

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Webinar

September 17, 2020

SUMMARY MINUTES

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Other observers and participants attached.

The Executive Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened via webinar on Thursday, September 17, 2020, and was called to order by Chairman Jessica McCawley.

MS. MCCAWLEY: John, do you want to start walking us through -- Is the next item our priorities or is it Kelly going through the travel forms?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think Kelly going through the travel forms, and then we'll transfer over and jump into the priorities.

MR. KLASNICK: A little bit of non-fish-specific talk for you here for a couple of minutes, but the council staff has been working through a variety of different processes and procedures and looking for ways to modernize some and streamline and gain some efficiencies, and we have recently been tackling our travel authorization process and just the workflows and the forms and basically all the different components that are related to that.

We wanted to just give you a look at a couple of the forms that are most pertinent to you all, so that, whenever you receive these revisions, they won't be a complete surprise, and this is really just informational for you, but, of course, any questions, feel free to let me know.

What you're looking at here is a revision of the travel authorization memo. Typically, of course, when there is travel related to our meetings, one of the first pieces of information that you might receive would be the details on the where, the when, the what, and the related info that you need to get yourself to that meeting and plan for it. We have certainly kept all of the most relevant information here for you and tried to streamline things a bit and move to the front of the document kind of those key pieces of information that you're looking for to get yourself in the right place at the right time.

Also, including some of the information on here that you would need if you are indeed an approved traveler under the council to go ahead and submit your reimbursement for that travel, which we've also updated those forms to help with that process as well. The key information is on here, and I think it's pretty self-explanatory. The couple of pieces of information that you would need later on to complete your travel order for the reimbursement are going to be things like what is the particular per diem for that meeting, based on that location, if you have driven a personal vehicle and what is the reimbursement for that, and so, at any rate, this will have information on there to help you through that process.

Then the other kind of key piece of information that's going to be on this newly revised authorization notice is, on the second page, you will see a list of the approved travelers. Those will be listed and then if you are eligible for council reimbursement, and you're also going to have an assigned travel order number next to your name, like we see in the example here. You might not need that on that day, but you will want to have access to that information, because, whenever you submit your travel order, we're going to ask that you place that TO number that's assigned to you on that travel order, to help match things up, so we know which meeting that you are submitting to, and we can tie that back.

You get this, and the meeting date comes and goes, and you do your travel, and you need to go ahead and submit for a reimbursement, and so, in that case, you're going to need to work off of

the travel order to accomplish that, and there was a team here of staff that put a lot of effort into trying to work through this process and make it a bit more efficient, and so I appreciate everybody's effort on that, and we have this nice little fillable form for you all now, and so, whenever it's time to submit, of course, you will fill in what you need to, and here's where you will put that travel order that you would have pulled off of the authorization notice that matches with you.

Of course, the other meeting details up here, and then, as you get to the actual expenses for the day that you are accounting for, you will enter that in, and Suzanna did a lot of great work on these forms, making them as easy to navigate, I hope, as can be, with some calculations and things, and so you will see, as I make changes here on the form, it will total and recalculate for you on the total side. Hotel would only apply if you weren't traveling under our group and you had to pay for that yourself and get reimbursed for it, but, if you did, you would put that through on there.

You just fill that out, as appropriate, and then the other fields are going to be similar, and let's say you were driving your personal vehicle, and it was a 150-mile trip, and, if we're at that reimbursement rate of fifty-seven-and-a-half cents, it would do the calculations there and then, et cetera, and you would just fill out the rest as needed, and the form will do the math for you.

If you have any extenuating circumstances, something you think we need to know about, go ahead and fill that in here. Then a sign-off here, just typing in, or, if you have the capability for electronic signature, that's fine. If the field doesn't work for you, then you can just type your name in, date it, save it down, and then send it on, and we have the submission instructions up here. Of course, if you have any receipts that are needed, you can scan those in and also submit those electronically, and so we're trying to cut down a little bit on some of the paper shuffling and all of that in the process and just take advantage of some of the more streamlined options that we have out there.

I would also just mention, as part of this, that we're also in the middle of a pilot program to move our reimbursement, and so the actual method of making the reimbursement, and a lot of you now know that we're a paper check environment, and we've been working to move away from that, and we've done that with other vendors, and so we're right now piloting a program with a third-party vendor that will move to all electronic reimbursement, and so far so good, and, if there aren't any major problems with that, as we work through the rest of the pilot here over the rest of this month, just be looking for some information coming out from us about how to sign up and get onboard with that program.

Kind of another part of this is we wanted to streamline things on the frontend and improve the process, and then we also wanted to do the same kind of on the backend, when the reimbursements actually need to go out, and get out of that check and paper process for that.

Also, we're planning to create just a little overview video of these forms and the process, just kind of a step-by-step, to keep it concise, but make that available, because, as you know, people come and go to our meetings, and it can be difficult, and I know a lot of folks work with different organizations, and they all have their own processes and procedures, and so we're going to make that training video available, kind of as an on-demand type of option that people can dial in at their convenience and take a look at it, and hopefully it can answer almost all of the questions that we would see, and then, of course, if you still need assistance, you could always call us here at the office, and we'll be glad to walk people through and get them up and running.

We also, at some point, are planning to hang these things out on the website, and it might not be a good fit right now, but there's some other initiatives underway that will allow us, in the future, to get these types of documents and training videos and things hopefully out on there as well, to just kind of help with that self-service model and make these available for folks whenever it's most convenient for them to get it, but, in the meantime, you would expect to receive these items as an invited attendee and with the email that you would get with the agenda and other related information on it.

That is really all I have, from an overview standpoint, and I would be glad to take any questions or comments or feedback, if you all are looking for something else or feel like something else needs to be done.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Kelly. I think this is great. I am super excited about doing this, and I appreciate the time that you guys spent making these fillable forms, and I think that this is going to cut down time on the end of the traveler as well as on you all's time as well, and so I'm excited about that, and I'm excited that there might be the option in the future for a direct deposit, and I appreciate you guys working on a training video, because you're right that every organization has a different way that you fill out these forms, and I feel like I have to refresh myself every time that I travel for one of those entities about how to do it, and so I really appreciate all the work on this, and I'm very excited about it.

MR. KLASNICK: Sounds good. Thanks for the feedback, and, of course, as these things get out and you actually start using them, feel free to provide us feedback throughout the process, so we can make improvements as we go.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Kelly. I see some hands going up. Mel and then Chester and then Steve.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Kelly. This is great, and, for those of you who travel for ASMFC, this will look a little familiar to kind of how they do it, and, to those that don't, trust me. I have done both, and this process is -- Once you've got it figured out and understand how to do it, it's greatly simplified, and it expedites your ability to work through the claim, and so it's a really good thing, and I really appreciate all the hard work on it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Mel. Chester.

MR. BREWER: I have got two questions. My first one is who and what is anonymous skunk? It keeps showing up on the hands raised, and I just have no idea what it is. Maybe somebody can tell me offline, but, anyway, Kelly, I do have a question, and it's not on the page that's up on the screen right now, and it was, I believe, on the first page, where it's the travel authorization.

It's saying there that, if the distance from your office to the meeting site is fifty miles or under, you will not -- The South Atlantic will not reimburse for a hotel stay. Is there some change that has taken place? I mean, heretofore, the hotels have essentially been booked as a block, and we've just called in to make a reservation, and has that process changed, number one, and, number two, fifty miles seems a little bit distant, to me, because sometimes these meetings -- I mean, we're going until late at night, and sometimes, when we're behind, we're starting really early in the morning, and some of these places that we go to are -- They are two-lane roads leading in, and so

it could take potentially an-hour-and-a-half or more to drive the fifty miles, and, with that, I will mute myself.

MR. KLASNICK: Thanks, Chester. To answer your first question, as far as booking the hotel, no, we're not really anticipating any change in that process, and so, if it's a meeting that the council is sponsoring, and we have reserved a block of rooms, then, on this travel authorization notice, you would have here the hotel details, the information you would need to go ahead and book that, whether that's directly through weblink or if you want to make a phone call, whatever you would prefer, and so that wouldn't change that part of the process.

As far as the fifty miles, that's really not a change, and I didn't clarify this earlier, but, I mean, we didn't change any really existing policy as part of these updates, and it was more of a process type of update, and you had fifty miles, which is really just kind of in line with GAO, and not that the council is bound to that, but that has been the protocol that's been out there.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Kelly. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thanks, Madam Chair, and thanks to Kelly and all the other staff that put these together, and I agree with Jessica that these are very clear and straightforward, and I appreciate the update on maybe moving us into electronic payments, direct deposits and that kind of stuff, but Chester did raise a pretty good point, because I agree. I mean, a lot of these meetings can run late, and I am certainly one of the folks that, if I can sleep in my bed, yes, I might spend two hours on the road and go back and sleep in my bed, but I certainly recognize that others might want the option to stay at a hotel.

I noticed too, as far as from the office -- For example, I live about twenty miles from my office, and, depending on where the meeting is in North Carolina, it might be fifty miles to New Bern from my office, but only thirty miles from my house, or vice versa on that, and I was just curious, and I guess it's in our policy somewhere, as far as it being from the office, but I could also see that being an issue for some of our non-state reps, council members who may not have an office and work from home, and so, in the end, it might be a minor detail, but should that language kind of be modified to maybe office or place of residence or something to that effect?

MR. KLASNICK: Thanks, Steve. I mean, the office is really in there as trying to pick a consistent, I guess, measuring point for everybody, and so, if your office is your home, then my interpretation would be that it would be counted the same, but certainly we could add clarification to that, something more along your place of business or something along those lines.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Kelly. Anna.

MS. BECKWITH: I'm good. Thanks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Kelly, do we need some type of motion to approve this, or was this just an update for informational purposes? What do you need here?

MR. KLASNICK: Thanks, Jessica. I mean, this was really just an update for informational purposes, but there's been some comments here on the fifty miles and that sentence under the basic

guidelines, and so, if this is something that the committee would like to propose a change in, then, yes, I think that would be best handled under a motion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. What is the pleasure of the committee? I thought that the policy was that you wouldn't reimburse for a hotel stay, but there was a way to make a request to either the ED or to you for some extenuating circumstances, like what Chester described, as a reason why you might need or want to request a hotel stay, and so I thought that there was a little more to this that was in the handbook.

MR. KLASNICK: Thank you for that, Jessica. You are correct, and it's actually on the travel guidelines as well, which gets distributed to all of the approved travelers with these other documentations, and I didn't bring that up at this meeting, because, although we've cleaned it up a bit, again, we didn't change any of the policy in it, and we have more just clarified to make it easier to read, but you're correct, Jessica, that one of the lead sentences on that document indicates that, if you do have circumstances that warrant some sort of consideration, yes, that you can reach out here to have those discussed. If that makes the committee feel better, you're correct that is out there and provides that flexibility, understanding that one-size-fits-all doesn't fit every exact situation that folks are dealing with.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks for that clarification, Kelly, and I just was throwing that out there because I'm not certain that we need a change, because I felt like this extenuating circumstances suggestion was already covered in the language. Steve.

MR. POLAND: I mean, I'm fine, as long as that's there. If there is some opportunity for extenuating circumstances, it's up to the Chair or the Vice Chair or the ED or something, I mean, I'm fine, because I feel like that covers all our bases.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Steve. Chester, I assume that you're okay as well?

MR. BREWER: Yes, ma'am.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. I don't see any more hands raised, and so I'm going to assume that folks are good here.

MR. KLASNICK: Very good. Thank you, Jessica. Thank you, everybody.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Kelly. John, back to you for priorities, for council priorities, I believe is what's next.

MR. CARMICHAEL: That is next, and so we'll get the -- Let me call up the control and start displaying that. Okay. I have got the agenda overview displayed, and the next topic is review of the council priorities and workplan, and so where we left this was, in August, in our Executive Committee meeting, we reviewed the priorities schedule list, the spreadsheet, which I will call up here, which lays out the projects that we have in play right now and things that we're looking ahead to.

The next evolution of this process was to try and capture the amount of discussion that goes on at council meetings for various topics as a way to control our meeting length and make sure that we

don't bite off more than we can handle in one particular meeting, and so the refresher is the orange blocks are what are considered the full-session discussion, with a session being say a morning or afternoon period during the meeting, and so like a 9:00 to 12:00 before lunch or a 1:00 to 5:00 after-lunch session, basically, and so, in our normal meetings, there is eight of those, Monday afternoon through Friday morning.

The goal is to try and keep our FMP workload on the order of six, in terms of counting in these full-period discussions in orange your half-period discussions in yellow, and, obviously, this is kind of an approximation. We don't always know how long issues are going to take, and some things may take an hour, and some may take two or three, et cetera.

Anyway, the goal was to try and prevent us from having the surprises where we just totally overload the meeting, but while also making sure that we get as much done as we can, and so I guess we'll have optimum yield of our meeting discussion time, essentially.

We discussed the future outlook and what we were going to prioritize at the Executive Committee in August, and one of the agreements was to prioritize these assessment, upcoming assessment, projects, and so you basically see them here in Lines 9 through 14. That addresses a number of those, and we know these assessments are coming, and some have already been received, and they are things that we have to work on.

We also recommended, at that meeting, to account for the time that some of these other topics take, such as AP and SSC selection, the discussion of the emergency rule, as noted for this meeting, and a discussion of allocation, and so, based on this meeting, one thing that we will need to do then is to factor in potential future allocation discussions in some of the upcoming meetings, and, looking at the bottom line, hopefully those are going to be yellow and not orange.

The other thing we added, after August, was the recreational topics meeting that we've talked about some and asked folks to make sure you provide your availability, so we can settle that this week, and we're kind of looking at Monday, November 9 for holding that meeting. That seems to be good for folks.

What we would be talking about at that meeting is shown here, and the joint workgroup reviewing the recreational items, reminding the council and giving you a refresher on the accountability measures and the permits actions, and then the MyFishCount project, which will be transferred over to the Angler Action Foundation at the first of the year, and so we want to tell you what we've learned about that and where that is headed for the future, and so that's the November meeting.

Then the process here is we would just add up the FMP projects here in Line 15 with your light-green, and then the sub-total for the other projects and the other light-green, and then we have a subtotal for basically the entire meeting's workload. What we looked at was having the potential for maybe some additional work that we could do moving forward into the future, and, if we did have that potential, what would you like to do.

The two options that were discussed were some long-standing projects that have been underway for a while, one being the Coral 10 and addressing the CHAPCs, and then the other being the ABC control rule amendment, and so the committee asked that we give a refresher of those amendments,

what they're proposing to do, so to help you decide which of these we would like to work on, and I think, as we look ahead to this, we see that the workload gets up to six, 6.5, 8.5.

I think that's okay, to say approach about seven, or maybe seven-and-a-half, if we consider that we have added this section here, with the recurring and special topics, where we are taking note of things like the AP selection and that sort of thing that takes a pretty good bit of the council's time, but, you know, what isn't characterized in here are some of the ongoing things, like the Executive Committee meetings that are pretty regular, the SEDAR Committee meetings, and so, if we figure a meeting as eight of these blocks, I think we know at least probably a block in every meeting is probably filled up by at least those committees, or sometimes maybe two blocks, and so I think, if we keep this total somewhere around seven, or seven-and-a-half, we're probably manageable.

Now, that tells us that we have a bit of an issue, as we can see, coming up in the latter half of the year, June and September, and I believe our workload is fairly manageable going into December, and certainly into March, and so what we will do is, after we talk about these couple of amendments of next, I think we need to look ahead and think about how we can maybe manage this workload a little bit better and make sure we're not overloading the council meetings.

A couple of thoughts come to my mind on dealing with that, and one is we can probably refine some of the discussion points in the overall FMP projects as we learn more about what needs to be done in those FMPs and how much discussion will be required, and then we can perhaps, if necessary, stagger some of these FMP and assessment-related projects, so that maybe the council isn't talking about every amendment at every meeting, and so we may take a little hiatus while say an amendment gets reviewed by the SSC and an AP, perhaps.

The plan then would be, once we get these few decision points this week, we will go through our normal reprioritization of all these projects that you're familiar with, where you put a number score for each of those, and we will do that prior to the December meeting, as we traditionally do, and then we would look at our priorities, and, at that point, the plan is to develop a workplan for the coming year, and so for 2021.

Just to keep us on track, the goal is to make sure that we don't have an overload for December of 2020, and probably March of 2021, too bad, because we do start working that far in advance, and then, in December, we'll probably have to get to brass tacks on balancing out some of this for 2021, and so, if everyone is clear on sort of where we stand and where we left things, we can go ahead and turn it over to the presentation, and so I will pause here, Jessica, to see if there are questions.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, John. While we're waiting to see if there's any hands, I really like this new format, and I like how, at our meeting last month, we added in some of these recurring items that we know happen at every single council meeting, just so we were having, I guess, a more accurate reflection of all the different things that we were doing and all the different time blocks that are needed in one meeting, and I just think that this is helpful to see. That way, it doesn't look like there's more space for more items in there. I don't see any hands right now, John. I guess that we're good to move into Coral 10.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think one just came up.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Mel.

MR. BELL: I guess I'm Anonymous Skunk Alpha. I was just going to say that I really like it too, Jessica. For whatever reason, I'm kind of a visual comprehension person, and having this all laid out like that really helps me, and it's got all the things that you want to look at to help us balance stuff, and so I really appreciate them reformatting this, and it actually works.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Mel. I don't see any more additional hands. I think we're good to go into those presentations.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think we are, yes. Thank you. Like Mel, I'm glad this works out, because I am kind of the same way, and this really helps me see what is coming up on our documents. Brian, who was going to go first, coral or the control rule?

DR. CHEUVRONT: John, I don't know that it really matters, and so whichever one you want to bring up first, and I see you've got coral right there, and that's fine, and so Roger would go.

MR. PUGLIESE: Did you want me to run it from the regular presentation, or are you just going to scroll?

MR. CARMICHAEL: It's pretty short, and I will just scroll. You tell me when to jump.

MR. PUGLIESE: Okay. What I wanted to do is catch the council back up on the development of Amendment 10 to the Coral, Coral Reef, and Live/Hard Bottom Habitat Fishery Management Plan. The first thing I wanted to do is address actually what is not in it anymore, and what the council decided to do is move the shrimp vessel transit provision from that amendment, and it was addressed in Shrimp Amendment 10. Also, there was discussions regarding the development of additional gold crab areas within that document, and, after seeing research and other activities, the council pulled that out of this amendment, and so that actually focuses on the two actions on the next slide that will be considered under Amendment 10.

The first is an activity that was associated with the beginnings of the extension of the Northern Zone of the Oculina Bank. After the council had reduced, actually, the northern extension, a couple of times, right at the end, after the council had moved forward, there was a desire to look at a small sliver of an area along the eastern boundary of the northern extension of the Oculina Bank, and so this would potentially establish a shrimp fishery access area along that eastern boundary.

The second action really gets to the issue of the creation of an expansion of the Miami Terrace CHAPC, and so coral habitat area of particular concern, which was refined both from the original CEBA, through Coral Amendment 8, and this would be to protect newly-discovered and connected deepwater coral ecosystems and habitats observed and mapped since 2014.

It's significant, because this first one addresses the first action, and this at least gives us a scope of the type of issue that's being discussed. If you look on the left map, you're seeing the entire Oculina Bank HAPC, with all the different areas that were added over time, and that's the complete distribution of the new HAPC. When you look to the right, you actually see the area of interest that has been discussed, and it's that red sliver on the right side of the northern extension. There is a small area that has been identified by industry, saying that, at certain years, certain times, there

is opportunities, potentially, of fishing a little bit closer to the edge of that eastern wall, and so that area is what is being shown there.

This is now, just for familiarization for some of the members that may not be familiar with this fishery, and we do have the only vessel monitoring program in this fishery, and so we have very fine-resolution information on operations. We were able to look at the operations relative to that area and have updated information through -- At that time, we actually had looked at this in 2015, relative to what was in and what was out, and so that's the first action that would be addressed, and so it's really getting back to an issue that had been sitting in the background for a little while.

The second action has to do with the deepwater coral ecosystems, and the council developed the full suite of coral habitat areas of particular concern, one being the Stetson Miami Terrace CHAPC, and what this is really trying to just emphasize as part of this is some of the foundational rationale to move forward and also influence some of the discussions on removing the golden crab areas out of this.

The Okeanos Explorer, over time, has mapped -- Really, to a great degree, it has focused on council needs and a number of other NOAA vessels and NOAA partners have focused efforts to map and characterize, within the area, and this shows about 34,000 kilometers within the actual HAPC that have been mapped since the implementation of Coral Amendment 8, as well as a significant area of the Blake Plateau, and that's what really this discussion and focus and effort is going to address, is the extension of the areas beyond the eastern boundary of the existing coral HAPC.

Even though we have information, there is still focus and direction, and, as I said, we have been lucky enough to have the cutting-edge technologies applied directly for council priorities and expanding our understanding of all those systems.

What that really does is show -- The kind of key take-aways that support this action is the mapping and ROV exploration. That continues to reveal extensive distributions of lophelia coral on the Blake Plateau and verifying the real complex deepwater ecosystems and the unique components, like the Million Mound area that extends really significantly east of the present CHAPC boundary, and those are some of the most dynamic systems that have been found really almost anywhere in the world at this time.

That Million Mound area had been mapped earlier on, after we were moving through the last coral amendment, and now they are showing the extension, and they have made it clear that it even goes beyond where the latest mapped areas are, and so these, again, are some of the most dynamic deepwater systems that support wreckfish, that support a lot of the deepwater species in our region.

What that brings us to is that we've been, as I mentioned, working very closely with Ocean Exploration, OER, as well as NOAA's Deep-Sea Coral Program, and we have been continuously updated with the Habitat and Ecosystem Advisory Panel before this, but some of the more nearer times were October of 2019, and, most recently, at the webinar that we held in April of 2020. The intent is to have another update on this at the October 2020, both on where they are and where they're going.

The next steps, and this is actually something that had been deferred, but we were hoping to have the director of OER present to the committee and council on kind of the bigger picture, a high-

level review of all that has been done, and it really gives you that context of how much has been invested by the different programs to focus on council needs and to look at the types of areas that would be considered under Coral Amendment 10, and so the hope is that we potentially could have that type of presentation at the December, if we have a Habitat and Ecosystem Committee for the council in December of 2020.

That would provide the foundation from which to move forward in building the options and to look at moving into scoping, having scoping meetings, both Habitat and Coral Advisory Panel meetings, and probably the Shrimp Advisory Panel, and public hearings held in 2021.

The one big difference, I think, of this effort is that, in this amendment, the one action is very focused on previous discussions, and the second action is giving us a boundary, and we don't have, necessarily, some of the bigger interactions that occurred earlier on, and the shrimp fishery does not occur in these depths, and so the opportunity to build on what truly is the ecosystem conservation effort that was done in the original round for the coral habitat area of particular concern designations is there, and it's an opportunity to take steps to really protect some of these systems.

I think one of the great actions is, not only were we getting them to do the work, but they were very linked very closely on live presentations that we were distributing out to the council and out to everyone on their actual live operations of the ROV systems, as they were mapping, and it really did give you a view of how extensive -- Virtually everywhere they were looking, they were looking at new, undescribed species and undiscovered habitats and coral ecosystem. With that, that is really the context of the entire amendment, those two significant actions to move forward with and address outstanding issues that we have very significant research and foundation information to support council action. Any questions?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Roger. I just wanted to note that the first action that's in there, the revision of the area that was some historic rock shrimping grounds, I feel like this item has been hanging out there for maybe four years, and I can't remember when we put this in place the first time, but we definitely made a commitment to those fishermen that we would go back and look at this, and I know that this was something that Roy wanted to do before he retired, and so this is also -- This particular action of this amendment is one of the items that is going on the Presidential EO list, which I think also needs to be able to come back within a year from that initial Presidential EO, to show that we started it.

I guess I am certainly in favor of moving this into the items that I would like to see the council work on, and, for me, if the second action, the one that's about adding the new areas, I welcome that moving forward, but, if it's going to hold up the first action in this document, the one that the fishermen have been waiting on for multiple years, I am willing to move even just that action and that part of the amendment forward and then come back later and revisit the additional areas that Roger talked about, just to make sure that we get that first action done a little bit faster, since folks have been waiting for many years on that, and, Roy, I don't know if you wanted to add anything to this.

DR. CRABTREE: Nothing to add, Jessica, except that this is one we've talked about for a while and that I would like to see us tend to.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Roy. Mel.

MR. BELL: I was going to just simply second your comments. Yes, this has been -- The first action there has been -- I couldn't even tell you how long, and I guess at least four years or so, but I would like to get that taken care of, and I don't want it to be delayed by adding something else at this point.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Mel. Chester.

MR. BREWER: Thank you. Now we have an Anonymous Walrus, but, anyway, I agree with Jessica, and I agree with Mel, and I agree with you that this has been out there for a long time, and we did promise, and I think we ought to move it forward as expeditiously as possible.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Any more comments on this? John, if I understand, we will look at these two presentations, and then we'll come back to our priority list, and is that how this is going to work?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Yes, that's the plan, and I think probably a motion that would say to add either this or the ABC control rule, if you were to say take this and add the CHAPC to address the extension, and that would be fine, and so, if there's no questions on this, then we'll move into the ABC control rule presentation.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Sounds good. Thank you, Roger.

MR. PUGLIESE: Thank you.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Up next is Mike Schmidtke with the review of the comprehensive ABC control rule amendment, and just to point out that we kind of just threw this at Mike and told him to jump onto it, and he's probably only been working with us for a few weeks, and so take it away, Mike.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Thanks, John. As John said, I kind of jumped onto this project a little bit late in the game, and so, when we get to the time for questions, I will do my best to answer, but I will certainly likely be depending on some of my fellow staff members, if there are questions about this, but I will be giving a brief overview of the comprehensive ABC control rule amendment, kind of where it stands currently, and what some potential next steps could be.

In June of 2018, staff presented a draft amendment that considered five general actions modifying the ABC control rule process, specifying risk tolerance, a process for specifying a probability of rebuilding, the phasing-in of changes to the ABC, and carryover of unharvested catch. The council provided comments to this draft and approved it for scoping.

Scoping was conducted in January of 2019. In March of 2019, the council reviewed these comments. The draft that includes the scoping comments was included in the briefing book in April of 2019, and the SSC reviewed the amendment and recommended some additional information. This included a P* comparison of current and proposed methodologies for assessed species, wanting to see kind of what the potential differences in the P* method would be, and then a Story Map example that would walk through the attribute evaluation and risk score calculation

components of the amendment. These two items are things that Mike Errigo is, at minimum, aware of, if he hasn't already started working on them, and so they are things that could be incorporated moving forward.

As far as next steps for picking this back up, the response that we could go with would be that the staff would address those concerns that the SSC had and bring that information to them in the October 2020 meeting. There is some advantage to doing this, because the SSC schedule for October is relatively light, and, kind of further off on the horizon, there are multiple assessment reviews that are coming up in some future meetings that are going to take a considerable amount of time, and so it would be good, if the council wants to move forward with this, to try to address that part of it sooner rather than later.

Looking at more of a longer-term timeline, if the council would like to move forward, we could have that SSC review in October, and then staff would be able to resume work, and the council would be able to resume work, on the amendment starting in December and then going through the middle of next year, when a document could be approved for public hearings in September, with hearings in the fall, and review of the hearing comments, as well as approval of actions and alternatives and final action approval for secretarial review in December of next year, and so the overarching question for all of this is does the council want staff to proceed with this schedule, or is there any change or alternative to it?

One point that has been discussed a little bit is that there's been a considerable amount of time between the initial scoping period and now, picking that back up, and so that time period is wanting to take that into account. However, considering the comments that were provided in that initial scoping period, this amendment is a pretty technical sort of amendment, and many of the comments were addressing the technical aspects of it, but more giving some general directions that these folks would like to see fisheries management move in through this amendment. Those are some things for your consideration. If we go to the next slide, I can cede the floor and try to address any questions.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. I guess, while we're waiting for hands to be raised, I would like to see this amendment come back, and I am wondering if maybe this Modern Fish Act joint council workgroup -- I am wondering if that workgroup needs to meet another time or two before we come back to this amendment or if it's okay that it's on a parallel track, and I think it's okay that it goes to the SSC in October no matter what, but I see that Steve has his hand raised, and I was wondering what your thoughts are on this amendment in relation to that workgroup.

MR. POLAND: Thanks, Madam Chair. From the SSC's perspective, I have heard, just about meeting since I've been the SSC liaison -- Every time we have reviewed assessments and they have provided ABC recommendations, they have expressed a desire that the council continue work on this ABC control rule, to address some of the concerns that they're raised in the past, and so I'm fine with the proposed schedule, as far as getting this back to the SSC in October, because I think they have had some additional conversations, and kind of some new insights, on how the ABC control rule is applied since the last time they have seen this, and so I would like to hear that.

As far as the workgroup, I think it's completely appropriate to move this along in parallel streams. I certainly think we need to get the ball back rolling on this, especially for those carryover provisions and that kind of stuff, to kind of set the stage to go ahead and get those incorporated,

so that, eventually, when the workgroup starts producing recommendations for us and the Gulf Council, we might be able to jump on them in a little quicker order.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Steve. That was helpful. I don't know if there's any more questions about this presentation. If there aren't, then, John, could we go back, or, Brian, can we go back to that Excel table and talk about how we could fit both of these items in there? At least for me, I am fine with just Action 1 of Coral Amendment 10 moving forward, and it is on that Presidential EO list as a high priority, and it's been hanging out there for many years, and so I guess I would be looking to staff to say whether the ABC control rule and say the Action 1 of Coral Amendment 10 could move forward and get into our priority list at the same time, or can we only select one of those?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Jessica, I think picking the one action in coral probably does simplify things, and maybe we can knock that out quickly, and then, as far as doing both, I agree with sort of how it was presented, that it's important to keep the SSC's action moving on the ABC control rule. You know, that's something that the council does in concert with them, and the biggest component of that amendment is addressing the risk and uncertainty and the P* situation, which directly translates to your ABC.

I think, if we can work with the SSC on that for October, and see where that goes, and maybe have a report-out to the council in December, keep it as a yellow-type issue and a pretty short, maybe an hour, discussion, and I think we could get both moving at the same time. Then I think what we would have to do is sort of see how the coral workplan lines up and what we do with the pending workload issues that we see here in the spreadsheet say starting in June.

I think, in December, we can talk about how do we potentially stagger that workload, particularly as you see -- You know, we have the snowy grouper assessment, which we intend to look at in March, and we have the gag and golden tilefish assessments coming in June, and maybe we stagger some of them, in terms of presentation to the council, just to balance out that workload, but, of course, I feel that we need to see what the status of those stocks are, because, if we're under a statutory deadline, say to end overfishing or to have a rebuilding plan of some sort, then those would have to be elevated in the priorities. Is that clear as mud?

MS. MCCAWLEY: That was helpful, and I had the same thoughts about possibly staggering some of those assessments, and I agree that it likely depends on the results. One of my questions is it sounds like that the SSC could look at the ABC control rule amendment at their upcoming meeting and then we could get, at the very least, an update on what the SSC discussion was about this at the December meeting, and so could -- It's unclear to me this one action in Coral 10, and could it come back to December, or does it need to wait until March? I am just trying to figure out when it would come back.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Roger, sort of where is that? Is that something that could be potentially a document ready to move a little bit on the council's guidance in December, and then, I assume, at some point, we'll need to bring in the AP, and is that something we could do maybe this spring? Roger, if you could give us some guidance there.

MR. PUGLIESE: Well, we haven't addressed this in a while, and so, I mean, what we would want to do is bring some of this to the APs too, but I think we have what is identified as the key proposal,

and we could get input from the Habitat and Ecosystem at the October meeting, and, right now, we don't have anything actually on the table that the council is looking at yet, and so I think that's the key, and to look at some of the information that was the foundation of it, in terms of what, at that point in time, we knew was fishing operations.

I think we could have an options paper, or something, developed, and, to me, it's more likely to be brought to the council in March, and I think the point I was making before about the amount of work to work on that, as well as the simple action of the HAPC, those actually -- If we're doing a full amendment, it's about the same thing, because, actually, the AP has had more information on the newest information on the extension of the HAPC than on this.

I guess my comment would be that, if we had the opportunity to bring something and flesh it out more between having that presentation that I mentioned to the council on the broader HAPC in December, and we could look at the actual alternatives of what would go for the extension or creation of the shrimp fishery action area in a document that we brought to the council in March, and that would be probably the best situation, because we would have the ability to have some input and actually create something, because, right now, we have not had any input from an IPT or even any focus on this specific -- The one action from any of the APs, et cetera.

That is probably clear as mud, but I think that my point is, yes, if we want to move these forward -- I think, if you're going to move forward with a full amendment, it's going to take as much time to work on compiling the information we have from the one as well as the other, if we're moving forward with a full amendment.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I guess my take is I really just want Action 1 to come forward, and I really would love for Action 1 to come forward in December and not wait until March. It is on our list, and it has been hanging out there for like four years, and I really feel like we already have the information, and I just think that Action 1 is the priority, at least for me, but I think that Steve had his hand up, and then I see Mel and Chip.

MR. POLAND: I put my hand back down, Madam Chair.

MR. BELL: I just wanted to clarify, since we did add that to our Executive Order list, and so then that sort of lights a fuse on one year, and, at the one-year mark, what is it exactly that we are supposed to have done, and is it initiated an amendment? In other words, how would we measure success that we have meet that requirement? Is it just having something in place? At what point in the process do we need to be in a year?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Mel, we do have to have initiated, and then I would think that, if we said, yes, start working on this and have the Habitat AP talk about it, and maybe even ask that we have a meeting of the Shrimp AP, if that's necessary, and that would certainly, in my mind, constitute that the council has started working on it, particularly if we made time at the December meeting to also get a report-out and potentially look at options that you would be considering, and I would presume, at that time, potentially approving it for scoping.

MR. BELL: That's what I was going to ask, if we needed to be close to, or right at, scoping or something to count.

DR. COLLIER: If you remember from a couple of years ago, there was a request for reducing regulations, and we had several options that were discussed at that time, and this area was discussed then as well, and so we presented a couple of different options, based on some previous recommendations from the Shrimp AP, and this was presented to the Coral AP as well as the Shrimp AP, and so there has been a few discussions, and we can dig those back out, and, that area up there that Roger had indicated with that red line, that area has been mapped since 2014. NMFS went out there and mapped it for us, based on some preliminary discussions, and so we do have a little bit of additional information that could potentially be included in that amendment.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That sounds great. My recommendation would be to move on Action 1, and I do feel like, not only has it been hanging out there, but, yes, Chip, we talked about it as an item that could be considered removing regulations, removing regulatory barriers, whatever that particular item was, and it was on our list then, and we still haven't acted on it, and that's why I really wanted Action 1 to move in that amendment. John, what do you need from us here today?

MR. CARMICHAEL: Let me see if I can summarize the guidance. It would be to proceed with Coral 10 to address the boundary issue, Action 1 as it's being called here, and then to have the Habitat and Ecosystem AP look at that, and potential other APs that might need to look at that, and try to hold those meetings between now and December and come back to the council in December with the actions and alternatives to address that, with the intent of approving that for scoping. Then go from there, obviously, as we know more of what's required, and, in December, we would have a plan for carrying this thing through to final approval.

Then, on the ABC control rule front, to route this through the SSC in their coming meeting and report back to the council on where that stands, and we'll have a sense of is the SSC satisfied with what's in there, in terms of their ability to apply -- To deal with the uncertainty and to apply a control rule to come up with an ABC recommendation, or would they be satisfied in October, or is it something they're going to talk about more at a future meeting, and I think we would report on that in December. Then we'll have a sense of where that then can potentially fit into our schedule.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That sounds great. Mel.

MR. BELL: Then, based on that, the total at the bottom, are we now at like seven or 7.5 or what would that do, in terms of loading the December meeting?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think that those two would probably bring us to seven, and so, if we have the full unit of eight, that gives us another half-day session for dealing with the Executive Committee, essentially, and that would probably wrap us up.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right, and so then, John, do we need to go back over the items that are coming to December as a whole, because it sounds like we spoke earlier about this rec item webinar that I think we're kind of honing-in on this November date, and I believe it was November 9, and then we need to look back to the other items coming in December, and I kind of felt like that was already discussed at the webinar Executive Committee that we had in August, and so are we good, or do we need to go back over things here?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I think that we're good in December, and what we'll do is, obviously, we will build the agenda around these things, and we'll define the time we need for like Dolphin 10, and we know we're going to approve that for public hearing. Red porgy will probably require some discussion as we get deeper into that rebuilding plan, and we'll hear back from the SSC and the advisory panels, but, yes, I feel like this is -- The items you see here are the primary topics for December, and so, unless there's something to change here, this is what we'll build the agenda around, along with the updates on ABC and the coral.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Sounds good, and so, committee members, council members, other discussions or concerns or thoughts here on this? Jack.

DR. MCGOVERN: One thing that maybe could be added to Coral 10, if the council wanted to do it, is removal of the operator card requirement for the rock shrimp, like we're doing for dolphin wahoo, and so I just -- That could be added later, but I just didn't know if you wanted to consider it now.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks for that, Jack. We can certainly have a discussion on it, and maybe the APs need to talk about that. If they're going to meet between now and the next meeting, maybe they can talk about that. Chip.

DR. COLLIER: The Shrimp AP had talked about that a bit, the Deepwater Shrimp AP, and they -- At that point, they had liked the idea, and I think it was back in 2017 that we had talked about that issue, and they actually like it, because it protects the boat owners a little bit, but we can -- It can definitely be brought back to the Shrimp AP.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thank you. Mel.

MR. BELL: I was going to say, if you could add that, I don't think there would be a lot of opposition to it or anything, and it might be straightforward and not cost us any time or anything, and, also, related to the second item we talked about, that we were kind of hesitant to add, to keep in Amendment 10, we were going to have some discussion on that, and it was not necessarily attached to the amendment, but there was discussion to kind of move that forward, even if a separate amendment, right? When you were describing kind of the flow of all that, I thought we had kind of just agreed to -- That we discussed kind of continuing to work on that, but not necessarily associated with this amendment, right?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think that that's partly up to the committee. I just want Action 1 to move forward, and I really don't want it to get bogged down with anything else. It's been hanging out there, and I get that there's these new coral areas, and I am fine looking into that, but I just don't want to hold up what's in that first action in that amendment. Anna.

MS. BECKWITH: I just want to make sure that I heard Jack right, and was he referring to the operator card aspect and if it were to be added to the shrimp amendment or to the Dolphin Wahoo 10 Amendment, and I sort of missed that part.

MS. MCCAWLEY: It was to this coral amendment that would also amend the shrimp plan, and so it was about shrimp.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Thanks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Any more discussion here? John, are you good with the direction to staff here on these items? Do we need a motion?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I am good with the direction, and I feel like we've clarified it pretty well, and we've been sort of just discussing this and clarifying it as we go, and then we'll move the more formal workplan looking ahead in December.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Is that the last item on our agenda, which we forgot to approve the agenda and the minutes at this committee meeting, and so let's back up to approving the minutes from our last Executive Committee meeting, which was the meeting on the 7th of August. Are there any changes to the minutes from that meeting? Monica.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I was trying to get into Other Business, and so, after you have taken the vote on the agenda, then you can come back to me.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Monica. Any changes to the minutes from the last meeting? Any objection to approval of the minutes? The minutes are approved, and I will go to Monica for other business.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I just realized, after seeing Roger's first slide about the other shrimp amendment, I thought I would just give you a status update. Shrimp Amendment 11, you approved it in March, and that's changing the vessel transit provisions for the cold-weather shrimp closures, and the notice of availability for the amendment was published on July 10, and the public comment period ended on September 8. The proposed rule was published August 13, and the comment period ended on Monday of this week, on the 14th, and so decision day on approval or disapproval of the amendment is October 8, and so you should be hearing about that before your next meeting.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Monica. Is there any other business to come before the Executive Committee?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I am not aware of anything. I had a note to make sure we went back and grabbed the minutes, and so thank you for getting that, but I am not aware of any other business, and so thank you, everyone, for the instruction and guidance.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, John. I think we're going to go ahead and break for lunch. When we come back at 1:30, we will be in Full Council.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on September 17, 2020.)

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October 26 2020

SAFMC September Council

Attendee Report: Meeting (9/14/20 - 9/17/20)

Report Generated:

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Actual Start Date/Time

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00Sanchez	00John
Aukemam	Trip
BLOUGH	HEATHER
BYRD	01JULIA
Bailey	Adam
Beaty	Julia
Beckwith	00Anna
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Dover	Miles
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Long	Stephen
Lyons Gromen	Pam
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Marhefka	00Kerry
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McCoy	Sherylanne
McGovern	00Jack
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Morrison	Wendy
Nee	Shannon
Neer	Julie
Nesslage	Genny
Petersen	Andrew
Poland	00Stephen
Porch	00Clay

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Rhodes	01Cameron
Sapp	Art
Schmidtke	01Michael
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Smart	Tracey
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Smith	Duane
Somerset	Carly
Spanik	Kevin
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Stevens	Wesley
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Williams	Erik
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