

Impact of Federal Shutdown on SAFMC Amendments and Projects  
As of February 5, 2019

Please note that these are anticipated effects. The staffs of the SAFMC and SERO have reviewed each of the amendments and projects below. Amendments/projects not listed below are assumed not to be affected by the Federal shutdown at this point. The document will be reviewed the week prior to the March 2019 Council meeting and updates, if necessary, will be made. This current version assumes that the shutdown will NOT resume on February 15, 2019.

**Snapper Grouper**

*Amendment 38 (Blueline Tilefish north of Cape Hatteras)* – The SSC was going to review blueline tilefish at the January 25<sup>th</sup> webinar. Before this amendment can move forward, the SSC review will need to occur. If the webinar does not occur prior to the April SSC meeting and the SSC isn't able to determine whether the data are adequate to develop projections, the amendment may not get considered in time for the Council to act on SSC recommendations prior to the June 2019 meeting. If it cannot be reviewed by the SSC by April, it will be December 2019 before the Council can take up further consideration of this amendment.

*Amendment 42 (Sea turtle release gear modifications)* – The Council is scheduled to take final action at the March 2019 meeting. SERO is working on the codified text and it should be ready by the time of the meeting. There will be some additional material provided by SERO economists in the economic section. Nonetheless, almost all analyses for the actions/alternatives and their effects are completed. Should the codified text be completed, the Council could approve the amendment and then give the Chair the ability to review the final document with the additional economic information (environment, RIR, and RFA) added prior to sending the amendment in for Secretarial review.

*Abbreviated Framework 2 (Vermilion and black sea bass ACL modifications)* – implementation will be delayed due to no movement on proposed rule package during the shutdown.

*Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 (Recreational)* – SAFMC edits have been completed. SERO has requested a final review by Jack and Monica before the document is sent in for formal Secretarial review.

*Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 (Commercial)* – Still has some 508 Compliance issues to be resolved. SAFMC staff were waiting for those to be resolved prior to sending the document in for formal review. However, since these 508 Compliance edits do not change any document text and the edits must be made by SERO staff, the document was formally sent in for Secretarial review on January 24, 2019.

*Regulatory Amendment 29 (Best fishing practices and powerheads)* – The Council requested a public hearing document for the March meeting and work is being done to try to have a document ready for the Council. Sections will be populated, and basic analysis completed, but the analysis may need to be expanded in next iteration of the document. It is not clear whether

the document will be sufficiently ready for the Council to vote to send out for public hearings in Spring of 2019.

*Regulatory Amendment 30 (Red grouper)* – The Council cannot do much of the work on Action 1 as planned at the March meeting. The postponement of the SSC webinar scheduled for January 25 prevented progress on this action. If the SSC can finish its work on red grouper either before or at the April meeting, it is likely the Council can take a final vote on the amendment at the June 2019 meeting. This amendment has a statutory deadline of having a new rebuilding schedule in place by September 2019.

*Wreckfish ITQ Review* – The Council was expecting to have a final document to review. SAFMC staff have been able to work on some additional sections of the document, however they have not yet been reviewed by the entire IPT. Additionally, key sections of the document to be written by SERO staff by January were not completed due to the shutdown. The Council was scheduled to give final approval in June. Most likely final approval will be pushed back to September 2019.

#### **Habitat and Ecosystem**

Due to the shutdown, NMFS EBFM Implementation Plan for the South Atlantic Region will not be completed as originally scheduled due to the unavailability of their employees to contribute to the process. The timing of the Habitat and Ecosystem AP was moved back to late May so NMFS will have more time to complete their plan. NMFS will report on deliverables supporting FEP II Implementation Plan at the AP meeting. Given the delay, the Council will not consider this in June, but will in September 2019 when the AP report will be made.

#### **Coral/Shrimp/Golden Crab**

*Coral 10/Shrimp 11/Golden Crab 10 (Transit and allowable fishing zones)* – NMFS was preparing needed, updated maps based on recent coral surveys. They were not completed prior to the shutdown. Before the updated maps can be used, they will need to be reviewed by the GMFMC and SAFMC SSCs. It is possible that if they are not ready to be reviewed by the SSC in April, it could be December 2019 before the maps can come to the Council. In this scenario, no further action could happen with this amendment until December 2019.

#### **Mackerel/Cobia**

*Amendment 31 (Transfer of Atlantic stock cobia management to the ASMFC)* – Awaiting final rule publication by SERO.

*Framework Amendment 6 (Modification of Atlantic king mackerel trip limits)* – Awaiting proposed rule publication by SERO.

#### **Spiny Lobster**

*Amendment 13 (Florida management and gear modifications)* - Awaiting proposed rule publication by SERO.

## **Dolphin/Wahoo**

*Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 (Dolphin wahoo management issues)* - The IPT was unable to meet as scheduled after the December Council meeting due to the shutdown. In an effort to offer suggestions for the actions and alternatives currently under consideration, the IPT did provide limited comments through an email based-review once the government shutdown ended. Some data are available for analysis, however, there is not much new analysis that SAFMC staff can bring to the Council in March that they didn't see in December. However, the Council can continue the discussion on the actions/alternatives at the March meeting, particularly focusing on the ranges of alternatives that is proposed for the newly added items and items that should remain in the amendment if it is sent out for scoping. The development of the amendment is likely to be delayed at least one Council meeting.

(Bullet and Frigate Mackerel White Paper not won't be affected by the shutdown. Was waiting primarily for NOAA GC comments. Those have now been received.)

## **Generic Amendments**

*ABC Control Rule* – Amendment will be delayed because guidance from the NMFS working group on phase-in and carry-over provisions for ACLs has not yet been provided. There will be at least a 1-month delay on receiving the information which could result in pushing back further work on the amendment by one Council meeting. Scoping was held January 23-24 as planned, although the IPT did not have an opportunity to review the scoping documents.

*Recreational Accountability Measures* – The IPT was unable to meet as scheduled after the December Council meeting due to the shutdown. Therefore, the IPT was unable to offer additional suggestions for the actions and alternatives currently under consideration. This amendment is likely to be delayed at least one Council meeting. Scoping was held January 23-24 as planned, although the IPT did not have an opportunity to review the scoping documents.

*For-Hire Reporting Amendment* – Awaiting final rule. Implementation was delayed until April 2019 to coincide with final rule publication with the Gulf's For-Hire Reporting Amendment. Unclear whether this final rule will happen as scheduled. The SAFMC is not doing any additional outreach or training on for-hire reporting until the final rule is published.

## **Citizen Science**

*Fishtory Project* – Delayed in starting due to lack of transfer of Federal funds.

*ASMFC MOU* - Implementation is delayed while waiting for NOAA GC review

## **Advisory Panel Meetings**

The Information and Education AP meeting occurred January 29 & 30 as planned. Other APs are not yet affected by the shutdown. However, the Snapper Grouper AP may not need to meet in Spring 2019 if there isn't anything new for them to discuss. The Council will decide at the March 2019 meeting whether the Mackerel Cobia AP needs to meet prior to the June 2019 meeting. If so, the meeting will most likely be done via webinar.

### **Scientific and Statistical Committee**

The SSC webinar scheduled for January 25, to review the MRIP revision assessments in detail, was postponed. Council staff are working to see if it can be rescheduled prior to the March 2019 Council meeting. NMFS staff participation is necessary, as they conducted the assessments and are the only ones who can answer SSC questions. This webinar was an important step toward ensuring the SSC has the information it needs at its April 2019 meeting to provide ABC recommendations based on the revised assessments.

### **Scoping and Public Hearing Sessions**

Scoping sessions occurred via webinar for the ABC Control Rule and the Recreational AM amendments in January as planned. Public hearings for Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 29 (Best fishing practices and powerheads) could occur between the March and June Council meetings if the needed analyses can be completed in time. Otherwise, public hearings for this amendment will have to be postponed until Summer 2019.

### **Red Snapper 2019 Season**

At the December 2018 meeting, the Council notified NMFS SERO that it would be beneficial to fishermen to receive information on the length of the 2019 recreational season as soon as possible, preferably at the March 2019 Council meeting. The idea was for the information on the season to be published sooner than in previous years. SERO is actively working to have the season projections available by the March 2019 meeting. The projections most likely will not be ready for into the BB ahead of the February 15, 2019 posting. However, every attempt is being made to have the projections available for discussion at the March meeting.