

SUMMARY REPORT
SOPPs COMMITTEE MEETING
New Bern, North Carolina
December 8, 2010

The SOPPs Committee met in joint session the afternoon of December 8, 2010 in New Bern, North Carolina. The minutes from the September 2010 SOPPs Committee were approved. The Committee received presentations on the following agenda items:

1. Final rule addressing Council SOPP

Mr. Mahood noted we now have a final SOPP rule spelling out the specific provisions that are required in our Council SOPP. The staff has reviewed the final rule and found that all of the required provisions in the final SOPP rule are currently addressed in our SOPPs. However, some modifications and fine tuning may be necessary.

2. Model SOPP

Mr. Mahood directed the committee to Attachment 2, containing the Model SOPP. As noted by NMFS, the model SOPP is based on the 2006 SOPP of the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. Bob pointed out that under the introduction in the model SOPPs it states “While it is not necessary to follow this model exactly, each Council is responsible for ensuring the information presented in this model SOPP is included in its SOPP or other standing policy”. He noted that initial review indicates, that with some minor variations, our SOPPs is structured similar to and contains the same information as the model SOPP. Also, the language stating “...or other standing policy” will allow us to keep our Administrative Handbook as the governing document for our day to day in-house operations.

3. Changes to current Council SOPPs

Mr. Mahood asked that prior to our March 2011 meeting that Council members review the current Council SOPP (Attachment 3) to see if there are any changes or modifications they would like to have addressed. He used the example of Tom Swatzel recently requesting that the Council consider modifying the “Minority Report” language in the SOPP. Staff will also be closely reviewing our SOPP to update out-dated provisions and ensure it is in complete compliance with the model SOPP recently received. These modifications will be presented to the Committee at the March 2011 meeting.

The Councils have been instructed to submit their “final rule compliant” SOPP to the Secretary within one year. However, our goal is to finalize our SOPP at our March 2011 meeting and submit the document to the Secretary for review shortly thereafter.