussion surrounding this action so far, and so I'll turn it back to the subcommittee for your discussion and guidance on alternatives here.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thoughts on this action? Charlie.

MR. PHILLIPS: Well, because Kerry won't talk yet, you know, I guess a lot of our closed seasons are for spawning, and so I would be a little bit hesitant to -- We also know that, if you give a fisherman a trip limit of ten fish, they generally try to catch it, and so there's almost no such thing as incidental, in the scheme of things, and, again, I'm not sure you would get much bang for your buck, because, if you lower your numbers over here, so you can catch a handful of fish over there, I'm not really sure you get a lot for this, and, again, I would like to see this amendment kept as simple as possible. I'm not saying no, because if somebody can teach me a way to do this that makes sense, but I'm afraid that it might be too much sugar for a dime. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: You got me, and, no, because I was hoping you were going to come -- I think there's a way to make this work, and I was hoping that's what you were going to pipe in with, but, like you, I can only see the downsides, and I cannot figure out, in my mind, how to make this work. Like I love the idea in concept, because, in theory, if you -- You know, if you bring up a gag, or you bring up a snowy, you hate to throw it back, right?

That's crazy, but how do you -- If it is a spawning season, like, you know, obviously, we can't bring fish to the dock during spawning season, and other people can't either, you know, and so I hate to dismiss it out of hand, unless some genius can show up and tell us how to do this right, because I do think there is a way, and I just don't have it, and so, at this point, it might not be for this vehicle.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: Yes, and I like the concept, and I agree with Kerry's comments, and I guess one way I'm thinking about this is you could avoid retention during fixed season closures that are already specified on the books, right, and so this would be more for allowing, you know, out-of-season harvest after a catch limit is met, or after a certain amount of a catch limit has been met, and so I kind of think of this as more of like the dynamic trip limits as well, where you can get to a certain point in the year, 90 or 95 percent of the catch limit, and then really ratchet down on the trip limit to some lower amount.

The challenge that we have with the Fisheries Service is the projections, because we have to factor in late reporting, and we use a lot of historical data, and information, with regard to trends and patterns in the fishery, and so being able to predict, you know, the remaining 5 percent, or 10 percent, of the harvest can be very, very difficult for us, just given the limitations on timing of when reports are received.

MS. MCCAWLEY: It still sounds like dynamic trip limits might cover us. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Well, yes, and, to what Andy just said, while we haven't worked out carryover yet, we have successfully worked out how to dock what we went over the season before, and so you really would just be robbing Peter to pay Paul, I feel like, in that circumstance, and that leads to a lot of uncertainty, and I think what we all need, probably for our businesses, is some level of certainty, and so -- Yes. Stability.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay, and so it seems like -- Okay. go ahead, Jimmy.

MR. HULL: Just one question, and this will be directed to Mike, and so, at the AP, was there ever a discussion, or an example, given from a stakeholder to use this action in their fishing effort?

DR. SCHMIDTKE: I mean, I think the one that comes up probably most often is going to be red snapper oriented, catching, you know, commercial red snapper out of season, even if that's not the target species being gone after, but, if there is some ability to retain outside of the season, at a certain specified amount, or the other example is kind of what Kerry alluded to, and, you know, you bring up a grouper, or something, especially in like a deepwater context, where, if you throw that fish back, then that fish is very likely not going to survive anyway, and so being able to retain in that type of context as well, and so I think those are some of the examples that we've heard thus far surrounding this.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Other thoughts on this? Charlie.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess you probably could make an exception for deepwater species that you know are not going to live. Again, I don't know if it's worth the bang

for the buck, but that does make sense. It is logical that I could -- That something like red snapper that, right now, has got such a low catch level, and I would probably say no, and, yes, nobody wants to throw a gag grouper away, but, at least with a gag, you've got a shot at getting him down with a descending device. Snowy, not so much, or, a golden tile, not so much.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: I was actually thinking the same thing with Charlie, and maybe what you could do is just keep it to the deepwater groupers, and something we do in North Carolina, with the red drum, is you have to have other fish, to kind of keep you from, quote, unquote, targeting. You would have other fish in that, and so, if you caught a blueline tile -- If you were targeting blueline tile, and had blueline tile, and you brought up a snowy, then that may be a way to keep him, because you were out there blueline tile fishing, but that's just throwing an idea out. I don't know, again, if it's worth the squeeze, but that's something we do in North Carolina.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right, and so we've heard some comments of possibly doing this for some deepwater species that might not be descended well. What do we think about exploring that? I see some people nodding yes, and some people nodding no. I see thumbs-up from Andy. Okay, and so it seems like it's, yes, we're going to include it, and pay particular note to doing this for deepwater species, like groupers. Okay.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: All right, and then, finally, the last draft action is considering revision of existing stowage requirements for gear onboard, and this was brought up not in any way to expand the allowable gear that would be used in the fishery, but changing the stowage requirements, so that fishermen are more able to stow one gear and switch to another form of fishing within a given trip, and so that's kind of what's been discussed so far, and I'll turn it back to the subcommittee for discussion and guidance.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Jimmy.

MR. HULL: Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, and I support this. We need this flexibility, and, you know, the way that -- Obviously, it's illegal to use -- I'll just use the example of longline gear, which is what is important to me, and so, you know, it's illegal to use longline gear to harvest snapper and grouper, and so, obviously, we need to come up with a way, with a boat that's multi-permitted, that's using hand gear, rod-and-reel, to catch their snapper grouper species on a trip, and I'll just use the example for me.

We target the seventy-five pounds of red snapper. I mean, that's how desperate we are to try to make a living off of northeast Florida, and so we'll target those animals, but it's not enough to really make a profit, at the end of the day, and so we do have a shark fishery, and we could then go inshore and make a shark set on the beach, where we fish for sharks, and fill the box, generally, and then we have a profitable trip, and so this is something I'd like to see happen.

Now, how do you make it enforceable? Well, you know, longline gear is all about hooks, and so, if we can somehow get the unbaited hooks stowage below, zip tie fifty at a time together, and stow them while you're in the act of snapper grouper harvesting, and they're stowed. If they're not stowed, then you're breaking the law, but, when you're not harvesting snapper and grouper, then you can pull them out, and it takes a long time to cut bait and hook all those hooks up. It's not

something that happens quickly, and so I think it's doable, and I hope we can move it forward, because it would definitely be beneficial to the fishermen, you know, at least in my state.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Amy.

MS. DUKES: Thank you. Jimmy, I'm all for you, and I think having the availability to switch gears aboard a vessel really speaks to this idea of trip efficiency, and specifically with a longline, and then being able to hook-and-line for your snapper grouper. It's not unlike our commercial divers, that are allowed to dive and then do hook-and-line in between those areas, so they don't have any of the bends, and so, to me, I feel like it's an exemption for you, but not an exemption for them. Leveling the playing field here would be a good thing.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: Jimmy, are there any corresponding restrictions for sharks, HMS, that would prevent , in terms of the multiple gears, that you're aware of?

MR. HULL: None that I'm aware of, Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: Then a follow-up, and so stowage requirements, obviously, are enforceable on the water. What about some sort of notification requirement, if it was fairly simplistic, to let law enforcement know that you were on a trip and switching gears? Would that be palatable?

MR. HULL: Yes, and I have no issue with that. The tradeoff to have the ability to be able to have a profitable trip, you know, I'm willing to do anything, and, if you can figure out a way, if that helps law enforcement to that degree, certainly. I have no problem with that.

You know, in my mind, if, you know, I get intercepted by law enforcement, while I'm anchored up catching snapper, and so, you know, they're there, and, if they're doing their job, and they're patrolling, and intercepting, and observing, you know, it's enforceable, and, if you don't have that -- If we make it the hook stowage, if it's not stowed below, and they intercept you, you know, you're going to get written up with it, and so you're breaking the law, and so I think it is enforceable, to that degree. It's the same idea as if they intercept you and you don't have a descending device rigged and ready on deck, and then potentially you get -- They have to intercept you, and they have to be doing their job and patrolling.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Charlie, then Kerry.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, and this also applies to say if you're golden tile fishing. If you get out there, and the water is cold, and the fish aren't biting, and the tide is too bad, at least you can go inshore, and stow your gear, and try to pull some kind of trip together, you know, picking some amberjack, or beeliners, whatever, and so, yes, it really could give us a lot of flexibility, and some -- You know, if we need to call in, of course, you know, when you're way offshore, and maybe we could, you know, text in to law enforcement that we're switching gears, but, yes, it definitely could help the bottom line. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes, and I'm supportive of this. I do think it's going to get muddier as we really delve into it, but I'm hoping that we are -- We can come up with the solutions that -- I think law enforcement is going to give us a really hard time, but I'm willing to do whatever it takes to help work through it, I think, and the reason for me, and I just want to say this on the record, is, you know, I look back to this creation of this subgroup, and of this commercial subcommittee, and it was sort of this idea of sort of a high level view of how we can make this commercial snapper grouper fishery --

Like what do we want it to look like, and how can we make it better, because we haven't had time to focus on that, and I was sitting here, a second ago, feeling sort of that we're going to come out of it with removing the two-for-one, which, yes, and some trip limit changes, and I'm like is that really enough to change lives?

This definitely feels like this is part of the concept of how we allow commercial fishermen to have a broad portfolio, and to be able to be flexible and nimble, and so for -- That's something that I wanted to come out of this, and I think that this meets that objective, is we don't want to pigeonhole someone into one gear, you know, one group of species, and we really know that we all need to move around a lot to survive, and so, for that reason, even though I think it's going to be really complicated, I do support this, and, as we finish up talking about this, I would just like us all to sort of keep in mind that big overall goal of are we doing enough to really -- Are we doing everything we can to help this fishery.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Kerry. Mike, when does the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel meet again, and then when would they look at all of this?

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Around February, and so typically the beginning of the year, and so they would potentially look at this after you all have seen it one more time.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. It sounds like we're good with including Draft Action 5 in the document.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Just clarifying, and do we -- Do you all want us to develop -- Like I'm kind of envisioning this as possibly a sub-action under this one of a notification requirement. Go ahead and do that? Okay.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes. All right, and so that's all the actions, based on our discussion at the last meeting, and then we've already talked about the timeline a little bit, but we will definitely see this again in December. The subcommittee can look at it again in December. Any other discussions for Amendment 60? All right. I don't see any additional hands. That brings us to Other Business, and so I'm going to pass it to Kerry for the Other Business item.

MS. MARHEFKA: Look at all the time we have to talk about it. I'm just kidding, and so I've talked to a lot of you about it or you've received correspondence about it, but, earlier in this year, some people from north Florida, that fish out of like Mayport and Jacksonville, reached out to me, and I think -- I don't know how many people, and maybe everyone got the letter, and I wasn't paying attention, but, basically, real quick, it's that, if a fish house is closed on Sunday, and a boat came in on a Saturday, even if they offloaded their fish and stored it at the fish house and went back out fishing again, that was -- They were getting a violation, because it was considered the

fish hadn't technically been sold to the dealer, which apparently I learned, for the first time in thirty years, that the sale of the fish ends the trip, and not the offloading of the fish.

You know, I've had a lot of discussions with NOAA GC, and Andy, and they've been great about sort of staying on top of it, and talking to us about it, but Shep did send around language that did - - Actually, in the regs, it says sale, and it never occurred to me, in all my time on this council, that that was a thing. I thought it was once the fish was offloaded, and then the trip ended. We've all talked about the zillion ways in which sale does not -- That it cannot happen right at the time the fish is offloaded, for lots of reasons, that are very practical.

Also, it has been enforced differently within NOAA, as far as different states are being held to different standards for this provision. I don't ever think it was any of this council's intention to say, if you come in and your fish house is closed, then you can't go fishing again until they open up.

That doesn't meet the purpose of what we're trying to do with trip limits, and so I don't know if this is the place, because, quite frankly, in my mind, Amendment 60 is too slow to look at that regulatory language and remove the sale provision, but, since we're talking about -- Since we're on this commercial subcommittee, I figured I would at least bring it up here, just to see how other people felt about it, but I feel pretty strongly that I would like to make a change to that language. I just don't -- I don't think it was the intent of this body ever, and, how we do it, we have time to talk about this week.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thoughts? Charlie, and then Dewey.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Madam Chair, and we might have to clear it with Shep. or Andy, but, as you well know, a lot of fish houses, even if you unload on Monday, you're not getting paid for days, or, you know, I pay my guys when they unpack, but I'm probably more of the exception, but, if it's paperwork they need to show that some kind of transaction is taking place, I can envision somebody that put stuff in a cooler on Saturday, and I could text them a receipt that I've got fish. That should cover the sale, and then we don't really have to change anything.

The only thing we're changing is how we're doing our paperwork, and that should satisfy the sale requirements in the documents, I would think, but maybe Andy and Monica might could clarify, you know, exactly what they might call a sale, but I can easily text somebody, email somebody, you know, a document saying I received a basket of red snapper. I don't have to know the weights, per se, but I received a basket of red snapper, and, if I had to, I could leave some scales there, and they could weigh them and give me the weights, and I could still do it, and so maybe we can get some feedback on that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. I've got a lot of hands going up, and so I saw Monica's hand go up. I'm going to jump to her. Then the other people I have on the list are Dewey, then Jimmy, and then Andy.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Yes, and so it might be helpful to -- Here's what the first sentence of the commercial trip limit regulations state: Commercial trip limits are limits on the amount of the applicable species that may be possessed onboard, or landed, purchased, or sold from a vessel per day

If you wanted to change these kinds of requirements, I think you could probably do it via a framework. How you want to do it, of course, is going to be more complicated, and, Charlie, I understand what you're suggesting. I don't know that that gets to the problem that Kerry is bringing up though of a fish house being closed. I mean, if you're closed, how are you going to write a receipt, right? Maybe they'll go knock on your door at your house, and ask you for one, but there's a couple of different problems here, I think, that you might want to look at.

MS. MCCAWLEY: So I've got a lot of hands. Can you go to the back of the queue? Is that okay? All right. Dewey, Jimmy, Andy, Charlie. All right. Jimmy.

MR. HULL: Thank you, Madam Chair. I think changing the language would be the best alternative here, and, you know, just common sense in looking at, when the trip ends, when the vessel gets back to the dock, and offloads, the trip is over, right? It really defines the end of the trip better than when the sale is made, and so I think we should change language.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: Yes, and so there's the challenge of, obviously, enforceability on the water at-sea, before offload, and then after offload, right, and I think that's what I've heard a lot from Kerry and others talking about this issue, is that the trip ended, the fish were maybe offloaded to a cooler, and they weren't sold at that point, and a couple more trips were made, and then, all of a sudden, all of those are taken to a dealer to be sold, three days later, right, and so you're in possession of essentially multiple trip limits at the same time.

I'm supportive of looking into this. I think there's a delicate balance with regard to the enforceability, and that's why I note that. We've talked about everything from, you know, more of a paper trail, and we're going to have e-logbooks coming online in not too distant future, and so could we come up with ways to document when a trip limit is ended, to like we just talked about with more dynamic trip limits, especially because I think this is related to red snapper primarily, to have a higher trip limit on the weekend to accommodate the fact that fish houses are closed, to the more extreme, which is we have trip limits for red snapper, or whatever species this is problematic for, just during the week, and it's closed on Saturday and Sunday.

I'm not saying that that's the idea that we would want to go with, but we're trying to think outside the boxes of how to address this issue, and what might be providing the best solution both for the industry as well as enforcement. I think there's a number of avenues we need to at least take a look at.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thank you. Charlie, then Kerry.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't -- I think we commercial fishermen, at the docks, we like to have a weekend off, but we stay on call all the time. I mean, it never stops. There is no such thing as vacation for us, or, you know, just let's take off some federal holiday. I've forgotten how many times I went to work, went to do something, and, oh, it's federal holiday, and the bank is closed, and you can't do this, and you can't do that. Well, we're working. We're shipping stuff, and so I still think that, if somebody wants to unload something on Saturday, unload something on Sunday, a lot of times, I've got people there doing stuff on Saturday.

I'm often there in the mornings, even the days that my guys may not be there, crunching numbers or something, and so it's still -- I think it's still doable to do the paperwork, and, as far as the numbers going in, we don't send our numbers in except but once a week, and so it really doesn't matter if I've got Saturday, Sunday, and then Monday, because the numbers still aren't going in, I think, until Tuesday or something, and so it's really not going to matter, as far as that is concerned, but I think, if the docks and the fishermen really needed to, they could probably, at least until we can fix this in a better way, we could figure out exactly -- To do some kind of paperwork once it's in the fish house cooler.

Now, you may not want to leave it in a fisherman's cooler in his backyard. I can see that being an issue, but, if they can get it to the dock, to the fish house, the fish house should be able to give them some documentation and still be legal, and it may have to jump through some extra hoops until we can get this other stuff fixed. Thanks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I think the cat is out of the bag anyway already. The paperwork route is how exactly it's been enforced everywhere, in my understanding, everywhere but Florida, and whether it's one law enforcement officer, or that office has a different take on it, and I can tell you that other regional law enforcement agents have had no problem with the paperwork route, and so I think that that ship has already sailed, just because of the discrepancy, unfortunately. You're absolutely right, and that's how it should be done.

The other thing that frustrates me to know is we are never going to craft a rule that prevents all rule breaking, and I'm tired of that being -- Like overriding common sense, okay? There's speed limit signs all up and down 526. It didn't stop me from going about twenty-five miles over this weekend, you know? Well, okay, twenty, for anyone out there, but, anyway, my point is I know where this is going to go, because I've seen it so many times. We're going to hear all the reasons why law enforcement is like we can't do, can't do, can't do.

Is there -- Are there 1 to 5 percent of fishermen who are going to find this, and use this as a loophole? Probably. We cannot manage to that small percentage. We need to use our common sense, and I just beg that, as we go through this process, that's what we think about.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and I want to talk about the vehicle for fixing this, and so do we -- Can we do like an abbreviated framework to fix this, because I think that what you're saying, Kerry, is that the timeline for Amendment 60 is too long, because we're talking about, I think, approval in like September of 2026, and so I'm looking over to someone from NOAA about the vehicle to do the language change in like an abbreviated framework action, and how fast is the abbreviated framework action. Mike says we cannot do abbreviated framework, because that's only for changing catch levels. Mike.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: So you all -- You could do a framework amendment, like Monica brought up earlier, to potentially address this. I'm not -- I'm not sure whether this is something of a standalone nature, or something that you want to put into something else that's being developed. I'm not sure of that. I think that's the part of the discussion that you all would have, and possibly even a larger discussion than the subcommittee, and into the Snapper Grouper Committee, and so -- But it would

not be -- An abbreviated framework would not be the vehicle. It would need to be at least a framework amendment.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. I saw Carolyn, then Kerry.

DR. BELCHER: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm not on your committee, but Kerry and I had talked, and I've talked with the law enforcement group downstairs, and I'm kind of curious, because I know they'll talk to the level they can talk outside of the circle, right, and so, when I talked with Captain Hodge, he indicated that there's a couple of places where trip limit is a little bit kind of contrary. There's a section that talks to it about the beginning and end of a trip, and then there's the one that incorporates the sale.

I'm curious to see why law enforcement has this divergent to start with, and find out what's the hangup because, like I said, Hodge had showed me that, and I'm kind of like, well, I guess that's kind of difficult to rectify, when you're looking at Code Section A, and Code Section B has similar language, but goes in a different direction, or a more specific direction, and so I don't know if that's something that law enforcement at least can comment, as to why there seems to be this one outstanding individual area, or whatever, that seems to go in a different script than the others do.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Kerry, to that point, and then I'm going to make a suggestion, which is I think we recommend to the Snapper Grouper Committee that we want to look into this further, but we're not sure of the vehicle maybe to do that, and so maybe it is a recommendation from the subcommittee to the full committee to fix this, and then, by the time we get to the Snapper Grouper Committee, we have it worked out on the vehicle to do it, but go ahead, Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes, and I think that's a great plan. Also, I do think, later -- If we're going to come back to it in the full committee, and Carolyn brought up a very good point, and Amy and I are searching. Trips are defined differently in different places of the regs, and so that is part of the confusion, and we probably need to investigate that but what I wanted to say, to give staff time to think about it, and they don't have to answer now, but, the vehicles that are going forward, and I was thinking of like the black sea bass, one of the black sea basses, is fairly fast. Anyway, between now and then, between now and when we look at the workplan, maybe help us figure out if there are any vehicles that could be slipped into, and that's it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and we also found some language on abbreviated documentation process, and so we're going to be looking at that as well. Go ahead, Jimmy.

MR. HULL: Back to how law enforcement could be satisfied on this. what about -- We're talking about notification, if you notified them, and say, hey, I just unloaded a trip, and I'm heading back out, or, you know, notification and who do you notify in law enforcement. And, you know, that's another question, and so is it just your local OLE officer, that we all know in our area, or the agency in general, or who, and so those are questions I have, but that could be a remedy to it, is, you know, notification.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I'm so sorry. I just -- Earlier, Andy said he was thinking it was a red snapper issue, but I will argue that, if it starts -- It's a red snapper issue because that's where it first came

up, in north Florida. If it is going to be enforced in the rest of the region the way it was enforced in north Florida, it will be bigger than a red snapper issue, and so I just wanted to make everyone understand that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right, and so Mike has put some language there, to recommend to the Snapper Grouper Committee to consider revision of the definition of ending a trip and appropriate vehicles to address this. Do we think that captures our discussion? Monica.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I guess that captures the discussion, and we'll get into this further, but I don't know that you want to -- Just for food for thought, and put your thinking caps on, and so, the definition of a trip, trip means a fishing trip, regardless of the number of days duration, that begins with departure from a dock, berth, beach, seawall or ramp, and that terminates with return to a dock, berth, beach, seawall or ramp.

That's clear in the regulations, but when you start -- So a trip, various fishery management plans have different requirements, right, and so there's a definition for a trip, and it's not always in relation to a trip limit, but, when you start applying the trip limit idea, that's where you start, and, the regulation I read before, that's when it starts being more complicated, and I think that's the problem you're trying to get at.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Monica. We modified that, and so now it says to recommend to the Snapper Grouper Committee to consider revision of applying trip limits to sale of fish and appropriate vehicles to address this. Okay. All right. I see heads nodding that that's better. All right, and so I appreciate that discussion. More research coming before we get into the Snapper Grouper Committee about this. All right. Any other business to come before the Snapper Grouper Commercial Subcommittee? Go ahead, Trish.

MS. MURPHEY: So, just since we seem to be running early, you guys had received an email from Bob Zales concerning commercial vessel telecommunication requirements, and so I don't know if this would be the place to discuss it. Apparently, a lot of -- The commercial guys here can probably talk about it much better than me, but apparently a lot of the commercial guys now are using Starlink, and it's not a -- It doesn't count towards the three pieces of equipment, as far as communication equipment, and so I think he is requesting that we discuss the possibility of asking the, I guess it would be the Coast Guard, to add Starlink into that list of equipment. I don't know if this would be the place here, or the EO, but I just wanted to offer that while we -- Since we actually have time.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. We captured that. I see hands going up. Charlie, then Jimmy.

MR. PHILLIPS: Thank you, Madam Chair, and I had this conversation, I guess last week, with my Coast Guard safety officer. He came by the office, and I specifically asked him, and he said, no, Starlink is not one of the approved devices, and one of the reasons it is not approved is because they have not asked that FCC if could they be approved, and, until it goes through the I guess FCC, that the Coast Guard couldn't approve it, but supposedly there's not even an application in for it to be used for this purpose, and so it's not really on the Coast Guard. They're waiting on the FCC to say we've got a license, and we've covered it, and so that was what he told me, and he actually sent me an email to that effect.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Jimmy.

MR. HULL: Yes, and I would ask that this council send a letter to the Coast Guard and recommend that we get this as an approved device for communication and qualified for our safety inspection. I think this came up at the Gulf Council meeting, and I believe that that's something that they did, was write a letter, and so maybe that could push this a little faster, and, you know, not getting into too many of the details, because, like Charlie, we've learned a lot about it, and Bob has particularly been digging into this, and it seems like that, right now, the ball is in the court of Starlink itself to do something, but we need to get this done, because it is a safety-at-sea issue, and the sat phone is just totally unreliable.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Probably about two months ago, unbeknownst to what Bob Zales was doing, I had some interaction with the Coast Guard about this. I was going down a rabbit hole, that I did not have time, or did not care to go to, the bureaucratic part of it, but I have a bunch of emails back and forth to it, and I gave the justification that, you know, we don't use Starlink, but we use Starlink because the other is ineffective, and doesn't work, and so I got emails that I could provide somebody, or forward it on, but it seems like it's caught in the bureaucracy between the FCC and the Coast Guard as not being an approved vendor, yet everybody that I know of doesn't have --

I had to go borrow a bag satellite phone to check the box for my SADL work that my vessel is doing, and so I don't know anything that can help facilitate this, and the issue is having the observers on vessels, and that's why I think it has highlighted this, because everybody has gotten away from satellites, and using is Starlink, because it's effective, and it works, and so we just, I guess, maybe send a letter, or something like that. I don't know, and it seems like it's above that, and so I'll provide emails to anybody who wants to forward this on to somebody.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Dewey. Andy.

MR. STRELCHECK: I shared the letter that the Gulf Council wrote with John, Myra, and Chip, and so that can be shared around, and so I agree. I think it would be good for the council to provide a letter to the Coast Guard. I might be mistaken, but I think there's kind of two issues. One is Starlink needing to apply for approval and two is I think the Coast Guard's regulations might be antiquated, and need to be updated, in order to accommodate this new technology, and so I know the Coast Guard is looking carefully at it. We had a robust discussion at the Gulf Council, but I just wanted to mention that I think it's not just simply Starlink's responsibility as well. The Coast Guard regulations need some modification, based on my understanding.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right, thanks for that discussion, and so we have a note here about commercial telecommunication requirements. Add Starlink to list of approved devices. The Coast Guard needs FCC application from Starlink. Coast Guard regs may also need to be modified. Send a letter to the Coast Guard requesting approval if an application is received. See Gulf Council letter. All right, and so that will go to the Snapper Grouper Committee as well. All right. Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Who would be the -- Who do I forward this contact onto, or maybe we find out where Andy and them sent their Gulf letter, and just -- When I reached out to Coast Guard, I

got up the way a little bit, and got to where the person who is in charge, supposedly I guess, where it has to go to, and so I'll wait to see you all's stuff. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: We might not need it, and so just stand by. We'll let you know. Thank you for that, Dewey. All right. Any other Other Business to come before the commercial subcommittee? All right. With that, we'll adjourn this subcommittee, and then I'm going to turn it back to the chair.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on September 15, 2025.)

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Certified By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Transcribed By  
Amanda Thomas  
October 15, 2025

mon 9/15

SG Sub

First	Last	Suffix	Position	Affiliation
✓ Trish	Murphey		Chair	NC Division of Marine Fisheries
			Vice-	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation
✓ Jessica	McCawley		Chair	Commission
Robert	Beal			Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
✓ Carolyn	Belcher			GA DNR Coastal Resources Division
Gary	Borland			
✓ Amy	Dukes			SC DNR Marine Resources Division
✓ Judy	Helmey			
✓ Francis (Dewey)	Hemilright			
✓ James	Hull	Jr.		
✓ Kerry	Marhefka			
Tom	Pease			Seventh Coast Guard District
✓ Charlie	Phillips			
web Tom	Roller			
Robert	Spottswood	Jr.		
✓ Andy	Strelcheck			NOAA Fisheries Southeast Region
	Warner-			
Deirdre	Kramer			Office of Marine Conservation OES / OMC
TBD	TBD			U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Representative

Chris Schiible

Sonny Gwin

Monica Smit-Brunello

Kristin Foss

DeLaney Farrell

Kathy Knowlton

Rick DeVictor

MON 9/15  
SA Su5

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL  
**COUNCIL STAFF**

**Executive Director**

✓ John Carmichael  
[john.carmichael@safmc.net](mailto:john.carmichael@safmc.net)  
843-302-8435

**Deputy Director - Science**

✓ Dr. Chip Collier  
[chip.collier@safmc.net](mailto:chip.collier@safmc.net)  
843-302-8444

**Deputy Director - Management**

✓ Myra Brouwer  
[myra.brouwer@safmc.net](mailto:myra.brouwer@safmc.net)  
843-302-8436

**Citizen Science Program Manager**

✓ Julia Byrd  
[julia.byrd@safmc.net](mailto:julia.byrd@safmc.net)  
843-302-8439

**BFP Outreach Specialist**

✓ Ashley Oliver [Ashley.Oliver@safmc.net](mailto:Ashley.Oliver@safmc.net)  
843-225-8135

**Admin. Secretary/Travel Coordinator**

✓ Rachael Silvas  
[Rachael.silvas@safmc.net](mailto:Rachael.silvas@safmc.net)  
843-571-4370

**Fishery Scientist II**

✓ Dr. Mike Schmidtke  
[mike.schmidtke@safmc.net](mailto:mike.schmidtke@safmc.net)  
843-302-8433

**Quantitative Fishery Scientist**

✓ Dr. Judd Curtis  
[Judd.curtis@safmc.net](mailto:Judd.curtis@safmc.net)  
843-302-8441

**Communication and Digital Media Specialist**

✓ Nicholas Smillie  
[Nick.Smillie@safmc.net](mailto:Nick.Smillie@safmc.net)  
843-302-8443

**Fishery Economist & FMP Coordinator**

✓ John Hadley  
[john.hadley@safmc.net](mailto:john.hadley@safmc.net)  
843-302-8432

**Staff Accountant**

✓ Suzanna Thomas  
[suzanna.thomas@safmc.net](mailto:suzanna.thomas@safmc.net)  
843-571-4368

**Habitat and Ecosystem  
Scientist**

✓ Kathleen Howington  
[kathleen.howington@safmc.net](mailto:kathleen.howington@safmc.net)  
843-725-7580

**Fishery Social Scientist**

✓ Christina Wiegand [christina.wiegand@safmc.net](mailto:christina.wiegand@safmc.net)  
843-302-8437

**Fishery Scientist I**

✓ Allie Iberle  
[Allie.iberle@safmc.net](mailto:Allie.iberle@safmc.net)  
843-225-8135

**Citizen Science Project Manager**

wb Meg Withers  
[Meg.withers@safmc.net](mailto:Meg.withers@safmc.net)  
843-725-7577

**Public Information Officer**

✓ Kim Iverson [kim.iverson@safmc.net](mailto:kim.iverson@safmc.net)  
843-224-7258

**SEDAR**

**SEDAR Program Manager**

wb Dr. Julie Neer  
[Julie.neer@safmc.net](mailto:Julie.neer@safmc.net)  
843-302-8438

**Administrative Officer**

wb Kelly Klasnick [kelly.klasnick@safmc.net](mailto:kelly.klasnick@safmc.net)  
843-763-1050

**SEDAR Coordinator**

wb Emily Ott [Emily.Ott@safmc.net](mailto:Emily.Ott@safmc.net)  
937-479-6171

MON 9/15  
SG SUB

Snapper Grouper SG Commercial Sub-Committee

- ✓ Jessica McCawley,  
Chair
- ✓ Kerry Marhefka, Vice-  
chair
- ✓ Francis (Dewey) Hemilright
- ✓ Trish Murphey
- ✓ Amy Dukes
- ✓ Andy Strelcheck
- ✓ James Hull, Jr.
- ✓ Charlie Phillips

September 2025

## Attendee Report: Council Meeting

Report Generated:

09/22/2025 06:59 AM EDT

**Webinar ID**

302-385-691

**Actual Start Date/Time**

09/15/2025 07:50 AM EDT

## Staff Details

**Attended**

Yes

**Interest Rating**

Not applicable for staff

## Attendee Details

**Last Name**

**First Name**

Addis

Dustin

Aines

Alex

Alexander

Sheila

Alexander

Nathan

Baker

Scott

Barger

Jeff

Barile

Peter

Barrows

Katline

Beal

Bob

Bernier

Quinn

Bianchi

Alan

Boots

Benjamin

Borland

Gary

Brantley

William

Brouwer

Myra

Buntin

Jesse

Bunting

Matthew

Burky Lechwar

Heather

Byrd

Julia

Carrigan

Abby

Carruthers

Tom

Cermak

Bridget

Cerny-Chipman

Elizabeth

Clinton

Haley

Clinton

Haley

Corbett

Ellie

Cox

Jack

Curtis

Judd

Darden

Tanya

Davis

Conor

DeVictor	Rick
Degan	Jacqui
DiJohnson	Alex
Dingle	Julie
Dover	Miles
Downes	Athena
Dukes	Amy
Dyar	Ben
Dyar	Ben
Ealahan	Maranda
Emory	Meaghan
Evans	Joseph
Finch	Margaret
Flowers	Henry
Floyd	Brad
Foor	Brandon
Foss	Kristin
Gentner	BRAD
Gloeckner	David
Gooding	Elizabeth
Gore	Karla
Gray	Alisha
Griffin	Aimee
Griner	Tim
Guyas	Martha
HEMILRIGHT	DEWEY
Hadley	John
Hallas	Sara
Hart	Hannah
Helies	Frank
Helmey	Judy
Hiers	Homer
Hildreth	Delaine
Hooten	Jackson
Hordyk	Adrian
Horton	Chris
Huber	Jeanette
Hudson	Joseph
Hull	Jimmy
Iberle	Allie
Ingram	Jamal
Iverson	Kim
Kalinowsky	Chris
Karnauskas	Mandy

Keppler	Blaik
Klasnick	01Kelly
Knowlton	Kathy
Larkin	Michael
Lazarre	Dominique
Leavel	Lillie Callaway
Levy	Mara
Locke	Charles
Lopez-Mercer	Maria
Lorenzen	Kai
M Dobbs	Jeffrey
Mackesey	Brendan
Marhefka	00Kerry
Masi	Michelle
McClair	Genine
McGill	Maria
McManus	Brian
Mehta	Nikhil
Merck	Nicole
Meyers	S
Murphey	Trish
Neer	Julie
Newman	Thomas
Oliver	Ashley
Ott	Emily
Package-Ward	Christina
Peterson	Cassidy
Phillips	Charlie
Ramsay	Chloe
Records	David
Reding	Brandon
Reynolds	Kris
Rivera Garcia	Liajay
Robbins	Megan
SCHLICK	CJ
Seeley	Matthew
Seward	McLean
Silvas	Rachael
Smit-Brunello	Monica
Solinger	Laura
Spratt	Paige
Spurgin	Kali
Stemle	Adam
Stephen	Jessica

Stephens	Haley
Stephenson	Sarah
Sweetman	CJ
Turley	Brendan
Vecchio	Julie
Walia	Matt
Walsh	Mick
Walter	John
Wamer	David
White	Geoff
Williams	Erik
Willis	Michelle
Withers	Meg
Zapf	Daniel
collier	chip
lee	Jennifer
marinko	Jeff
moss	david
o	o
oden	jeff
poholek	ariel
riley	Rick
roller	tom
sandorf	scott
sinkus	Wiley
thomas	suz
vara	mary
zales	bob
Barbieri	Luiz
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Bogdan	Jennifer
Bradshaw	Christopher
Bruning	Jake
Cody	Richard
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Gannon	Megan
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McWaters	Mark
Nejjari	Amber
O'Donnell	Kelli
Puglise	Kimberly
Reynolds	Kris
Sedberry	George

Smith  
Tidball  
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Warren  
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Leah  
Victoria  
Jason  
Camilla  
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September 2025

## Attendee Report: Council Meeting

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## Staff Details

**Attended**

Yes

**Interest Rating**

Not applicable for staff

## Attendee Details

**Last Name**

**First Name**

Addis

Dustin

Aines

Alex

Alexander

Sheila

Alexander

Nathan

Baker

Scott

Barger

Jeff

Barile

Peter

Barrows

Katline

Beal

Bob

Bernier

Quinn

Bianchi

Alan

Boots

Benjamin

Borland

Gary

Brantley

William

Brouwer

Myra

Buntin

Jesse

Bunting

Matthew

Burky Lechwar

Heather

Byrd

Julia

Carrigan

Abby

Carruthers

Tom

Cermak

Bridget

Cerny-Chipman

Elizabeth

Clinton

Haley

Clinton

Haley

Corbett

Ellie

Cox

Jack

Curtis

Judd

Darden

Tanya

Davis

Conor

DeVictor	Rick
Degan	Jacqui
DiJohnson	Alex
Dingle	Julie
Dover	Miles
Downes	Athena
Dukes	Amy
Dyar	Ben
Dyar	Ben
Ealahan	Maranda
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Evans	Joseph
Finch	Margaret
Flowers	Henry
Floyd	Brad
Foor	Brandon
Foss	Kristin
Gentner	BRAD
Gloeckner	David
Gooding	Elizabeth
Gore	Karla
Gray	Alisha
Griffin	Aimee
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Hallas	Sara
Hart	Hannah
Helies	Frank
Helmey	Judy
Hiers	Homer
Hildreth	Delaine
Hooten	Jackson
Hordyk	Adrian
Horton	Chris
Huber	Jeanette
Hudson	Joseph
Hull	Jimmy
Iberle	Allie
Ingram	Jamal
Iverson	Kim
Kalinowsky	Chris
Karnauskas	Mandy

Keppler	Blaik
Klasnick	01Kelly
Knowlton	Kathy
Larkin	Michael
Lazarre	Dominique
Leavel	Lillie Callaway
Levy	Mara
Locke	Charles
Lopez-Mercer	Maria
Lorenzen	Kai
M Dobbs	Jeffrey
Mackesey	Brendan
Marhefka	00Kerry
Masi	Michelle
McClair	Genine
McGill	Maria
McManus	Brian
Mehta	Nikhil
Merck	Nicole
Meyers	S
Murphey	Trish
Neer	Julie
Newman	Thomas
Oliver	Ashley
Ott	Emily
Package-Ward	Christina
Peterson	Cassidy
Phillips	Charlie
Ramsay	Chloe
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Reding	Brandon
Reynolds	Kris
Rivera Garcia	Liajay
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Seeley	Matthew
Seward	McLean
Silvas	Rachael
Smit-Brunello	Monica
Solinger	Laura
Spratt	Paige
Spurgin	Kali
Stemle	Adam
Stephen	Jessica

Stephens	Haley
Stephenson	Sarah
Sweetman	CJ
Turley	Brendan
Vecchio	Julie
Walia	Matt
Walsh	Mick
Walter	John
Wamer	David
White	Geoff
Williams	Erik
Willis	Michelle
Withers	Meg
Zapf	Daniel
collier	chip
lee	Jennifer
marinko	Jeff
moss	david
o	o
oden	jeff
poholek	ariel
riley	Rick
roller	tom
sandorf	scott
sinkus	Wiley
thomas	suz
vara	mary
zales	bob
Barbieri	Luiz
Black	Karlisa
Bogdan	Jennifer
Bradshaw	Christopher
Bruning	Jake
Cody	Richard
Fields-Rivera	Kayla
Gannon	Megan
Harmon	Jake
Hatcher	Dale
McWaters	Mark
Nejjari	Amber
O'Donnell	Kelli
Puglise	Kimberly
Reynolds	Kris
Sedberry	George

Smith  
Tidball  
Walsh  
Warren  
Wilms  
Wilms

Leah  
Victoria  
Jason  
Camilla  
Sean  
Olivia