



## SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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

### AGENDA

#### Snapper Grouper Committee

Bahia Mar Doubletree by Hilton

801 Seabreeze Boulevard

Fort Lauderdale, FL

Tuesday, June 12, 2018 – 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

Wednesday, June 13, 2018 – 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. (Times subject to change)

Approval of Agenda – Jessica McCawley

Approval of March 2018 Committee minutes – Jessica McCawley

1. Status of Commercial and Recreational Catches versus Quotas for Species under ACLs – NMFS SERO (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)
2. Status of Amendments under Formal Review – NMFS SERO
  - a. Amendment 43 (Red Snapper) – sent to NMFS 11/17/17
  - b. Abbreviated Framework Amendment 1 (Red Grouper) – sent to NMFS 12/21/17
3. Extension of Interim Rule for Golden Tilefish
  - a. Overview – Myra Brouwer
  - b. **Committee action:** Discuss and consider requesting extension – Jessica McCawley
4. Red Snapper 2018 Season
  - a. Discussion on possible implementation of Amendment 43 – NMFS SERO
  - b. **Committee action:** Discuss and take action as necessary – Jessica McCawley
5. Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) Report (*Attachments 2a and 2b*) – David Moss, AP Chair
6. Bag Limits and Trip Satisfaction in the For-Hire Sector: A Case Study of South Atlantic Black Sea Bass (*Attachment 3*) – Stacey Weinstock, College of Charleston
7. Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Report – Dr. George Sedberry, SSC Chair
  - a. Results from assessments reviewed
    - (i) Black sea bass
    - (ii) Vermilion snapper
  - b. Blueline tilefish – ABC recommendations for area north of Cape Hatteras
  - c. Red Snapper ABC workgroup update

- d. Golden tilefish ABC recommendation
  - e. Recommendation on analytical methodology for actions in Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27
  - f. **Committee action:** Discuss and take action as necessary – Jessica McCawley
8. Size-selectivity of hook and line gear, Chevron traps, and underwater cameras for Red Snapper and other reef fishes in the U.S. South Atlantic (*Attachment 4*) – Dr. Luiz Barbieri, FWRI
    - a. **Committee action:** Discuss and provide guidance as appropriate
  9. Southeast Reef Fish Survey (SERFS) Update (*Attachment 5*) – Dr. Marcel Reichert
  10. Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 (Permitting and Reporting for Private Recreational Anglers) (*Attachment 6*)
    - a. Overview – Dr. Chip Collier
    - b. **Committee action:** Discuss, provide guidance to staff, and consider approval for scoping – Jessica McCawley
  11. Regulatory Amendment 29 – (Best Fishing Practices and Powerheads) (*Attachment 7*)
    - a. Overview – Christina Wiegand
    - b. **Committee action:** Discuss, provide guidance to staff, and consider approval for scoping – Jessica McCawley
  12. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 - Recreational (*Attachments 8a-8d*)
    - a. Discard mortality of gray triggerfish – Brendan Runde, North Carolina State University
    - b. Overview of public comments and decision document – Myra Brouwer
    - c. **Committee action:** Review, modify document as necessary, select preferred alternatives, and approve all actions – Jessica McCawley
  13. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 - Commercial (*Attachments 9a-9c*)
    - a. Overview of public comments and decision document – Myra Brouwer
    - b. **Committee action:** Review, modify document as necessary, select preferred alternatives, and approve all actions – Jessica McCawley
  14. Snapper Grouper Amendment 47 (For-Hire Permit Moratorium) (*Attachments 10a and 10b*)
    - a. Overview – John Hadley
    - b. **Committee action:** Review draft scoping document, provide guidance to staff, and consider approval for scoping – Jessica McCawley
  15. Regulatory Amendment 30 (Red Grouper Rebuilding) (*Attachment 11*)
    - a. Overview – John Hadley
    - b. **Committee action:** Review options paper, provide guidance to staff, and consider approval for scoping – Jessica McCawley

16. Regulatory Amendment 28 (Golden Tilefish) (*Attachments 12a-12c*)
  - a. Overview – Dr. Brian Cheuvront
  - b. **Committee action:** Consider public comments and recommend approval for formal review – Jessica McCawley
  
17. Amendment 42 (Sea Turtle Release Gear) (*Attachment 13a and 13b*)
  - a. Overview of scoping comments and decision document – Christina Wiegand
  - b. **Committee action:** Review scoping comments and modify/approve actions and alternatives to be analyzed – Jessica McCawley
  
18. Regulatory Amendment 32 (Yellowtail Snapper) (*Attachment 14*)
  - a. Overview – Myra Brouwer
  - b. **Committee action:** Discuss and provide guidance to staff – Jessica McCawley

Other Business – Jessica McCawley

Adjourn – Jessica McCawley

**Committee Members**

Jessica McCawley, Chair  
Mel Bell, Vice-chair  
Anna Beckwith  
Zack Bowen  
Chester Brewer  
Mark Brown  
Chris Conklin  
Roy Crabtree  
Michelle Duval  
Tim Griner  
Ben Hartig  
Doug Haymans  
LCDR Jeremy Montes  
Charlie Phillips  
Mid-Atlantic Liaison, Tony DiLernia/Dewey Hemilright

**Attachments:**

**SSC Report**

- Attachment 1a:** Status of commercial catches vs. ACLs
- Attachment 1b:** Status of recreational catches vs. ACLs
- Attachment 2a:** Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel Report
- Attachment 2b:** Snapper Grouper AP Minutes – April 2018
- Attachment 3:** Bag Limits and Trip Satisfaction in the For-Hire Sector - A Case Study of South Atlantic Black Sea Bass (presentation)

- Attachment 4:** Size-selectivity of hook and line gear, Chevron traps, and underwater cameras for Red Snapper and other reef fishes in the U.S. South Atlantic (presentation)
- Attachment 5:** SERFS Update (presentation)
- Attachment 6:** Amendment 46 Options Paper
- Attachment 7:** Regulatory Amendment 29 Options Paper
- Attachment 8a:** Gray Triggerfish Discard Mortality Presentation
- Attachment 8b:** Public Hearing Comments (Reg 26)
- Attachment 8c:** Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 Decision Document
- Attachment 8d:** Draft Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26
- Attachment 9a:** Public Hearing Comments (Reg 27)
- Attachment 9b:** Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 Decision Document
- Attachment 9c:** Draft Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27
- Attachment 10a:** Revised Options Paper for Amendment 47
- Attachment 10b:** Amendment 47 Draft Scoping Document
- Attachment 11:** Regulatory Amendment 30 Options Paper
- Attachment 12a:** Regulatory Amendment 28 Decision Document
- Attachment 12b:** Draft Regulatory Amendment 28
- Attachment 12c:** Regulatory Amendment 28 Codified Text
- Attachment 13a:** Amendment 42 Scoping Comments Summary
- Attachment 13b:** Amendment 42 Decision Document
- Attachment 14:** Regulatory Amendment 32 Options Paper

**Staff:** Myra Brouwer

# OVERVIEW

## Snapper Grouper Committee

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

**1. Status of Commercial and Recreational Catches for Species under ACLs – (*Attachments 1a and 1b*)**

**Description:** National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office (NMFS SERO) staff will update the Committee on the status of commercial and recreational 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 Amendment 43 (red snapper) and Abbreviated Framework 1 (red grouper) submitted for formal review in November and December 2017, respectively.

**Required Committee Action:** None.

**3. Extension of Golden Tilefish Interim Rule**

**Description:** At their June 2017 meeting, the Council voted to request that NMFS issue an interim rule to revise the annual catch limit for golden tilefish for 2018 in order to reduce overfishing. The request was approved and new catch levels went into effect on January 2, 2018. The interim rule is set to expire July 1, 2018 but can be extended for an additional 186 days. An extension of the current catch levels would continue to ensure the level of overfishing is reduced and would allow time for the Council to finalize work on Regulatory Amendment 28. The latter would adjust the acceptable biological catch based on results of the latest stock assessment and consider changing the start date of the fishing year for the hook-and-line component of the commercial sector.

**Required Committee Action:** Consider requesting that NMFS extend the golden tilefish interim rule for an additional 186 days.

**4. Red Snapper 2018 Season**

**Description:** NMFS SERO staff will provide an update to the Committee on the expected implementation date of Amendment 43, should the amendment be approved.

**Required Committee Action:** Discuss and take action as appropriate.

**5. Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel (AP) Report (*Attachments 2a and 2b*)**

**Description:** The Snapper Grouper AP met in Charleston on April 11-13, 2018. David Moss, AP Chair, will deliver a summary of the AP's discussions and recommendations and provide additional information/clarification as needed.

**Required Committee Action:** None.

**6. Bag Limits and Trip Satisfaction in the For-Hire Sector: A Case Study of South Atlantic Black Sea Bass (*Attachment 3*)**

**Description:** While there has been research on factors that contribute to trip satisfaction among freshwater anglers, comparable work is lacking for the recreational for-hire fleet. Stacey Weinstock, a graduate student at the College of Charleston, conducted a study to determine the factors that drive trip satisfaction among customers and captains/crew of the South Carolina for-hire industry using black sea bass as a case study. Stacey will deliver a presentation highlighting results of her research to the Committee.

**Required Committee Action:** None

**7. Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Report**

**Description:** The SSC met in Charleston on May 1-3, 2018. Included in their agenda were several items pertaining to the management of the snapper grouper fishery. Dr. George Sedberry, SSC Chair, will deliver a summary of the SSC's discussions and recommendations on the following topics:

- Results of stock assessments for black sea bass and vermilion snapper and corresponding ABC recommendations;
- ABC recommendation for blueline tilefish for area north of Cape Hatteras;
- Red snapper ABC Workgroup update;
- Golden tilefish ABC recommendation; and
- Recommendation on analytical methodology for actions in Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27

**Required Committee Action:** Discuss and provide guidance to staff.

**8. Size-selectivity of hook and line gear, chevron traps, and underwater cameras for red snapper and other reef fishes in the U.S. South Atlantic (*Attachment 4*)**

Limited harvest of red snapper in the U.S. South Atlantic (aside from very limited seasons), has dramatically eroded the utility of fishery-dependent data for assessing red snapper stock status. To address this loss of information, there have been ongoing efforts to improve fishery-independent data streams. Most notably, the long-term SERFS Chevron trap survey was modified to add a video camera component and expand spatial coverage, while FWC has developed a standardized, fishery-independent hooked-gear survey. Despite these efforts, important questions remain as to the selectivity of this sampling gear. FWC-FWRI conducted a one-year study to begin assessing size-selectivity of Chevron trap, fisheries-independent hooked-gear, and fisheries-dependent hooked-gear surveys by pairing capture gear with underwater stereoscopic cameras. Combined, these analyses provide new insight into the size-selectivity of various sampling approaches for managed reef fishes, although due to insufficient sample sizes, additional efforts are required to quantitatively assess selectivity for other managed reef fishes (e.g., gray triggerfish, red porgy, scamp).

**Required Committee Action:** Discuss and provide guidance as appropriate.

**9. Southeast Reef Fish Survey (SERFS) Update (*Attachment 5*)**

**Description:** Dr. Marcel Reichert (SCDNR) will deliver a presentation summarizing trends in abundance through 2017 of snapper grouper species sampled through the SERFS.

**Required Committee Action:** None

**10. Snapper Grouper Amendment 46 (Permitting and Reporting for Private Recreational Anglers) (*Attachment 6*)**

**Description:** The Committee discussed Amendment 46 during the March 2018 meeting and provided specific guidance. One of the most significant changes was removal of actions addressing best fishing practices and powerhead regulations from the amendment. The Council approved continuing to develop those actions in a framework amendment (Regulatory Amendment 29). The Committee will review the revised Amendment 46 document and consider approving for scoping.

**Status of amendment:** A draft scoping document will be presented to the Committee for their consideration and guidance. If approved, scoping hearings would be held prior to the September meeting.

**Required Committee Action:** Consider approval for scoping.

**11. Regulatory Amendment 29 – (Best Fishing Practices and Powerheads) (*Attachment 7*)**

**Description:** At the March 2018 meeting, the Council directed staff to continue to work on actions to address the use of best fishing practices and powerhead regulations in a framework amendment to expedite development.

**Status of amendment:** An options paper will be presented to the Committee for their consideration and guidance. If approved, scoping hearings would be held prior to the September meeting.

**Required Committee Action:** Consider approval for scoping.

**12. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 26 - Recreational (*Attachments 8a-8d*)**

**Description:** At the March 2018 meeting, the Council selected preferred alternatives for the majority of the actions in the amendment and approved the amendment for public hearings. Hearings were held via webinar and listening stations on May 8-10, 2018. Council staff will present an overview of revisions to date and a summary of comments received through May 11, 2018. Comments received thereafter will be available on the Council's online comment form.

The Committee will also receive a presentation from Brendan Runde, a PhD candidate at North Carolina State University, on his research on release mortality of gray triggerfish. His team used a tag-recapture approach to produce an overall discard survival estimate for the South Atlantic recreational hook-and-line fishery. The mean estimated survival rate across all depths in North Carolina and Florida was substantially lower than the value (0.875) used for the most recent stock assessment of this species in the South Atlantic region.

**Status of amendment:** A public hearing draft was prepared for public hearings. A revised draft is provided in the briefing book. The amendment is scheduled for final approval in September 2018.

**Required Committee Action:** Consider public comment, modify the amendment as appropriate, and approve all actions.

**13. Vision Blueprint Regulatory Amendment 27 - Commercial (*Attachments 9a-9c*)**

**Description:** At the March 2018 meeting, the Council selected preferred alternatives for the majority of the actions in the amendment and approved the amendment for public hearings. Hearings were held via webinar and listening stations on May 8-10, 2018. Council staff will present an overview of revisions to date and a summary of comments received through May

11, 2018. Comments received thereafter will be available on the Council's online comment form. On May 7, 2018, the SSC convened via webinar to discuss the methodology used to analyze the potential effects of some of the proposed actions.

**Status of amendment:** A public hearing draft was prepared for public hearings. A revised draft is provided in the briefing book. The amendment is scheduled for final approval in September 2018.

**Required Committee Action:** Consider public comment, modify the amendment as appropriate, and approve all actions.

#### **14. Snapper Grouper Amendment 47 (For-Hire Permit Moratorium) (*Attachments 10a and 10b*)**

**Description:** During the March 2018 meeting, Council staff presented an options paper and requested guidance regarding implementing a moratorium on for-hire Snapper Grouper permits. Committee members offered detailed guidance and the Council requested that a revised options paper (*Attachment 11a*), and draft scoping document (*Attachment 11b*) inclusive of the comments and additional items provided by the Committee be prepared for their consideration in June.

**Status of amendment:** A draft options paper and scoping document have been developed for the Committee's consideration. If approved, scoping hearings will be held prior to the September meeting.

**Required Committee Action:** Review draft scoping document, provide guidance to staff, and consider approval for scoping.

#### **15. Regulatory Amendment 30 (Red Grouper Rebuilding) (*Attachment 11*)**

The recent red grouper assessment (SEDAR 53) indicated that the stock is undergoing overfishing and is not making adequate progress towards rebuilding, which is supposed to take place by 2020 under the current rebuilding plan. The Council was formally notified of the red grouper stock status via a letter from NMFS dated September 17, 2017. The Council has moved to end overfishing through the revised ABC and ACL for red grouper that will be implemented via Abbreviated Framework Amendment 1 but has not yet revised the red grouper rebuilding plan.

During the March 2018 meeting, the Committee directed staff to begin work on a framework amendment to revise the rebuilding plan for red grouper. In order to meet the statutory deadline, a revised rebuilding plan needs to be in place by September 2019. Staff will present a draft action and alternatives, a draft purpose and need statement, and request further guidance/clarification.

**Status of amendment:** A draft options paper has been developed for the Committee's consideration. If approved, scoping hearings would be held prior to the September meeting.

**Required Committee Action:** Review options paper, provide guidance to staff, and consider approval for scoping.

#### **16. Regulatory Amendment 28 (Golden Tilefish) (*Attachments 12a-12c*)**

**Description:** The Council directed staff to continue development of Regulatory Amendment 28. The amendment includes actions to revise catch levels of golden tilefish and specify a new ABC. Additionally, an action to modify the fishing year for the hook-and-line component of the commercial sector is included. The SSC agreed with the Council's



rationale that setting ABC = 75% of Fmsy (362,000 pounds whole weight), the same as the current interim rule, was reasonable.

**Status of amendment:** A draft amendment has been prepared and public comment will be taken during the June meeting.

**Required Committee Action:** Review the amendment, modify as necessary, select preferred alternatives as needed, review the codified text, and consider recommending approval for formal review.

**17. Amendment 42 (Modifications to Sea Turtle Release Gear and Snapper Grouper Framework) (*Attachment 13a and 13b*)**

**Description:** At the March 2018 meeting, the Council directed staff to conduct scoping webinars for proposed 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. 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. Scoping hearings were conducted on April 23-24, 2018. Council staff will deliver a summary of scoping comments and an overview of the decision document to obtain further guidance.

**Status of amendment:** Scoping hearings were conducted in April 2018.

**Required Committee Action:** Consider scoping comments and provide guidance.

**18. Regulatory Amendment 32 (Yellowtail Snapper) (*Attachment 14*)**

**Description:** In March 2018, the Council directed staff to begin work on an amendment that would revise in-season accountability measures for yellowtail snapper. The intent is to alleviate socio-economic impacts due to in-season harvest closures in the commercial sector once the sector ACL has been met. The Committee provided some guidance on the range of alternatives to be included. Staff will present draft actions and alternatives, a draft purpose and need statement, and request further guidance/clarification.

**Status of amendment:** Draft actions/alternatives and a purpose and need statement have been developed for the Committee's consideration.

**Required Committee Action:** Discuss and provide guidance on amendment timing and development.

**Other Business**