



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Jessica McCawley, Chair | Mel Bell, Vice Chair
 Gregg T. Waugh, Executive Director

AGENDA

Snapper Grouper Committee

Westin Jekyll Island
 110 Ocean Way
 Jekyll Island, GA

Monday, March 4, 2019 – 8:30 A.M. to 12:00 Noon

Tuesday, March 5, 2019 – 1:30 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. (Times subject to change)

Approval of Agenda – Jessica McCawley

Approval of December 2018 Committee minutes – Jessica McCawley

1. Status of Commercial Catches versus ACLs – NMFS SERO (*Attachment 1*)
2. Status of Amendments under Formal Review – NMFS SERO
 - a. Abbreviated Framework Amendment 2 (Black Sea Bass & Vermilion Snapper) – sent to NMFS 11/19/18
 - b. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 (Commercial) – sent to NMFS 1/24/19
 - c. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 (Recreational)
3. Update on the 2019 red snapper season (*Attachment 2*)
 - a. Overview – NMFS SERO
 - b. **Committee action:** Provide guidance – Jessica McCawley
4. Regulatory Amendment 29 (Best Fishing Practices & Powerheads) (*Attachments 3a and 3b*)
 - a. Overview – Christina Wiegand
 - b. **Committee action:** Review and consider approval for public hearings – Jessica McCawley
5. Regulatory Amendment 30 (Red Grouper) (*Attachments 4a and 4b*)
 - a. Overview – John Hadley
 - b. **Committee action:** Take action as needed – Jessica McCawley

6. Regulatory Amendment 42 (Sea Turtle Release Gear & Framework Modification; *Attachments 5a-5c*)
 - a. Overview (public comment during Wednesday session) – Christina Wiegand
 - b. **Committee action:** Review and consider approval for formal review – Jessica McCawley

7. Wreckfish ITQ Review (*Attachment 6*)
 - a. Overview – Dr. Brian Chevront
 - b. **Committee action:** Review and provide guidance to staff – Jessica McCawley

8. NMFS SERO Permits Presentation (*Attachment 7a and 7b*)
 - a. Presentation – Kevin McIntosh, SERO Permits
 - b. **Committee action:** Take action as needed – Jessica McCawley

9. Results of Recreational Workshops (*Attachments 8a and 8b*)
 - a. Introduction – Kellie Ralston
 - b. Presentation – Dr. Kari Buck
 - c. **Committee action:** Take action as needed – Jessica McCawley

10. Spearfishing in the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Fishery (*Attachment 9*)
 - a. Overview – Myra Brouwer
 - b. **Committee Action:** Provide guidance to staff – Jessica McCawley

11. Guidance on agenda items for Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel
 - a. Overview – Myra Brouwer
 - b. **Committee Action:** Provide guidance to staff – Jessica McCawley

12. Vision Blueprint Outreach (*Attachments 10a-10c*)
 - a. Overview – Myra Brouwer and Cameron Rhodes
 - b. **Committee Action:** Provide guidance to staff – Jessica McCawley

13. Spawning Special Management Zone Update
 - a. Overview – Dr. Chip Collier
 - b. **Committee Action:** Provide guidance to staff – Jessica McCawley

14. Other Business – Jessica McCawley

Adjourn – Jessica McCawley

Committee Members

Jessica McCawley, Chair
 Mel Bell, Vice-chair
 Anna Beckwith
 Chester Brewer
 Kyle Christiansen
 Chris Conklin

Roy Crabtree
Tim Griner
Doug Haymans
Wilson Laney
LCDR Jeremy Montes
Steve Poland
Art Sapp
David Whitaker
Spud Woodward
Mid-Atlantic Liaison: Tony DiLernia, Dewey Hemilright

Attachments:

- Attachment 1:** Status of commercial catches vs. ACLs
- Attachment 2:** Red snapper season projections
- Attachment 3a:** Regulatory Amendment 29 Decision Document
- Attachment 3b:** Draft Regulatory Amendment 29
- Attachment 4a:** Regulatory Amendment 30 Decision Document
- Attachment 4b:** Draft Regulatory Amendment 30
- Attachment 5a:** Amendment 42 Decision Document
- Attachment 5b:** Amendment 42 Draft Document
- Attachment 5c:** Amendment 42 codified text
- Attachment 6:** Draft Wreckfish ITQ Review
- Attachment 7a:** SERO Permits Presentation
- Attachment 7b:** Application for Commercial Snapper Grouper Permit
- Attachment 8a:** Report on Outcomes of ASA Regional Meetings on Recreational Management
- Attachment 8b:** Presentation of Outcomes of ASA Regional Meetings on Recreational Management
- Attachment 9:** Spearfishing in the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Fishery
- Attachment 10a:** List of actions in the Vision Blueprint that were not prioritized for completion in 2016-2020
- Attachment 10b:** Revision of Snapper Grouper FMP Objectives – June 2013
- Attachment 10c:** Proposed edits to FMP objectives (based on June 2013 workshop)

Staff: Myra Brouwer

OVERVIEW

Snapper Grouper Committee

The Committee will approve minutes from the December 2018 meeting and the agenda for the March 2019 Committee meeting.

- 1. Status of Commercial Catches for Species under ACLs (*Attachment 1*)**
Description: National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office (NMFS SERO) staff will update the Committee on the status of commercial landings of snapper grouper species and species complexes relative to their respective ACLs.
Required Committee Action: None.
- 2. Status of Amendments under Formal Review**
Description: NMFS SERO staff will update the Committee on the status of amendments under review or recently submitted.
Required Committee Action: None.
- 3. Update on 2019 red snapper season (*Attachment 2*)**
Description: NMFS SERO staff will update the Committee on the status of preliminary findings regarding the length of the 2019 red snapper season.
Required Committee Action: Provide guidance as needed.
- 4. Regulatory Amendment 29 (Best Fishing Practices & Powerheads) (*Attachments 3a and 3b*)**
Description: At their March 2018 meeting, the Council removed actions pertaining to best fishing practices and powerhead regulations from Amendment 46 and requested that staff begin development of a framework amendment. The Council was concerned that other actions in Amendment 46 (recreational permitting and reporting) would take significant time to be developed and did not want to delay action on other issues.
Status of Amendment: The Council reviewed scoping comments at their September 2018 meeting. Actions and alternatives addressing venting and descending devices, circle hooks, and powerheads were approved for analysis. The action pertaining to allowable rigs was removed. The Council will review a draft public hearing document and consider approving the amendment for public hearings.
Required Committee Action: Review, modify draft amendment as necessary and consider approving for public hearings .
- 5. Regulatory Amendment 30 (*Attachments 4a and 4b*)**
Description: At their March 2018 meeting, the Council directed staff to begin work on a framework amendment to revise the red grouper rebuilding schedule. The Council discussed options at their June 2018 meeting and directed staff to consolidate actions addressing red grouper into Regulatory Amendment 30. Hence, actions to modify the seasonal closure of red grouper in the EEZ off the Carolinas were moved over from the Visioning Amendments (Regulatory Amendments 26 & 27). In addition, the Council added an action to consider a commercial trip limit for red grouper.

Status of amendment: The SSC was unable to provide additional guidance on red grouper fishing levels based on the updated assessment that incorporates revised recreational landings estimates (MRIP revisions) in January 2019 due to the government shutdown. Guidance on red grouper fishing levels and rebuilding timelines is expected in April 2019. The amendment was scheduled to be considered for formal approval in March 2019; however, due to the revised rebuilding timelines expected from the MRIP revision assessment, the amendment will not be ready for formal approval and is now scheduled to be considered for formal approval in June 2019.

Required Committee Action: Review updated analyses and provide guidance to staff.

6. Regulatory Amendment 42 (Sea Turtle Release Gear & Framework Modification) (Attachments 5a-5c)

Description: The amendment proposes modifications to regulations for vessels with South Atlantic snapper grouper commercial or charter vessel headboat permits to allow the use of three additional sea turtle release gear types and to clarify dimension requirements for current sea turtle release gear. The amendment also proposes changes to the snapper grouper framework procedure to facilitate modifying sea turtle and other protected resources release gear and handling requirements in the future. Additionally, the amendment includes objectives in the Snapper Grouper FMP as revised during the visioning process.

Status of amendment: The Committee reviewed a public hearing draft of Amendment 42 at the December 2018 Council meeting. The document was reformatted to expedite review once approved. Public hearings will occur as part of the March 2019 meeting when the Council is scheduled to consider final approval of Amendment 42.

Required Committee Action: Review draft document, consider public comment, and consider approval for formal review.

7. Wreckfish ITQ Review (Attachment 6)

Description: The document constitutes the formal review of the Wreckfish ITQ program in accordance with NMFS guidelines. The review itself does not contain actions and alternatives but may include management recommendations for the Council or consider in a future amendment to the FMP.

Status: The Committee will receive an update at their March 2019 meeting and consider the input of the APs, the SSC, and shareholders. The Federal shutdown has delayed the final approval of this review by one meeting. The Committee will see a completed draft document at the June 2019. Final approval is scheduled for September 2019.

Required Committee Action: Provide guidance to staff.

8. NMFS SERO Permits Presentation (Attachments 7a and 7b)

Description: At their Spring 2018 meeting, the Snapper Grouper AP requested that Permits Office staff deliver a presentation at their fall meeting. The Council discussed this request at their October 2018 meeting and directed staff to request a presentation from the Southeast Region Permits Office to be delivered at the March 2019 Council meeting and the Spring 2019 AP meeting. The Council provided further guidance at their December 2018 meeting and the request was sent to SERO on 12/17/19. Kevin McIntosh, Acting Permits Branch Chief, will deliver the presentation to the Committee.

Required Committee Action: Take action as needed.

9. Results of 2018 Recreational Workshops (*Attachments 8a and 8b*)

Description: Following the September 2018 workshop to discuss new ideas for management of the private recreational sector of the Snapper Grouper fishery, a series of regional meetings were coordinated by American Sportfishing Association (ASA) to get input from local recreational representatives on angler preferences, harvest rate management, harvest tags for deepwater species, registration and reporting, and barotrauma reduction. Kellie Ralston will provide an introduction to the project and Dr. Kari Buck, facilitator for the meetings, will present the outcome of the regional meetings.
Required Committee Action: Provide guidance as needed.

10. Spearfishing in the South Atlantic Snapper Grouper Fishery (*Attachment 9*)

Description: At their March 2018 meeting, the Council was briefed on emerging conflict in NC between commercial divers using spearfishing gear and hook-and-line fishermen. The Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel discussed spearfishing at their spring 2018 meeting and approved two motions to encourage the Council to characterize use of this gear in the commercial and recreational sectors of the snapper grouper fishery. At their October 2018 meeting, the AP approved another motion to recommend a gear endorsement for the commercial sector. The Council subsequently instructed staff to prepare a white paper to discuss the topic in March 2019.
Required Committee Action: Provide guidance to staff.

11. Guidance on Snapper Grouper AP agenda items

Description: The Snapper Grouper AP is scheduled to meet on April 24-26, 2019 in Charleston, SC. Staff requests guidance on items to include in the AP's agenda.
Required Committee Action: Provide guidance to staff.

12. Vision Blueprint Outreach (*Attachments 10a-10c*)

Description: The 2016-2020 Vision Blueprint for the Snapper Grouper Fishery was approved in December 2015 and includes prioritized short-term objectives around broad goals addressing science, management, communication, and governance. In December 2018, the Committee provided the following guidance to assist in developing next steps:

- Create a webpage/story map to update stakeholders on actions accomplished to-date and those left to be addressed and solicit their input. To view the revised webpage and story map, use the following link: <http://safmc.net/useful-info/council-visioning-project/>
- Provide list of actions in the Vision Blueprint appendix that were not prioritized for development in 2016-2020 and provide to the Committee in 2019 (*Attachment 10a*).
- Also during 2019, conduct a stakeholder survey once projects that are still under development are completed (e.g., best fishing practices amendment, recreational permit/stamp, etc).
- Provide evaluation of FMP objectives that was conducted in 2014 as part of the Visioning Project (*Attachments 10b and 10c*).

Required Committee Action: Provide guidance to staff.

13. Spawning Special Management Zone Update

Description: The System Management Plan Workgroup has been drafting sections for an outreach document/webpage on the Spawning Special Management Zones recommended in Amendment 36. The document is designed more as an informational document since the areas have only been closed for a short time and there is limited information available beyond what was presented in Amendment 36.

Required Committee Action: Provide guidance to staff and workgroup.

Other Business