

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

Webinar

September 17, 2020

SUMMARY MINUTES

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Jessica McCawley, Chair
Anna Beckwith
Chester Brewer
Chris Conklin
Dr. Roy Crabtree
Kerry Marhefka
Art Sapp

Mel Bell, Vice Chair
Dr. Carolyn Belcher
Dr. Kyle Christiansen
LT Robert Copeland
Tim Griner
Steve Poland
Spud Woodward

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Dr. Brian Chevront
Dr. Mike Errigo
BeBe Harrison
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Dr. Mike Schmidtke
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Myra Brouwer
Cindy Chaya
Dr. Chip Collier
John Hadley
Kathleen Howington
Kim Iverson
Dr. Julie Neer
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OBSERVERS/PARTICIPANTS

Erika Burgess
Shep Grimes
Dr. Jack McGovern
Pat O'Shaughnessy
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Rick DeVictor
Martha Guyas
Dr. Genny Nesslage
Dr. Clay Porch

Other observers and participants attached.

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

MS. MCCAWLEY: This is calling to order Full Council Session Number 3 this week. The first order of business is Adoption of the Agenda. Are there any changes or modification to the agenda? All right. Any objection to approval of the agenda? All right. The next order of business is Approval of the Minutes. Are there any modifications or changes to the minutes? Any objection to approval of the minutes? All right. Seeing none, the minutes are approved. John, I don't know if we need to go around and do some type of introductions or what before we move on.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I don't believe that we have to. We should know who is there, and you did introductions earlier, and so I think we're ready to go.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. All right. Then I am going to hand the floor over to you to run the Chair election.

MR. CARMICHAEL: All right. So, as Jessica mentioned, we are going to have to hold an election for our Chair. We do this -- We're supposed to do it every year, but our Chairs normally serve two terms, and then we have an election, and so we are ready to do an election for a new Chair today. First, we will elect the Chair, and then the new Chair will handle the election of the Vice Chair, and so I would like to open the floor and see if there are any nominations for the Chair.

MR. CONKLIN: It's with my honor and pleasure to nominate our current Vice Chairman, the honorable Melvin Bell of South Carolina DNR, to the Chair position of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Thank you, Chris. Are there any other nominations? I see Chester has his hand up.

MR. BREWER: I do. Thank you. Well, since apparently we have no other nominations, I would like to second the nomination and move that the floor be closed to nominations for Chair and that Mr. Bell be elected by acclamation.

MR. CARMICHAEL: All right. Thank you, Chester. Chester seconded and moved that the floor be closed for Mr. Bell. He dropped out a little bit there, but I heard what he was saying, and just to make sure that everybody else did, and so Mr. Bell will be appointed by acclamation. Are there any objections to the motion? We hear none, and no hands have raised, and so, Mr. Bell, you're elected Chair. Congratulations, and I will hand the floor over to you, as our new Chair.

MR. BELL: Thank you, John. I will now handle the election of the Vice Chair. Are there any nominations for Vice Chair?

MS. BECKWITH: I would like to nominate Steve Poland for the position of Vice Chair of the council.

MR. BELL: All right. Are there any other nominations? Tim has his hand raised.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. I will second the nomination and move that the floor be closed to nominations for Vice Chair and that Mr. Poland be appointed by acclamation.

MR. BELL: All right. Thank you, Tim. Are there any objections to the motion? All right. Hearing none, or seeing none, then Mr. Poland is elected as the Vice Chair. Congratulations, Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Mel. Thank you, everybody.

MR. BELL: All right, and so, now that that's concluded, I guess that we will proceed with the rest of the agenda, and thank you, Jessica, for teeing all that up and for running everything so far. The first thing on the agenda to deal with then is Council Staff Reports. John, I think you're the first one on there.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I am. Thank you, Mel. First, I would welcome Mel as our new Chair and Steve as the new Vice Chair. I look forward to working with you guys in the coming year, and definitely hats-off to Jessica for getting us through probably some of the most interesting years we've had recently, from me coming in as the new ED and then having to deal with COVID, and it's certainly been an interesting time, and I definitely have appreciated all of your guidance and help and support as we've dealt with this, and I think I speak on behalf of everybody to offer you a big thanks for all that you've done for the council in your role as Chair, and I'm glad that you'll still be around and continue to lead committees and direct us, as you can, and so thank you very much for that.

I will go into the Executive Director Report items, and, really, just very briefly here, I want to update you guys on our operations, mainly in this continuing time of COVID. Staff continues to work from home, and we are bouncing here in Charleston with infection rates anywhere from 10 to 15 percent each day, it seems, and so it's still fairly high in our area.

Really, our concern now, as far as the staff goes, is seeing how contagious this thing is and making sure that we don't get into a situation where, perhaps from just trying to be in the office, we end up having several people go down with this at one time and get taken out of circulation, and so we continue to distance and work from home, just so that we can get the council's business done as best we can.

Then the other concern is, if someone were to become infected and be around the office and not know it, then there's a potentially extensive and costly clean-up routine that would have to be involved as well, and we don't want to have to incur those extra costs, if we can, and so, as long as we can continue to meet your needs and get our work done, we will continue to work from home until this thing truly passes, and, as we look ahead at the end of this meeting to our upcoming meetings in the future, we will continue to meet through webinar through the end of this year. The one item in question is our December council meeting, and we'll withhold making a decision on that until it gets closer, because I think we would all love to be able to get together in person, if we can at all.

We have covered most of the things we've been working on since the June meeting through our various committees this week, and you will hear some more about the other staff activities in these next three reports, and there's a lot of great stuff that's been going on in these other programs with

our outreach efforts and best practices and the update on what Citizen Science has been up to, and so, with that, if there's no questions about where the staff stands, and I don't see any hands raised at this point, I will turn it over to Cameron to give us the Outreach and Communications Update.

MR. BELL: John, just real quick, what's the go or no-go date on making a decision for December, based on hotels and that sort of thing?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I would say late October would be for Federal Register purposes, and we could probably get Kelly to research that, if he doesn't know it off the top of his head, for the hotel deadline, but that's probably -- That could be in early October, as far as when the penalties start kicking in, but, Kelly, if you could look that up and jump in and let us know, that would be appreciated.

MR. KLASNICK: Sure. I mean, I know we're already technically within some percentage of the period, and so I can check that out, but I will say that most hotels have been very understanding, given these circumstances, and so hopefully that would be the case here as well.

MR. BELL: Okay. We can work on the details of that later. Any other questions for John? I guess the hand-raising thing is working. Okay. Good deal. Cameron, if you're ready, you can go ahead and do the Outreach and Communications Update.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Mel. Hi, everybody. I'm just going to go through a real brief update on some outreach and communications efforts that are underway at the council office and with our partners. We work together to share messaging, and we continue to support each other, and it really improves the overall outreach and communications that we all can accomplish and hopefully reach different stakeholders and audiences that we wouldn't traditionally reach through some of our other channels.

Before I dive into the campaigns themselves, I'm just going to mention how we even go about conducting outreach and communication efforts. All of you are very familiar with what we do, and this is, of course, a very small subset of the different tools and resources that we employ in order to accomplish our outreach and communications goals, but here's just a real quick run-through of some of the things we do.

We attend in-person meetings, and, of course, that has been limited as of late, as a result of COVID-19, but those are some of the best things that we get to do as an outreach staff, and we often bring other staff members with us, and so, hopefully next year, we're going to have a whole suite of folks coming with us for ICAST, and we also go to seafood festivals and DNR open houses, and those are really great opportunities for us to interact with members of the public and learn new things and bring these new issues and ideas home with us, so that we can work on coming up with new strategies for reaching different folks and answering questions and resolving some of the fishery management issues that we often come to terms with when we're out in the field.

We also update our website often, and we try to keep that content fresh and relevant, and so that's a great tool for us to communicate with members of the public, and it's really one of the largest locations for anybody to get information relative to the council, whether it be about fishery management plans or about upcoming meetings or public comment opportunities, and there is a

whole bunch of information that you can pull from our website to get a better feel for how a member of the public can engage with us.

We're also active on social media, and so we're primarily focused on Facebook and Twitter. However, we do post on Instagram and YouTube, where relevant, and then, of course, we send out our newsletter, and we send out news releases. Typically, those news releases are topical, and we often see them get picked up by other organizations and agencies that are going to share the word on our behalf.

Then, of course, we're intimately involved in sharing information and communicating with members of the public via mobile apps, and I think I probably mention Fish Rules every single time that I get the opportunity to speak with you, and I'm sorry that I do this, but it's selfish. I am a huge fan of this Fish Rules app, and it's certainly been a great tool and resource for us, as council staff, but I think it's also been a great tool for folks who are members of the public and are heavily reliant on their phone and need access to information even when they're offshore, and so it's really great tools for us to rely on here, this whole suite of things, but, again, we have so many other resources that we use in order to disseminate information to the public.

Diving into some of our specific topics for today, I'm going to focus primarily on best fishing practices, but touch on the development of the commercial Fish Rules app and where we stand with that and then provide you some updates on what we've been up to relative to the Citizen Science Program and its projects and what's been going on with MyFishCount.

The best fishing practices campaign largely came about upon your request when Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 29 was undergoing development, and there was quite a bit of discussion as to how we were going to make sure that members of the public were aware of these new requirements, and, as all of you know, that amendment required descending devices be onboard and readily available for us when fishing for or possessing snapper grouper species in federal waters of the South Atlantic, and it also modified some of the hook requirements for those same fishermen.

When that amendment came together, it really became a priority for all of us to make sure that we were focusing on a best fishing practices campaign and going about a comprehensive approach to make sure that people had the information they needed, and we started with the development of the best fishing practices webpage. You all have reviewed this webpage already, and it was something that came to you in June. However, we have made some slight modifications and additions, at the request of state agency folks or at the request of stakeholders who have reached out to us with confusion, and so I would encourage you guys to go check it out.

The webpage has some pretty cool resources, most of which were provided by our state partners, Sea Grant, by FishSmart, and so we're very lucky to not have had to recreate the wheel. Instead, we relied on resources that were already made available by our partners, and we've now created this central location, and we were hoping to become a landing page for folks to get the information they needed relevant to best fishing practices, and we'll be keeping an eye on that and keep pushing for that, so that people will continue to come to us for those resources.

You will notice that we have these really cool icons that were developed by Allie Iberle, and she's very creative and great with graphic design, and so we were able to borrow her to help us with

this, and these icons have now really been woven into the very fabric of every single best fishing-practices-related resource that we have created. I wouldn't go as far to call it branding, but I would certainly say that we are trying to make sure that everything kind of meshes together and has a general appearance and that hopefully that will then direct people back to us, when they see these icons over and over again. It's really great to have these, and you will see them pop up throughout the remainder of this presentation.

We also developed a best fishing practices wallet card. It's a real simple card, and you can see this is the front of the wallet card here with the blue background, and it shows our black fish that we've been using whenever we're talking about best fishing practices, and this is really the graphic that we turn to to link everything together, and it also has those icons developed by Allie Iberle, and this wallet card has some information, very basic, on some of the new requirements, as a result of Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 29, and then it directs people to our webpage.

This really came about -- Kim Iverson brought this up, and she thought it would be a really great idea, and we all got together, and we're super excited to get it off the ground, and it turned out to be a major success. This actually aligned really well with what the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel had suggested we do. They recommended that we provide some kind of handout that they could use when conducting boardings, so that they had an outreach material that they could hand over to somebody in the case that they didn't have a descending device onboard, or, in the case that they weren't even aware of these requirements were going into effect or something like that.

Just as a little bit of background, the amendment was implemented, the new requirements were implemented, July 15, and that was in the middle of the red snapper season, and we didn't find out about it until the June council meeting, and so there wasn't that much time, as far as like pumping out materials, but, courtesy of our friends at the state agencies and NOAA Fisheries and the Coast Guard and the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, we were really able to compile a list of places that we should distribute this card to under these shortened circumstances.

We actually ended up identifying, with your help as well, and you all provided some input on where we should send these stacks of wallet cards, and we identified a little over sixty tackle shops and marina sites and distributed the cards to them, and we were able to develop relationships. We called every single tackle shop and spoke with them, and we asked them if they knew about the upcoming requirements, and then we sent them stacks of cards for them to distribute in stores, and the same went for marina dock offices and things like that.

We also sent large amounts of cards to the state agencies, to the Coast Guard, and NOAA Office of Law Enforcement in Charleston, and so we have since distributed 25,000 wallet cards, and we have 20,000 more available for distribution, and we will continue that effort, to reach back out to those tackle shops and marinas, and to other groups, and then there's some other opportunities that I will go into in a little bit that will focus on the future of these wallet cards as well.

It's really an exciting effort, and a big thanks go to Spud, too. Spud has, obviously, been a critical component of this best fishing practices campaign, attending in-person sessions, and he was at ICAST, and he gave a whole talk on best fishing practices, but he also delivered some of these wallet cards to folks in Georgia, and that was really helpful, to be able to send a council member out and have in-person conversations, and so thank you, Spud, for that effort.

One of these more exciting developments that all of us internally are really glad to share with you today is we have reached out to Andy Loftis with FishSmart and had some conversations about ways that we could go about engaging different groups and stakeholders, and we reached out to Andy, and he said, well, in the past, FishSmart sent a sticker that highlighted best fishing practices to Plano Fishing, and Plano Fishing then included that best fishing practices sticker in a line of tackle boxes, and, anytime somebody would purchase that type of tackle box, then they would open it up to find this best fishing practices sticker.

We really liked that idea, and Andy encouraged us to consider doing something similar as part of our campaign. As staff, we compiled a list of around fifteen to twenty different companies and manufacturers that we thought could be a good fit for this effort, and then we reached out to the American Sportfishing Association, and Kellie Ralston and Gary Jennings were hugely helpful as part of this process.

They gave us a whole slew of really great contacts, and we reached out to people, and some folks told us that, no, we don't think that we're going to be able to include a sticker or a wallet card in our packaging, simply because our manufacturing is conducted overseas, and it would be too challenging. However, we would be glad to share information on social media, and so they did that.

They went about doing that, and a couple of different groups were able to help us out in that way, but we've had some others who have said yes, and so Engel Coolers, and Mike Dixon was kind enough to agree to move forward with a relationship on this, and we've sent him a thousand wallet cards for him to distribute in products, and so that's a really exciting development, and we're very grateful to Mike for that opportunity, and Engel Coolers, and we think it's going to be really neat to see where that goes, and hopefully there will be room to expand on that.

Then we've been in discussions with a couple of other companies who have expressed in sharing the wallet cards, and so we will keep you updated as that develops, and that's going to be ongoing over the next couple of weeks, and potentially the next couple of months, just getting people all the information they need in order to distribute these wallet cards to people.

I just wanted to note that this is not something that we have traditionally done at the South Atlantic Council, but this is really mirroring some of the approaches that were used by BeBe Harrison in MyFishCount, and so we've taken a lot of the expertise that we've seen from her and making these connections with industry, and we've implemented them so that we can use best fishing practices as a foot in the door to having these conversations and getting people the critical information they need, especially since now best fishing practices is beyond just a concept and an encouraged practice, and it's also moved on to being a requirement, in some respects, relative to those descending devices and those hook requirements. It's really great to have BeBe's expertise and be able to see that move over into some of our other needs and in a more general council sense.

We've also developed some really sweet swag, and so, unfortunately, we haven't been able to distribute lots of these materials, since we haven't been attending in-person events, but BeBe Harrison created this really great ruler at the top of the screen, and it's like a sticker that you can put on the side of your boat or on a cooler, and, again, that sticker features those icons that are weaving their way through any best-fishing-practices-related topic.

We also have this -- The black fish is in a sticker format, and you can see that in an image here behind a red snapper, courtesy of Captain Mark Phelps, and Mark is a member of our Outreach and Communications Advisory Panel, and so he was kind enough to take this picture for us and show the sticker in use. Then we also have created this sunglasses pouch, which features the best fishing practices fish icon as well as the MyFishCount logo, and so we're doing some cross-promotion there.

We spoke to a number of stakeholders, and we also spoke to state agency representatives, and folks were having some challenges identifying where they could even go about purchasing a descending device, and so we went ahead and created this video to make sure that people understood that you didn't have to go and purchase a commercially-manufactured descending device and you could in fact make one, using tools that might already be available to you in your tackle box, and so we made a very quick, nothing fancy, video, and, shortly afterward, FWC made a really nice video, illustrating much of the same information, and so there are multiple resources now available to folks to show them how to go about creating their own descending device.

This has been added to our website, and we've shared it on social media, YouTube and Facebook, and so we're glad to have a resource like this, and I would certainly say it's nothing fancy, but it gets to the point, and it shows people how they can go about making a descending device.

We also upped our Facebook presence during the month of July. We wanted to capture pre-implementation, and we wanted to be present during red snapper season, and then we wanted to continue the effort post-red snapper season, throughout the rest of the month, and so we did two to three Facebook posts per week in the month of July.

We were fortunate enough to see many other groups picking up the social media push that we were doing, and so other groups would either share the Facebook post that we already put out or they would create original content pointing back to some of the resources that we had put together, or graphics, or our webpage, and so it was really nice to see this joint effort on behalf of all groups, whether they be state agency, a magazine, industry rep, or NGO, and we were able to see everybody come together and push these same messages to members of the public.

We also saw it pop up in the news quite a bit, and so there were multiple articles and blog posts that were written in order to highlight best fishing practices, especially relative to the red snapper season, and we definitely saw a push there with the two -- Both the season and the new requirements being pushed out together, and our news release was picked up multiple times by different groups and shared.

We also were on a couple of different live shows, and so we were on the Kelly Kelly show, which is a radio show hosted by Advisory Panel Member Doug Kelly, and then we were on the Fly Navarro No BS Tour, which is hosted across multiple different channels, and I believe it's nine different social media platforms, and it's a podcast, and then we also were on Fox 24 Charleston, where we discussed best fishing practices and the new requirements.

Next steps, we're going to be busy with this. We're going to have to continue fostering relationships with tackle shops and marinas, continuing to foster these relationships with these manufacturers, which is a really exciting new development with industry, and, of course, making sure that we distribute those wallet cards where they are needed, and continue to seek opportunities

with any kind of show or magazine or agency who might be interested in teaming up on best-fishing-practices-related material. Then, hopefully, in the near future, we'll be able to return to attending club meetings and other in-person outreach events, which are, obviously, hugely helpful to us in engaging with members of the public.

Transitioning to the commercial Fish Rules app, and this is going to be super brief, but I just wanted to remind you that we're in partnership with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and that partnership has been an absolute pleasure. It's been really nice to collaborate with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and working with Emily has been not only informational to me, and, I mean, I've learned a lot from her, but it's also been great to communicate about our different management structures and really get a better feel for each other's fishery management plans and things like that, and so that's been a really great process for us, as staff.

It's going to be a similar design as the current Fish Rules app, and I'm sure all of you have it on your phones, and I love it. It's such a great app, and it's really clean. However, we're planning on making the app permit-based, and so, when you first click in, as a commercial fisherman, you would select the permits that are relevant to you, and you'll get some permit condition information.

For example, if you hold a snapper grouper unlimited permit, it would tell you that you need to have sea turtle release gear onboard, and we hope to have all of this ready for beta testing at the end of this year and then in the App Store and Google Play store as early as March of 2021. I will be sure to keep you updated as that continues to progress, but we're excited to see the direction that that goes, and hopefully we'll have something for you to see shortly.

All right, and so, for Citizen Science, you're going to get a more comprehensive update from Julia shortly, but I just wanted to point out that, again, as we are this outreach and communication team, that we're all involved in this effort, and that we all work together on developing tools and resources and coming up with material and making sure that it's fresh and different, so that we don't end up creating this white noise, especially relevant to something as specific as Citizen Science or its projects.

We've been involved in the development of the Citizen Science Month campaign, and Allie Iberle and Julia are, of course, the ones who are mostly responsible for anything that comes out, and these are their brainchildren, but we definitely play a role as a team, offering guidance and giving feedback and writing news releases and helping to make connections between these individual projects and other groups or agencies that might be interested in writing about them or promoting them on their own accounts or through their own channels.

It's been really fun to see the networking that we've been able to accomplish, in order to promote the Citizen Science Program and its projects, and we've definitely seen some really incredible engagement, as a result of Allie and Julia's hard work to get news of the program and its projects out and get it into the hands of the people who can really access a whole new demographic and a whole new audience base, and so it's been really exciting to see the direction that Citizen Science has been able to go in the last few months.

It's much the same thing with MyFishCount, and BeBe is, of course, largely responsible for any success story that has come out from MyFishCount and the outreach that has been conducted over

the last year. She's done incredible work, and we have just participated by being able to offer support, provide guidance and feedback whenever there is a material or tool that is under development, whether it be a swag item or a video or a live session, like the one that she was able to conduct at ICAST.

Again, much of this is under BeBe's wheelhouse, but we've all been able to participate and work as a team to come up with new ways to reach new folks, and I just wanted to note that MyFishCount is going to be officially transitioning to the Angler Action Foundation by the end of this year, and so you will get more information on that as it becomes available, and we are currently working on developing a transition plan, which will include outreach and communications, guidelines for how we're going to move forward with communicating information about MyFishCount, including clear messaging on how we're going to explain to app users and others who might just be interested in MyFishCount or have supported MyFishCount, as far as teaming up with us to provide incentives or things like that.

We're just going to make sure that we're all on the same page in making sure that folks know exactly what's going on with the app and how they're still going to be able to use it, and not much is going to change for the app user, but we want to make sure that all of that is clear.

We've got lots going on at the council, but two big efforts are the For-Hire Electronic Reporting Program Outreach Team meets once a week, and it's a group of Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council folks and South Atlantic Council folks and then folks from SERO, and we've been able to get together and chat about how we're going to get people the information they need, and so you'll be learning more about that, and you'll be seeing those materials shortly, and they should be getting into the hands of for-hire operators soon.

Then we're also going to undertake a major website revision, and we've been working internally on identifying a team to work together on going ahead and revising this website and coming up with ideas, and we should get that project underway early in 2021. With that, I will open everything up to questions.

MR. BELL: All right. Thank you, Cameron. That was outstanding, and that's what I would call a robust and up-to-date modern outreach and communications program. It's very impressive.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Mel.

MR. BELL: Like you said, it's a team effort, and so it's something we all participate in, but that's really impressive, and so any questions for Cameron?

MS. BECKWITH: I just wanted to say thank you, and I received my little envelope of swag at the house, and it was sort of a nice surprise, and so great presentation, and I really do think that you guys have some of the funner, if not the funnest, jobs at the council, and so great work, and keep it coming.

MR. BELL: Any other hands?

DR. ERRIGO: I do not see anyone at this time.

MR. BELL: Okay. I will say, Cameron, you know you will have arrived when you see your fish ruler going down Highway 17 on somebody's bumper, because I know --

MS. RHODES: I dream of that day. We're working on it. We're working on it.

MR. BELL: It will happen. Trust me. Ours do that. Any other questions for Cameron? Okay. Assuming there are none, then we can shift -- We're going to hand-off to Julia for more discussion of Citizen Science.

MS. BYRD: Well, I appreciate the time this afternoon to give you guys a quick update on what's been happening in the Citizen Science Program since you all met in June, and so, first, I wanted to give you a quick update on what's been happening at a programmatic level. We have continued working with our Citizen Science Operations Committee, Rick Bonney and Jennifer Shirk, on kind of program-level evaluation, and we're hoping to come to you guys in December with a final draft program vision, goals, objectives, strategies, and indicators. I will also present you guys with kind of evaluation plan options, to do kind of an overall program evaluation for you guys to kind of review and consider.

The Operations Committee has been meeting pretty regularly, and we met in late June and August, and we'll meet again in October, working on this kind of evaluation work, and we're also planning to have a Citizen Science Projects Advisory Committee meeting later this fall, and we're hoping to schedule that in the upcoming weeks, and we're shooting for kind of a November timeframe.

Additionally, we've been working to organize a symposium with some of our NOAA colleagues for the Annual American Fisheries Society meeting. That meeting is being held virtually this year, and it kicked off this week, and it runs through the end of next week, and our symposium is really focused on how to better incorporate citizen science data into assessment and management, and so we have a lot of great presenters, and we are presenting on projects from all over the country in this session, and both Allie Iberle and myself will be kind of presenting on the Citizen Science Program and our projects during this session.

For those who are kind of registered or participating in the meeting, we're having a live symposium session next Wednesday, September 23, from 4:30 to 5:30, where we'll do kind of a Q&A with all of the presenters in our session.

We have also been working on the *Bioscience* manuscript, which is on the development of the council's program, and, thanks to the efforts of Jennifer Shirk and Rick Bonney, the revisions to this manuscript are almost complete, and we'll be re-submitting it to *Bioscience* in the upcoming weeks, and so we're excited about that.

I have also recently started serving as an advisor on a federal interagency citizen science workgroup that is trying to develop some citizen science kind of professional development programs, and so that's been a great way to connect with others doing citizen science across federal agencies, and then we're also continuing our citizen science social media strategy, and Allie Iberle is really the one who is leading the charge on this.

We kind of started branding our CitSciFri posts kind of earlier this spring, and Allie did kind of a preliminary analytics review, and, since we started branding these posts, we've seen pretty big

increases in the accounts that we're reaching and the shares we're getting and the likes and the photo views, all of that stuff. Just for one example, one of the posts that we do for the FISHstory project is the Fish ID Friday, and we've had one of our Fish ID Fridays reach over 10,000 people, which we were really excited about.

We have also been trying to grow our citizen science email distribution list, and we're also kind of trying to get out more regular updates, sending out updates to this group every other month, and so I've added all the council members to this list, to try to help you guys stay up to date on what's happening in the program, and, if anyone who is listening in wants to be added to this list, just shoot me or Allie an email, and we can make that happen.

Next, I wanted to get into specific kind of projects and collaborations, and I will give a quick update on the three projects we have underway in a few minutes, but one thing I did want to highlight is kind of a new partner that we started working with, which is a group called SciStarter, and there is a really great citizen science organization, and they do a lot of work to help connect volunteers to citizen science projects, and so they have a great tool on their website that is called a project locator that can help you locate citizen science projects in your area or on topics that are of interest to you.

We have our projects kind of listed on SciStarter, and they also have a ton of resources for people who -- Not only volunteers, but for people who are kind of citizen science project managers, to kind of promote and get the word out about your project. When you become kind of an affiliate, or a partner, with them, they will actually help promote your project and send it out through all of their kind of networks and resources, and they've been doing some project promotion for us on FISHstory, which has been really exciting.

Now I want to switch gears and update you guys on the individual projects we have underway. The first one is SAFMC Scamp Release, and we are continually working to kind of recruit and retain fishermen to collect data on scamp discards. The app celebrated its year anniversary this summer, and so we put together kind of an annual update on kind of data that have been selected thus far and kind of next steps for this project and provided that to people who are participating in the project and have user accounts.

The information collected was also provided for review at the SEDAR 68 data workshop, which is the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico scamp grouper assessment, and that data workshop occurred over a series of webinars kind of this spring, and then they're picking up again now, and, although we have kind of limited data collected through the app thus far, some of the preliminary feedback we got from some participants is that the data that we collected through the app, and that some of our participants were able to provide us, helped kind of interpret the trends that they were seeing in some of the other datasets.

Some other exciting things for the Scamp Release Project is we have an FY20 ACCSP project that is underway now, and this is the project that will combine SAFMC Release with North Carolina DMF's Catch You Later app, kind of under the ACCSP umbrella, and this will allow us to expand SAFMC Release to all shallow-water grouper, and not just scamp grouper, and so we're working with Harbor Light and North Carolina DMF. Harbor Light is programming to combine the apps and kind of expand the species, and we're hoping to have the kind of expanded app launched here in early 2021.

Another really cool part of this project is that we're holding a series of scoping meetings to help us plan for the development of a citizen science kind of customizable app, and so the idea is that you would be able to kind of build an app on the fly, based on specific kind of identified data fields, and so, that way, when you wanted to kind of get a project started, you could build an app fairly quickly, at low cost, to start collecting the data.

To do this, we have an organizing group together that's helping plan this series of scoping meetings, to help us figure out what data fields we may want to include in this app, and so we're planning for it now, and we're hoping to hold a meeting late this year into early next year, and then I also wanted to let you guys know that we submitted an ACCSP proposal for this year, FY21, that, if funded, would actually develop and pay for kind of the development of that customizable app that we're holding scoping meetings for this year, and, if funded, we're hoping that that will allow us to expand the app beyond just collecting kind of biological discard data, but it may be able to help us collect other types of data using this tool.

Then the last thing I wanted to say about this project is that we're working with a College of Charleston graduate student, Nick Smilie, and, as part of his thesis research, he is going to be interviewing folks with SAFMC Release accounts, to get their perceptions of the app, to help us try to identify ways to improve kind of user recruitment and retention, and one thing that was really exciting for us, and for Nick, is that he found out that he received a research assistantship from the College of Charleston for this year, and that is paying for his time and his kind of thesis research on this topic, and so his graduate program only gives away two of these assistantships each year, and so we were just thrilled and really excited that he got one of these kind of scholarships, and we're looking forward to seeing the results of his work.

Switching gears a little bit, now I wanted to give you guys an update on the FISHstory project, and so, since launching in late May, we've really just been blown away by the interest in the project and by our volunteers, who have been helping us kind of classify and collect data on these history photos.

The numbers on this slide are back from August 24, but I looked at the FISHstory project this morning, and now I think we're over 1,300 volunteers who have made over 22,000 classifications, and we have had over 1,600 photos retired, and so it's been really amazing, the interest and support we have found since launching this project.

Since you all met in June, we've held one meeting with our design team, and we've also started to work, and we'll be re-engaging with our validation team in the upcoming weeks and months, and so, as a reminder, the validation team is a group of kind of volunteer scientists and fishermen who will be helping verify the species identification and counts and photos where our citizen scientists kind of disagree. We finished analyzing kind of their beta test data, and we're hopefully going to have the validation team begin to start verifying kind of live data soon, and, once we start doing that, we want to start holding kind of regular meetings with them and training sessions, as needed.

We have also started analyzing some of the live data from the Zooniverse project, and we've kind of done some preliminary analyses, and we're developing code to format and analyze the data, and Chip Collier has been leading these efforts and doing a lot of the coding work, and so we're in the

process of developing thresholds for the validation team to review photos now, and so we'll continue doing that in the upcoming months.

I also wanted to give you a quick update on the length analysis portion of this project, and so we're trying to kind of develop a method to estimate length of fish in these photos, and we're pilot testing it on king mackerel, and so we kind of finalized the protocol we're using and what we're calling kind of production length analysis is underway, and so we have people who are assisting with kind of measuring fish in these photos. Allie and I are doing it, along with a couple of folks from the Southeast Regional Headboat Survey, and thanks to Ken Brennan and one person with the MARMAP program, and thanks to folks at South Carolina DNR.

So far, we have measurements completed for 400 photos, and Chip has been leading efforts to develop a re-sampling methodology, so that we're able to estimate length comps from these photos, and one exciting thing over the summer that we also did was meet with Matt Lauretta, who is the king mackerel analyst, lead analyst, in the South Atlantic, and we wanted to kind of share information on this length analysis kind of methodology that we've developed and kind of share with him the kind of information that we're able to collect from these photos, and he was really supportive of the project, and he mentioned that there was kind of no length data available from the recreational fleet for kind of this historical time period, and he thought that this information could be useful and informative to kind of assessments in the future.

The last thing I wanted to mention about FISHstory, and Cameron kind of hit on this a little bit, but we have been working closely with kind of the outreach team to spread the word about the FISHstory project to industry folks and education contacts and other state and federal agency partners, and we have been really excited that so many people are interested in the project. Through some of these kinds of networks and communications we've had, the FISHstory project has been featured in a number of kind of newsletters, and Allie was on a podcast, and it's been mentioned in several blog posts. On this slide, I just listed some of these kind of features, and they're all linked, and so, if you're interested in checking any of them out, just click on the link, and you can read the post, or you can listen to the podcast.

I did want to highlight three events that are kind of up and coming. The first one is we have written a guest blog post for SciStarter, and they have a partnership with *Discover Magazine*, and they do a citizen science kind of blog series, and so we've written a guest blog for that, and that should be coming out in the upcoming weeks.

We're also hosting a virtual field trip on the FISHstory project, with a group called Earth Eco International, which is an environmental education group, on September 29 at 1:00 p.m., and so this is a push where we're trying to get FISHstory into classrooms, and it's a great way to help us start connecting with educators.

Then the last thing that I wanted to mention is that the Zooniverse program kind of puts together an annual highlights book, and this is kind of the second year they've done that, and they reached out to us, and FISHstory is going to be one of the projects they're kind of featuring and highlighting in this book, and so we were thrilled to be included in this book that will be coming out around the holidays this year.

The last project that's kind of underway now that I briefly wanted to mention is one that we are a collaborator on that's being led by the Nature Conservancy and Grey's Reef National Marine Sanctuary. It's trying to kind of increase awareness about Gray's Reef and to encourage the use of best fishing practices and descending devices and promote collaboration through citizen science, and so outreach efforts for this project were impacted by COVID-19, and so kind of we're shifting gears a little bit, as a team, and we're developing kind of virtual outreach strategies, to kind of share this information, and Bob Crimian, with the Nature Conservancy, is leading these efforts.

Then the last thing that I quickly wanted to mention is just to give you updates on a few projects and collaborations that we've been kind of -- That have been under development, and you guys have heard about them at past meetings, but I just wanted to provide you with a quick update.

The first one is this project that is trying to create a website or an app to log rare species observations, with the idea that kind of these observations could serve as an early warning system for shifting species, and we last submitted funding for this project in May of this year, and we submitted a letter of intent to SECOORA, and we just found out this week that we weren't funded. However, we got a lot of positive feedback through the reviewers of the project, and so we are encouraged, and we continue to look for other opportunities to try to find funding for this project.

Another project that we've been working on is working with recreational divers to collect length estimates from certain data-limited species in the Florida Keys, as a pilot, partnering with REEF and SECOORA on that, and we've submitted a couple of proposals, and we haven't gotten funded yet, but we're still looking for new funding opportunities for that project as well.

Then the last one that I just wanted to briefly mention is the dolphin wahoo participatory workshops. As you guys know, we held workshops in North Carolina and Virginia this spring, and then Mandy Karnauskas and Matt McPherson presented to you guys, at the June meeting, some of their preliminary kind of findings from that workshop.

Well, they've been continuing their analysis, and we have been continuing to talk with them about how to handle kind of the Florida Keys workshops that were originally scheduled to take place this summer, and, again, these were postponed due to COVID-19, and so we have continued talking with them, to try to figure out how and when we can reschedule these workshops, and so, as it stands right now, we're trying to hold off a little longer, to see if it's possible to schedule kind of in-person workshops in south Florida later this year or early next year, but I know that Mandy and Matt have also started to try to brainstorm ideas, to see if there's ways to collect information, like we would at these workshops, virtually.

That is just a quick update on what we've been doing in the Citizen Science Program over the past few months, and a quick shoutout to Allie Iberle, who has taken on more and more job duties. She started working on the FISHstory project, and she now is helping in kind of every aspect of the program, and so now I will be happy to take any questions.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Julia. Great presentation, and there's an amazing suite of things you have going on, and I know that's a big team effort as well, and so, if anyone has questions, the hand-raising thing seems to be working. No hands. All right. Well, if there are no questions for Julia, then, Julia, thanks so much, and we'll go ahead and shift to the next topic, which is the NRCC Climate Change Scenario Planning, and I believe that Myra is going to handle that presentation.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Mel. Thank you, everybody. The two previous presentations were so uplifting and awesome, and now I have to bring you back down a little bit, and it's not such an uplifting presentation that I have for you. These ladies are great.

What I have this afternoon for you is a brief summary on a potential initiative that was started about a year ago on scenario planning for climate change. First off, what is scenario planning? You can see the definition on your screen is from a National Parks Service publication that came out in 2013, and, basically, scenarios are essentially stories about plausible combinations of future conditions that allow for explicit consideration of uncertainty in those conditions, and so they are created in response to a focal question that's developed based on a major challenge, a major strategic challenge, that is faced by an organization.

That strategic challenge for fishery management agencies right now is climate change, and so that's going to create issues, in terms of governance and species distribution, as those distributions shift in response to climate change.

Back in November of 2019, the Northeast Regional Coordinating Council, NRCC, discussed a potential climate change scenario planning process for the entire east coast, and I should say the NRCC is composed of Mid-Atlantic representatives, Mid-Atlantic Council, New England Council, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, GARFO, and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center.

They agreed to move forward with this region-wide planning, to basically explore these issues that we know are coming our way, and so they put together a scenario planning working group that was tasked with developing a proposal for the NRCC to review about this initiative, and so the workgroup was put together, and, currently, it includes members from all the NRCC agencies that I just talked about. There is also a representative from National Marine Fisheries Service headquarters and me representing the council.

I came to this working group a little bit late in the game, and they had already been putting a lot of work into gathering information about logistics and how much this initiative would cost, facilitation options, and then pros and cons of various scales of these scenarios, whether it could be an east-coast-wide thing or something that's at a smaller scale.

Also, during all those discussions, the Nature Conservancy came onboard and informed the working group that they had secured a grant to conduct scenario planning, and they have offered to partner on this east coast project. They have also been involved out in the Pacific, I believe, helping the Pacific Council do their scenario planning out there. The information and recommendations that the workgroup put together were presented to the NRCC in July, at their meeting. What I am here to do is to kind of tell you what those comments were, and Mike Ruccio from GARFO chaired that working group and presented that proposal to the NRCC.

All the members agreed that scenario planning is an important initiative and could help with governance discussions, and so everybody was onboard with going ahead. Some folks were supportive of moving ahead immediately, and others had a little bit more concern about commitment and priority setting, and there was acknowledgement that the states were going to

have some funding impacts from the pandemic, and there was concern about staff and time commitments.

Also, regarding the funding offer, there was also some potential complications that were brought up by having an outside grant provide funding for expenditures that normally would be covered by council grants or appropriated budgets for agency staff. However, if the council or the commission and agency personnel could have their respective participation costs paid by their organization, then the TNC grant could be used to pay for facilitation and meeting facilities, or technology contracts for remote meeting platforms and that sort of thing that would facilitate this project.

Some more comments is there was acknowledgement for the need to further evaluate these legal and potential optics issues with accepting this TNC funding, and so the NRCC also agreed to designate the current working group as the core group for the project, and they suggested three things.

First off, the Mid-Atlantic Council agreed to take the lead on discussions with NOAA General Counsel on just making sure that everything is legally sound with partnering with the Nature Conservancy on this project. They want -- The South Atlantic Council, they want to know what the council's commitment would be to this project, and, also, allow the member organizations and the council to have the time to discuss this scenario planning in their priority-setting discussions and/or revisit the topic at their fall meeting, which is coming up in November, and I don't know exactly the date, but that's when we would need to get back to them on this project.

We are just initiating discussions with the council on this, and I realize that you guys don't have a whole lot of background information on this, but so what we would need is, first off, as I said, does the council wish to participate in this region-wide initiative, and, if that's the case, how does the council want to have more -- When and how does that council want to have more in-depth discussion? Do you want us to bring something back to you in December, or later, and get you guys to start thinking about where this would fit into your workplan for 2021, and possibly beyond, in terms of priority?

Also, I think I forgot to mention that, initially, the composition of the working group was to include members from the Southeast Regional Office and the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, and so we would also need to see if those folks want to participate. Besides council time --

DR. ERRIGO: Myra, Jessica's hand is up, just so you know.

MS. BROUWER: Okay. I was just going to say that, besides the time for discussion at your meetings, basically, this would include staff time and some resources, like potentially travel for council staff to participate in meetings in the future, and so, with that, I will take your question.

MR. BELL: I figured we would have some questions, and I know that Jessica was going to ask one, but thanks for the presentation. Go ahead, Jessica. You can ask yours first.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Mel, and thanks, Myra. I really appreciate this presentation and you jumping in to sit on this, and I don't know what to call it, group or committee or whatever it is, for us, and I definitely think that we should be involved. In fact, I kind of feel like the South Atlantic

Council was all excited about jumping out in front and getting ahead of all these climate change issues, and now I feel like we're kind of left behind.

At least you've been at the table, but I really -- I feel like we need to catch up, and I know I would like to hear more about this, and maybe we can have some presentations more about this planning tool, scenario planning tool, and more about these things, and I don't know if we're going to have time at the December meeting, and I'm wondering if maybe we do a half-day webinar, or three-quarter-day webinar, where we can talk about this more, but I definitely want us to participate and have more in-depth discussions, but I feel like I have a lot to learn here, and so I would certainly love some additional information, through some other mechanism, just because I feel like we just packed up our plate for December.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Jessica, and I agree, too. I think we definitely need to be involved, and you're right that we kind of -- There's so many things going on, but I think we invited people at one point, and we were talking about this, and we were going to be involved, and then there was some discussion at the CCC, and I actually attended -- When the CCC meeting was in Charleston, the group met in another room, and I sat in on that, but it just kind of went cold, and you're right, and I am glad that Myra is still connected there, and we need to figure out how to get back in the game, and then, like you said, work it into the schedule.

MR. POLAND: I 100 percent agree. We need a little bit more information on this, and I am a big proponent of getting involved with this. I guess this kind of took the place or trumped that initiative that we started two years ago now in bringing the other two east coast councils together, and so, if this is what is going to take the place of that, I certainly feel like we need to look into it a little more and maybe get involved, and I'm also interested to hear from the Regional Office, our Regional Office, and the Science Center, if they're going to take part in this.

MR. BELL: Any other questions for Myra? I don't see any hands, but, Myra, you mentioned that we need to get back with them before November, I guess, in terms of input. Clay has got his hand up. That's great. Go ahead, Clay.

DR. PORCH: Thank you, Chair. I just wanted to support this initiative and also mention, on the science side of the house, you may recall that we were trying to organize a joint workshop, a NOAA Fisheries Atlantic coast science coordination workshop, where we were going to talk about many of these same things and how we position our resources together to better manage these species that are moving further and further north, among other things, and related to climate change. Unfortunately, I think that was scheduled for April in Chapel Hill, but, obviously, when we had this outbreak of COVID-19, that got cancelled, and so we're hoping to reconvene sometime next spring, but, obviously, we have to wait and see how things play out.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Clay, and we were looking forward to that, but, like a lot of things, we got sidelined by COVID, I'm afraid, but it would be great if we could pick it up again in the spring.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I believe that the South Atlantic Council, and I believe particularly Roger, participated in something the council had and some entities in Washington, D.C., five or six years ago, in reference to climate change, and maybe Roger could speak to that, but the South Atlantic Council was included in that, and I do remember, a couple of years ago, and I think the meeting in Charleston, or maybe in Georgia, where we brought the councils together and the South Atlantic

Council discussed -- It seems like there's been two different or two same topics of discussion on this, and maybe Roger could remember a little bit about where he attended, and I think it was four or five or maybe six years ago in Washington, D.C., for the South Atlantic Council. Thank you.

MR. BELL: Roger, you can explain that, and I think I was at that meeting myself, as well as some of the other folks.

MR. PUGLIESE: Thank you, Mel. Actually, there were a number of council members that participated in the session, and it was to begin to look at climate activities throughout the entire region, and what came out of that was planning, and it really led to some of the coordination that followed from that big workshop.

We were already in the process of developing some of our fishery ecosystem plan and some of the specific climate activities under the implementation plan, and we were anticipating really one of the next steps that's already been mentioned, and it was that coordination on science amongst all the regions that Clay had highlighted. There's kind of been a little bit of a hold on that, and, also, the aspect of getting a climate vulnerability analysis completed for our region is still in the works, and the ecosystem status report, and both of those we're going to get reports on at the October upcoming council meeting, and so there are a number of different things that play into this.

I think one of the most important aspects is the opportunities we have with the developing South Atlantic Ecopath with Ecosim modeling, and, really, the one that gets into some of the scenario and tool development is providing Ecospace into the future, and we have Howard Townsend who is really looking at some of these bigger aspects, like MSE evaluation capabilities, et cetera, that is participating directly in that process, and so those are kind of all the different points that we've been involved on climate activities or are keeping things moving forward, and as well as the Southeast Center keeping moving forward, but the biggest one, I think, was this coordination effort across all of the different regions on what the science was -- It's going to bring together everybody involved in all the fishery-independent surveys and everything, to look at where we stand, and so that's still, I think, what was anticipated as moving some of this forward.

Also, I think the discussions are going to happen after the review is completed for our ecosystem model, and it's going to lead directly to some presentations on applications of those and tool development, once you have Ecopath, Ecosim, and Ecospace available, and management strategy evaluation is definitely one of the capabilities, and scenario development is definitely one of the capabilities. It's beginning to understand the connections between the species and the environmental parameters that we can bring to bear as we really begin to utilize that new effort.

MR. BELL: Thanks for some of that, Roger, and I remember that, and I do remember, at that meeting, it was definitely -- The folks up in the New England area were seeing a lot more dramatic things at that time than we were, but, obviously, things are in play here. Myra, do you need to jump in right now, or could I go to Kerry?

MS. BROUWER: I was just going to answer your question, Mel, that you had earlier, and I believe that, at this point, the NRCC just wants to hear back from the council in terms of does the council want to participate, and then the NRCC is going to have more discussions in November, and we can go on just planning for the council to be at the table for future discussions.

MR. BELL: All right. From what I'm hearing so far, I would say that's a yes. We can hear from a couple of other folks. Kerry, did you want to weigh-in?

MS. MARHEFKA: Thanks, Mel. It's certainly a yes for me, and I also wanted to encourage, whether it's staff or working with the various AP chairs, that, maybe at every species AP meeting, there's five minutes set aside on the agenda, and not to go into the detail we've gotten here today, but just to really let the AP know that we are -- All the APs know that we are looking at climate change as another factor of what's going on, because, often, you will hear that complaint. You know, it's we're doing everything we're supposed to do, and it's still not getting better, and so, really, I think it's important that they know that we know that and that we're participating in looking at that.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Mel, and that's a great suggestion, Kerry. I appreciate that, and I've heard from quite a few mackerel fishermen up my way that they are starting to get concerned with that, about it, climate change and mackerel moving northward and kind of some of the governance and fishery management issues that that creates, and so I think that would certainly be a good thing to update them on.

Roger, correct me if I'm wrong, but the climate vulnerability analysis -- I am really excited to get an update on that later next month, at the Habitat meeting, but hasn't one already been completed for the Northeast, or at least a portion of the Northeast, because I feel like that information from the climate vulnerability analysis is probably a very logical first step in any type of scenario planning for climate change, because the climate vulnerability analysis basically identifies the potential species that might be affected, either positive or negative, of changing climate.

MR. PUGLIESE: Yes, and, to that specifically, Steve, yes, the Northeast Center not only has had one done, but they're actually in Version 2 of their climate vulnerability analysis, and the South Atlantic version is tailored almost identical to the process they went through to accomplish that, and there were some real good aspects of what we were involved with, because some of the work we did on Ecospecies, to build some of the species-specific information system, was drawn directly into that process.

Yes, they are in Iteration 2, and so we can draw on what's going on, and I'm hoping -- I was really hoping for a full draft, but I think we're going to be as close as we can at the October AP meeting, with presentations from the Southeast Center.

One last point I was going to make is that we have a direct effort, through the CCC Habitat Workgroup, and we have a planned webinar that is going to be coming up throughout the entire country, and this coordination with the Science Centers throughout the entire country, on a first step on enhancing coordination on habitat issues relative to climate change, and so I think what they're going to be doing is really highlighting, in all the different regions throughout the area, what some types of the activities have been actually accomplished, and it's not just biological, but it's getting into potentially social and economic and other aspects of that, and I would assume some of them are going to highlight how far they may have gone on management strategy or climate scenario analysis, and so that is something that we have happening in October, and I

anticipate regional follow-up webinars to enhance coordination with the Southeast Center further, and so that's another really direct trajectory on climate information and activity.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Roger, and, Kerry, that's a good point, to make sure we engage the APs on this, because it was interesting, yesterday, when we were hearing all the comments related to dolphin, and there was one gentleman in the Keys who I guess kind of described himself as sort of the old-timer, and he had been around for quite a while, and he had some observations related to bird behavior and what the birds are feeding on, and the birds aren't there, and some of what could be going on with dolphin availability could be related to water temperatures increasing or things like that, and so it certainly is going to impact a number of our fisheries, and it may be impacting more of them than we are even kind of thinking about right now. Any other questions or input on this topic? Myra, I guess what you've got from us is a, yes, we want to be definitely engaged in this, and so, if that's all we really need at this point, we can move on.

MS. BROUWER: Thanks, Mel. I will pass that along.

MR. BELL: All right. Next on the agenda is -- Well, that concludes our staff reports, and so now we shift to the NMFS SEFSC report. First on there is Commercial Electronic Logbook Status. I believe Julie Brown is going to give that.

MS. BROUWER: Yes, and so I'm about to make Julie the presenter, or to give her control, if I can figure out how to do that. Give me just a second.

MS. BROWN: Thanks, everyone. Thanks for having me here to talk today, and you've probably noticed that the voice you're hearing is not Brett Pierce, who normally gives this update, and my name is Julie, and I've been working with Brett on the Southeast Fisheries Science Center e-logbook development for the last year. I will ask that you hold any questions until the end, but please interrupt me if my audio goes out or anything like that.

We have been asked to give a brief update about the program, and so I'm going to be extremely brief today and only take a little bit of your time. I am just going to hit the highlights, and I have tried to keep these slides consistent with what you've seen during the past meetings.

As you can probably guess, the Corona virus has shaken things up with the paper logbook processing protocol, in terms of handling mail and all that sort of thing, which I think has really highlighted how necessary it is to have an electronic option to report logbook data for our users. One major task currently in development is the technical requirements document, which we plan on including a best practices section, and this may weigh heavily into the approval for any software that wishes to be used for the Southeast Fisheries Science Center commercial fishing reports.

Much of the current work is focusing on adapting the data collection to fit the Southeast Fisheries Science Center needs, and so, while there is overlap in the way that GARFO and the Southeast Fisheries Science Center collects data, we do have specific data elements that need to be tailored to fit our fishing practices in the Southeast, and, of course, ACCSP is working to accommodate all partners and not just the Southeast.

In the infrastructure department, we do have a view from ACCSP, which allows us to pull data into our database, and the bulk of the database work is complete, and the Southeast Fisheries

Science Center required variables are all accounted for. However, some likely additional changes will be needed, as we are currently testing the data flow from SAFIS to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center. We are mapping the data elements, and that is underway right now.

To expand on that, the major aspect that we are currently working on is mapping the ACCSP variables in the SAFIS database to our required variables in our database that we call UDP, Unified Data Processing. The only want to ensure that proper mapping is happening is to simply push data through the system, i.e., entering fake trip reports. To do that, we are using the eTRIPS application, which has been built and undergoes regular updates.

We are currently dependent on the functionality of that application to push the data and use that as our mapping protocol, and, as part of this mapping project, that includes creating new variables, and potentially new validations, that are going to reflect this updated data and the elements and formats.

As we learn more and more about the data flow, the application is, in return, being adjusted to account for the number of new variables and combinations of these variables, and we are coordinating with ACCSP to make sure that all of the database work that we have done is thus reflected within the application, and a last major update is the information sharing agreement between ACCSP and SERO, and the FISMA, or Federal Information Sharing Management Act, is necessary to link the permits and compliant information on SERO's end with the application users on the SAFIS end.

All of that previous information, of course, is relating to the positive fishing commercial trips, and we are proud to say that, for the no-fishing trips, we already have a fully-functioning internally-developed software that can receive the no-fishing reports and grant almost instantaneous compliance to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center users. As of today, we have 250 FER participants, and, because of the availability of this option, we have phased out the acceptance of faxed or emailed no-fishing reports. Users have been made aware of this phasing-out since logbooks were mailed in January, and, also, at any other time that they are in communication with one of the logbook staff members, for example in our phone reportings and phone call conversations, et cetera.

Again, just the highlights, and we are using an application to test the data flow procedures right now, and that's our major task at the moment. From this, we are providing feedback to ACCSP, to address any outstanding database issues, and, also, part of the mapping work is to create any new variables within our existing database, and, lastly, finalizing that technical requirements document that's going to be necessary for any third-party vendors that wish to produce software for consideration for the logbook program. That was all I had today, and so are there any questions?

MR. BELL: All right. Thank you, Julie. That was great. It was interesting. When we started down this road, years ago, you never realized how many moving parts there were going to be to this, or how many layers that we had to take care of, but it has been a tremendous amount of work, and I think we're getting very close now, but are there any questions for Julie?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Thank you for that presentation. Given that the council is going to have to amend its FMPs, to make the regulations in the FMPs themselves amenable to receiving

electronic reports, do you have any kind of timeframe of when you might all be ready to go, in terms of wanting to require it from everybody, because it will take a little bit of time, right, to develop the amendments and --

MS. BROWN: We would really like to have a minimum of one year for voluntary submissions, and so what we have been trying to coordinate with the council, and, ideally, the South Atlantic as well, is we can have this available on a voluntary basis in early January, which we would like to kind of coincide with the electronic reporting for the headboat. Of course, theirs will be mandatory, and so we would like to have a minimum of one year of voluntary reporting, to sort of work the kinks out and get up on our feet, before we consider having this as a mandatory submission protocol.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I guess, meaning voluntary, that, if you chose that route, that you would still have to fill out your paper logbook, also, and do both, correct?

MS. BROWN: No. We would be able to grant compliance after the submission of just the electronic reporting.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Maybe this would be offline, but where can one go to sign up for this?

MS. BROWN: Well, we don't want anyone signed up yet, because we don't have those information sharing agreement acts in place yet, but, when we do have this up and ready, it would probably -- We would probably be rolling it out on a those-who-ask basis, and I'm not sure exactly what our outreach is going to be for this voluntary portion.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Also, would this be shared with GARFO? Is that what you're saying about the sharing conditions, because I presently possess fish in the South Atlantic, and, because I possess GARFO permits, I have to double report to an entity that I don't even fish in their region, and they don't even manage the fish, and I just wonder if that would satisfy this, to help me not have to continue to double report.

DR. GLOECKNER: That's the whole reason we're going that route, this route, is to reduce that burden, and so you only have to submit one report. In general, how it will work is, whoever has the most -- Basically, whoever has the most restrictive reporting requirements, that's what is going to trump the other regions, and so, if we have set-level information that we're requesting from our vessels, and the Northeast is doing sub-trip, then the requirement will be for the set-level, and that will satisfy the Northeast Region.

Now, they have also got some policies in place, or regulations in place, that they have to follow right now, and so you can do this voluntarily, but you may have to still submit your paper reports to the Northeast, until the Northeast can change their regulations, which I believe they are trying to get to next summer. Does that answer your question, Dewey?

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Yes, it does. I've been working on this for probably four years, and I don't understand, especially where, in particular, the GARFO, the feasibility, or even the futility, of double reporting, but thank you.

DR. GLOECKNER: It really comes down to what they ended up with in their regs and not being able to get around that, but we're working on a project with GARFO and the Northeast Center and ACCSP and SERO and HMS to develop requirements for a single piece of software that will meet the needs of all of those partners, and hopefully the states as well.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: It can't be fast enough, and I'm sure it will save a lot of money. Thank you.

DR. GLOECKNER: Yes, and that's why we're working so hard to try to get this done. Thanks, Dewey.

MS. BROWN: I think, to reiterate, somebody earlier said we never imagined how many moving parts would have to be necessary for this project, and that's a great example. GARFO has, for example, their list of approved gears, and the Southeast has their list of approved gears. Well, if you have dual permits, and you're using the application, which list of gears is going to reconcile both of those, and so that's one of the coordinating aspects of this project that, yes, is just taking a lot of time and a lot of people to come together.

MR. BELL: I think, if you look at it just on the surface, you go, wow, that looks pretty simple, and how complicated can that be, but, just like with our recreational reporting system, it turns out that it's a little more complicated than we might have envisioned to start with. John, did you need to say something?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I was going to follow-up on -- Julie mentioned outreach, and just say, to her and Dave, when you get to that point that you're ready to start rolling this out and let people know about it, please reach out to us. I'm sure that Cameron would love to help with that, and, as you know, we can reach all the fishermen, and we've done a lot of this stuff, and we've learned, certainly, a lot through the for-hire, and so please don't hesitate to give us a shout when the time comes.

MS. BROWN: Great. Thank you.

DR. GLOECKNER: I plan to lean on you guys, yes.

MR. BELL: Great. Art, what did you have?

MR. SAPP: In a situation where you not only have multiple permits, but multiple boats, what the process would look like, and if you guys have considered that.

MS. BROWN: Right, and so one user should be able to report for all of the vessels that are registered to them. You just need to scroll through a list of vessels and select the one that you want to report for.

MR. SAPP: Fantastic. It sounds very simple.

MS. BROWN: Yes, and that's already up and running with the no-fishing report system that we have, and people can go in there, and, whichever vessel they want to report no fishing for, they just select it, and any of their other vessels, and they don't get credit unless they report for specifically that vessel.

MR. SAPP: Excellent. Thank you.

MR. BELL: All right. Any other questions for Julie, or anything else on this topic right now? All right. Seeing none, let's move along through the presentations. Under Science Center, I've got a COVID Impacts Report. Clay, are you going to give that?

DR. PORCH: Yes, sir.

MR. BELL: All right. Fire when ready.

DR. PORCH: All right. Great. Well, good afternoon, everyone. As I think most of you are aware, we had to cancel the South Atlantic Bight MPA survey, because the Pisces was unavailable, due to the stand-down of field operations by NOAA's Office of Marine and Navy Aviation Operations. The Pisces also was unavailable for our video trap survey, and so we tried to shift it this year to the R/V Savannah, but, again, we had some logistical challenges that kind of pushed it a bit later in the year than it's normally conducted, and, of course, as Mel knows, our partners at South Carolina DNR were unable to support multiday trips, and so, between all of that, we just wouldn't have gotten enough coverage to make the survey useful, and so we cancelled it for this year as well.

That, of course, is going to be a huge problem for stock assessments scheduled for later in 2021 and 2022 that would have used that data as that key last point, and there is some good news though. A few weeks ago, we kicked off our new South Atlantic deepwater longline survey for tilefish and deepwater groupers, and it's a Cooperative Research Program survey that employs two fishing vessels right now, and they have already gotten in, I think, four trips between them, and it's a survey that runs from Cape Hatteras down to the Florida Keys from forty-one to 200 fathoms, and so it's the first of its kind, and it's based on a pilot study that we did a couple of years ago, and the first one we've ever really instituted as part of a long-running survey for the South Atlantic, and so we're really excited to get that off the ground.

In other good news, Congress, last year, had appropriated \$1.5 million to conduct a fishery-independent survey of red snapper, similar to the Great Red Snapper Count in the Gulf, and so the idea is to figure out exactly how many red snapper are out there, hopefully with reasonable precision, and then, once that study is completed, we can tune our stock assessments to those numbers, and so hopefully that will get out -- That RFP will get out this December, and maybe, if everything goes just right, people can get the field sampling in this spring or summer. I suspect it will take another year for everybody to really get the logistics worked out, and it will be more likely to happen in 2022 sometime, but, in any case, that's good news.

Similarly, Congress funded a \$10 million RFP for Gulf and Atlantic amberjack, and so, for the first time, we'll be able to, hopefully, get an estimate of the total number of amberjack out there, all the way through the Gulf of Mexico and up through North Carolina, and so we should be able to learn an awful lot about that stock, and so we're really excited to see how those come out.

In terms of observer coverage, as you might recall, back in April, we issued a blanket waiver, owing to safety concerns and all the logistical problems posed by the shelter-in-place restrictions and all the stuff that we had to deal with with COVID-19. Beginning in early August, we followed

national guidance and resumed observer coverage, using a whole series of protocols that were designed to ensure the safety of both the observers and the fishermen, and that included sheltering in place and testing.

So far, knock on wood, we haven't had any COVID-related issues related to carrying observers, and everybody who has been asked to carry an observer has, and so our biggest concern right now is the Coast Guard had delayed doing safety inspections, and so it could happen that some boats don't have their safety decals yet, but, so far, we've been all right.

In terms of our port sampling, we mostly have continued dockside sampling of the commercial fisheries until about late June, and then we had to suspend all sampling until we could get our reintegration plans in place and approved by NOAA leadership, and so we did have a pretty big drop in sample collection, amounting probably to 400 or 500 trip interviews, and so we will have a loss of data, particularly length composition data, for 2020.

In our headboat survey dockside sampling, that was suspended in mid-March, because there are so many people that are crowded into one place, and we have continued to monitor vessel activity and report compliance, in order to generate those catch-and-effort estimates, but, again, the dockside sampling has been severely curtailed, and it's estimated, since we stopped sampling -- I think there have been about 11,000 headboat trips made, and, of course, very little of it has actually been sampled, maybe -- I think almost a thousand trips were not sampled that would have been otherwise.

In terms of recreational sampling conducted through the Marine Recreational Information Program, my center doesn't do it, but, obviously, the agency does it, along with their state partners, and they have indicated, MRIP that is has indicated, that they will not publish preliminary catch estimates for Waves 2 through 6 this year, and they will publish preliminary effort estimates on a wave-by-wave basis, but they really need to review the scant catch information that we have, to figure out what's the best way to try and get a total catch estimate.

In terms of our logbooks, I think some of you may have experienced some fairly significant delays that happened because we had to close the lab, and we had to change the procedures, to try and accommodate all the logistical challenges that cropped up with COVID-19, and we're pretty much up-to-date now, and there maybe are some minor delays in getting some datasets loaded in the system, because of our decreased time in the facility, and we just basically allow people to check-in and come and go for an hour to get things they need, and then they have to leave.

Some team members have had to dress and assist some fairly frustrated permit holders, one of whom actually was dangerously nasty, and so we're trying to track that one down, but, for the most part, I think we've gotten things ironed out, and, actually, Julie had mentioned having people report no trips through the website, and that actually probably has speeded things up a little bit, so they don't have to process them through emails or the mail.

We also have heightened our coordination with the Regional Office, to make sure that any delays that might affect compliance and permit renewal are dealt with quickly, and so I think we've pretty much got that under control now.

In terms of our stock assessments, as you know, so far, we've only had some minor delays in assessments, and I think snowy grouper in particular for the South Atlantic Council, but it's only been about a month, and we should still be able to get you management advice in time to promulgate any regulations, but it is a harbinger of things to come. We expect that we will end up having to alter schedules in the future, and we are meeting right now, as a Center, to just kind of review all the processes we have in place and try and figure out which things are going to take a little longer to process than we originally thought, and we'll bring that information to the SEDAR Steering Committee.

Hopefully we can accommodate some flavor of the schedule that's on the books now, but we may have to push some things off, and so you'll hear more about that during the SEDAR Steering Committee meeting, once we get our ducks in a row. Generally, though, I would say we're operating, across the Center, at about 70 percent efficiency, and, obviously, we're not doing a whole lot of field sampling, although we are doing, for instance, as I already mentioned, the longline survey.

I guess the only other thing I would add is -- Julia Byrd, I think, mentioned that we haven't been able to complete our dolphin wahoo analysis, because we haven't been able to do the workshop down in the Keys, and so, as she mentioned, hopefully we can get that going fairly soon, and so that's, in a nutshell, the effects of COVID-19 on the Center.

MR. BELL: Well, thanks, Clay. Obviously, 2020 data is going to have some asterisks by it for the future, I think, but certainly things that we've all had to deal with, federal and state and private industry, and, I mean, the whole country is dealing with this, and so no surprises, but thank you for keeping things running as best you can with all of that. Dewey, did you have a question?

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Yes. Thank you, and thanks for the update there. I was curious as to you said -- Earlier this week, you said the pilot program for deepwater snapper grouper is taking place, and now you said the program, the survey, and I was wondering if there is any surveys that are going to be north of Cape Hatteras, because it appears like the region between north of Cape Hatteras and the Virginia/North Carolina line still doesn't have a deepwater survey taking place, and it's my understanding that the Mid-Atlantic, when they are looking at the pilot program that they did a few years ago, might be deciding just to focus on golden tile, because of the random nature of the tilefish.

I would really hope that the area from north of Cape Hatteras and south of the Virginia/North Carolina line, which is managed by the South Atlantic Council, would have had some type of survey in place, and, also, who can we contact, or who could I contact, to get a blueprint of this pilot program, meeting the standards and where the areas are chosen and different things like that? Thank you.

DR. PORCH: Thanks for that question, Dewey. If I said that the current program that's happening now is the pilot, then I misspoke. The pilot was done a couple of years ago, and so now we're actually fully executing it, and, after this year, we'll evaluate the information that we got and then decide the extent that we might need to increase sample size, but, basically, we're considering this a permanent new survey, and so I wouldn't call it a pilot now, and it's the real thing.

We can get you the information on the sampling design, and that's easy enough. I can have Todd Kellison or Nate Bacheler or one of the others who are involved with the survey send you that information, if you're interested in it.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Yes, absolutely, and that would be fine, and how about the location, because it appears -- You said to Cape Hatteras, which is not getting the northern range, which is important to the fishermen in the northeastern part above Cape Hatteras.

DR. PORCH: I will have to check in on that, but we definitely intended to coordinate with the Northeast Fisheries Science Center and the councils regarding extending that longline survey all the way up the coast, and that was one of the things that we were going to tackle at this Northeast/Southeast collaborative workshop that got cancelled, that one that was scheduled in April, looking at climate change and expanding fish populations and how we could coordinate our surveys to accommodate that. Obviously, since COVID-19, that's kind of been put on hold. Ideally, we would have addressed it then, but it's definitely something that is high on our priority list.

MR. BELL: All right. Any other questions for Clay? All right. Seeing no hands, then thanks, Clay, and we will move to the next agenda item, which would be Regional Office Reports. For-Hire Amendment Status, I think Rick is going to maybe do that.

MR. DEVICTOR: Thanks, Mel. I just wanted to update you on the rulemaking, as I do each meeting at Full Council, on the rulemaking for the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico for-hire reporting amendments, or what we call the SEFHIER Program, to implement these requirements. You saw the Fishery Bulletin that went out on August 7, and that's where we announced that we were delaying the effective date of the final rule, because, of course, you talked about this back in June, and you recommended to NMFS that, due to COVID-19 and the impact to charter fishermen, that we delay it. I just wanted to quickly just update you on the SEFHIER Program and where we're going, in terms of standing up the program, and so I just have three or four slides here.

As I always like to do in my first slide, it's to remind you of the requirements, because you have been working on this for a while, and you started a little while back there, and so, in terms of the program, of course, we consider this a South Atlantic and Gulf program, one program, but they have different requirements in the region, and so, of course, this applies to all Southeast federally-permitted charter and headboats, regardless of where you're fishing, and so, if you're fishing in state waters, or you're fishing off the coast of New Jersey, you're going to have to report, if you have this permit.

Now, in terms of requirements, they're a little bit different between the Gulf and South Atlantic, and so both the Gulf and South Atlantic require trip-level logbooks, e-logbooks, for the South Atlantic, and reports are going to be due by Tuesday following a fishing week, and a reporting week is Monday through Sunday, and you can submit no-fishing reports. The Gulf of Mexico difference is you can do that prior to offloading your fish.

Now, the Gulf is a little more robust in their requirements, and they have that hail-out portion, where you would fill out your expected return date and time and landing location. Of course, the purpose there is port agents and law enforcement can meet you at the dock, or, if people want to further sample you, they would know when you are returning to the dock. Of course, there is that

location tracking device requirement in the Gulf, a VMS permanently attached to the vessel and on all the time, and so there are the differences between the Gulf and the South Atlantic.

Of course, that last point right there, vessels that have both permits must follow the Gulf requirements, regardless of where you're fishing, and so, even if you're fishing just in the South Atlantic, but you have that Gulf permit, you are going to have to report for the Gulf requirements.

Here is the projected timeline that I like to show you each time, and so, of course, the final rule published on February 24 of this year, and, as I said before, when you talked about this in June, you recommended to NMFS to delay that effective date, and so you can see there that the new effective date is January 4, 2021.

Outreach, Cameron spoke about this, and I have a slide at the end that outreach is just ongoing, and it's such a large program, and there are so many permit holders, that we're doing outreach constantly, but we do feel that there is going to be a push coming in about a month, and you'll see what we're planning in a second, and then I just wanted to talk about the Gulf, and it's in two phases. In June, the Gulf Council also talked about the timing of this, and they also recommended to National Marine Fisheries Service to delay it, and so we did delay the Gulf requirements for logbooks and hail-outs to January 5, and, the location device requirement, we're going to allow a bit more time there and do a second phase on that, and we still have to work out the timing of when we're going to require that part of it.

What are we working on? This is a slide that I have in here each time I give a presentation, and I will just update you on some things that we've been doing, and so, of course, in the beginning, the goal has been to turn on the program, so we can start collecting the data. People are going to use a smartphone, computer, or tablet to report this, and so, of course, there needs to be apps, software, so we can bring the data in from the fishermen to the data warehouse at ACCSP, and so we have software tech specs and an approval process, and all of that is posted. We want companies to come forward as this process goes on. If companies come forward with apps that they look at the approval process and the tech specs, then they can put that to NMFS to approve, potentially.

Right now, we are currently testing eTRIPS, and so that's developed by ACCSP, and VESL, which is Bluefin Data, and, of course, that VESL software is the app that's used in South Carolina, and so we're currently testing those, and hopefully we can approve both of those real soon here.

Data warehouse, we decided early on that ACCSP is the best to be the data warehouse, and so, of course, they are the data warehouse now, and so they had to do a data security audit, in order to receive some personal data, and that's been an ongoing process, and we learned a lot in that process, but hopefully we're at the end of that and we can move forward with that.

Two new things. Now that we're looking at standing up the program, now we can sort of focus a bit on QA/QC protocols and validation of the data. Of course, QA/QC protocols, the purpose there is to build a system that allows us to review the data for mistakes and errors, et cetera, and keep track of compliance, and so say we're not getting reports from a permit holder, for example, or we're getting reports that say that five red snapper were landed outside of the season, and how do we handle that?

We're certainly looking at the headboats and what they use, that program, in terms of QA/QC, and so we're working on those protocols right now, which is outlining the procedures and steps of the QA/QC process, and, finally, validation of the data, and so there's a for-hire survey right now, and this is used to validate the trip reports, and we've had funding to build a system for the Gulf, and hopefully that can be applied to the South Atlantic in the future also, but this is a survey, where samplers ask fishermen questions dockside about their trip. This data can be used to help validate the reports that we get electronically and also to ultimately improve the data that we receive.

That's currently what we're working on, and there's a lot more that we're certainly working on, but it is in one slide, and my final slide here is to talk about outreach. There's a lot of outreach going on, as I said already, and certainly customer support, and we sent out letters to all permit holders, and we did that when we put the regulations in place and had the effective date, the first effective date, and then we did it again when it changed to January, and so that's been mailed out.

We're working on these packets, and I think Cameron touched upon those, and these are packets with step sheets and folders, with frequently-asked questions, for example, and we have lots of good information there, and, again, we're looking at sending that out, hopefully, in about a month or so. Outreach sessions, of course, we can't do a lot of the in-person that we had planned, but perhaps webinars and outreach sessions in those ways are a real good way to get in touch with people, and we're going to be planning those.

We have a dedicated phone line and email, and we know we are already getting lots of questions from fishermen, and hopefully that will help down the road, if we can answer a lot of these questions upfront now, before the effective date. Then, of course, we have a website that has lots of good information about those tech specs and FAQs and the amendments and the rules, and so we're constantly working on improving that, and, if you look at that website and have any ideas for improvements, we would love to hear those.

We've been doing a lot of work on these instructional videos, and the Gulf staff and the South Atlantic staff have been very helpful with these. You know, this is really a great way, we feel, to reach fishermen, three to four or five-minute videos, where people can go on and see topics, such as what data you need to report, topics such as VMS, for example, and so we've been working on those, and hopefully those will be completed in the near future, in a month or so, and then we're currently hiring new staff and contractors right now, and we have one QA/QC staff on-hand, customer service, VMS, and we're taking this program seriously.

It's been a pretty big lift, and so it's good to get these new people here, and we're talking maybe twelve or thirteen new people, contractors, and they will be online to help out, certainly as we move forward with, for example, the QA/QC process. That completes my real quick presentation, and I will be happy to answer any questions.

MR. BELL: All right. Well, thanks, Rick, and, again, just like with the commercial one, there's a lot of moving parts, and we are really close on this one, and so I will say that we converted our program in South Carolina, using VESL, over to electronic for our offshore guys, and so, from that standpoint, you've at least got one state where they are already acclimated to it, because they're already doing it through VESL, but any questions for Rick about anything related to this topic? All right. I don't see any hands, Rick. What I am going to do is we'll cover one more presentation, the Protected Resources, and then we'll take a ten-minute break after that, and so hang with me,

and then everybody can take a deep breath, and we'll push through the rest of the day after that, and so I believe that Christina is maybe going to handle this, and Jenny Lee may be online as well.

MS. WIEGAND: Yes, and, Jenny, I went ahead and unmuted you, and so you can go ahead whenever you're ready.

MS. LEE: All right. Good afternoon, everyone. I hope you've had a great council meeting. I will keep this really short this time, and there's very little to share. The first item I will share with you is just that NOAA Fisheries has completed a couple of twelve-month petition findings. One was for dwarf seahorse on July 28, 2020. We announced a twelve-month not warranted finding, and this is predominantly a nearshore species, and so it's not of really particular interest to the council, but we did want to note the decision, for our partners and constituents present.

The other twelve-month finding was for leatherback sea turtles, and so we announced that finding on August 10, and it was a joint finding between NMFS and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. We announced that finding on a petition to identify the Northwest Atlantic population of the leatherback sea turtle as a distinct population segment and to list it as threatened, and so we completed a comprehensive status review to determine if we have potential DPSs, following our policy on DPSs, and we performed extinction risk analyses.

We concluded that the seven different populations of leatherback sea turtles would meet the discreteness and significance criteria that's part of the DPS policy, but the main thing is that, even though that was the case, even if we were to list them separately, all seven DPSs would meet the definition for endangered species, and so we determined that the listing of DPSs is not warranted, and we did not propose any changes to the existing global listing.

I do not have a determination to report to you as far as critical habitat for threatened Caribbean corals goes. In that case, that is still under review, and, similarly, I don't have really anything new to report with respect to dolphin wahoo. SERO Sustainable Fisheries is still in its action role and kind of chipping away at developing a draft biological assessment, so that we have the information necessary, and so that's that.

I do have some minor updates pertaining to marine mammal actions, and one is a timing update for you, and the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan proposed rule and associated DEIS, and we anticipate publication of that in the fall of this year, and so just FYI, and, of course, a public comment period will be included.

With respect to North Atlantic right whales and the unusual mortality event, I just am highlighting that, for 2020, there's been one mortality of a calf by a vessel strike off of New Jersey and then two serious injuries, and one notable case caused by a vessel strike to a calf in the Southeast, and I think, if you look in the briefing document, there's a hyperlink there, which can give you a little more information.

Our pelagic longline take reduction plan proposed rule development update is just that that is currently in clearance, and publication of the proposed rule in the Federal Register is expected, again, in the fall of 2020, and so coming up, and there is also a scheduled webinar meeting that will be held during the thirty-day public comment period for the proposed rule, and that is all I have for you.

MR. BELL: All right. Thank you, Jenny. Any questions? All right. I don't see any hands. That is also -- Her report is Attachment 6 in your briefing binder under this section. I don't see any hands. All right. Thank you, Jenny. We will go ahead and -- I've got 3:38. If you would be back at 3:48, we will just start back up in ten minutes.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MR. BELL: Jessica, are you ready to go?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I am. Thank you, Mel. The Snapper Grouper Committee met earlier this week and approved the minutes from the June 2020 meeting and the agenda for this meeting. We got an update on the status of amendments under formal review and also a review of the red snapper 2020 recreational season.

We then moved into wreckfish ITQ modernization, Amendment 48, and had a number of discussions about that amendment. We wanted to wait until the December 2020 meeting to consider the amendment for scoping and scoping it in the winter of 2021, and this would be after bringing together the wreckfish shareholders and wreckfish wholesale dealers prior to the December 2020 council meeting to discuss the actions that were proposed in the options paper and to make recommendations for potential additional actions. We also requested that the group discuss the possibility of requiring VMS on vessels participating in the wreckfish fishery.

Then we went on to -- It doesn't look like we made any motions there, and then we went on to red porgy, Amendment 50, and we made some progress on this amendment. The committee requested that the Snapper Grouper AP provide recommendations on possible changes to management measures, including bag and trip limit and seasonal spawning closures. A draft timeline was presented that would complete the amendment by the statutory deadline of June 2022.

Then we went into discuss some topics of the upcoming Snapper Grouper AP meeting in November, and Myra has made a nice table here of the topics that we had discussed for them to talk about at their upcoming meeting and if we wanted to add topics for spring of 2021. Myra, do we need to fill this out a little bit more?

MS. BROUWER: Thanks, Jessica. Well, Item 3, the third one down, the recommendation on proposed ecosystem component species, that one I wasn't sure, and I saw that, in the workplan, it is scheduled for the council to get an information paper on that in December, and so, if you would like to add that to the AP's agenda, and that was an item that was originally scheduled for April, and so I hadn't put an X on that one, and so, if you would like that for November, we can do that. Then the last item is, since the recreational management issues webinar has come up, and has been scheduled for after the AP meets, I was wondering if you all wanted to request any input ahead of that webinar from the AP.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I like both of those ideas, Myra, and adding those to the November column.

MS. BROUWER: Great, and, if I just may, acknowledging Kerry's suggestion from earlier, I would also add an update on council activities related to climate change.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That sounds like a great idea.

MR. BELL: Jessica, input for recreational management issues webinar, that's the webinar we're talking about for November?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and hopefully on the 9th. I hope that that's what the final outcome is, and I believe that the AP is set to meet November 4 through 6, and so they would meet right before this.

MR. BELL: Okay, and so that will work, timing-wise. Okay.

MS. BROUWER: If I may, just to clarify, it would, obviously, be a very short briefing, mainly to get them up-to-speed on what the council is taking back up at that webinar and if they have anything they would like you guys to consider for your discussions, and then I would bring that to you, but there is going to be just a couple of days in between. Thanks.

MR. POLAND: As far as the council update on our actions on climate change and related activities to that, I assume that we will also kind of open up the floor to receive some feedback from the AP on maybe just some observations from fishermen on the water, or is it just going to be just a strict council update on our activities?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Great question. Myra?

MS. BROUWER: Thanks for that, Steve. I hadn't had a whole lot of time to chew on that, but what I'm thinking is that I could basically just update them on this east coast initiative and give them just a little bit of background and let them know that the council is considering this and it is an important item for you all, and then, if you would like, I think it would be appropriate to request input from them, and that could perhaps inform your discussions a little bit more.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Myra. I see some more hands.

MR. BELL: I was just going to ask, related to the recommendations on proposed ecosystem component species, you're going to kind of bring them up to speed, I guess, on what we've sort of done thus far, by adding the two species to dolphin wahoo, and then ask them to just kind of brainstorm that, or -- I guess you've just got to kind of make sure that you explain it, in a way, and then kind of contain the discussion and get some useful input there.

MS. BROUWER: If it's okay with you, Madam Chair, I will answer that question. Mel, there has been eight snapper grouper species that were recommended by the SSC, in October of last year, for the council to consider as ecosystem component species, and so we've been working on getting information together for that determination.

Recall that we talked about the criteria that are necessary to be met before a species can be considered to not need management and conservation, and so what I had prepared for the AP for their meeting that was cancelled in the spring was basically just an overview of those criteria, whatever information we have on the life history of these eight species, which, for some, it's a good bit, and, for some other ones, not so much.

Then just an overview of landings, state versus federal, because that seems to be one of the main things that needs to be examined for that determination, and so I was thinking about presenting just whatever we're able to assemble by their meeting, and then that will then get developed into an information paper for you all to see in December, along with the Snapper Grouper AP's input and recommendations.

MR. BELL: Thanks. That's already got structure to it, and that's great.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and that's the thing coming out of the SSC that was cubera, margate, sailors choice, coney, yellowfin, saucereye, misty, and blackfin snapper. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: My point has been addressed, but thank you very much.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. Myra, can we just adopt this list as part of the timing and tasks motion?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, that would be great. I believe -- I think I added it to the bottom, where the draft motion is at the bottom of the report.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I don't see it in there.

MS. BROUWER: Okay. Brian, would you add it?

DR. CHEUVRONT: Sure. Tell me what you want to put in there.

MS. BROUWER: I just something as simple as approve the list of topics for the AP meeting would be good.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thank you. Who would like to make this timing and tasks motion?

MR. POLAND: I move to direct staff to do the following: prepare a draft red porgy amendment for review at the December 2020 meeting; prepare analysis to show length of commercial season under potential new ACL, using average catch rates from recent years to present to the Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel in November of 2020 and request recommendations on possible modifications to management measures; request presentation from SERO to inform potential actions in the wreckfish ITQ modernization amendment, Amendment 48, for the December 2020 meeting; convene a meeting of the wreckfish ITQ shareholders and wreckfish wholesale dealers via webinar ahead of the December 2020 meeting; prepare the wreckfish ITQ modernization amendment, Amendment 48, to be considered for scoping at the December 2020 meeting; and approve the list of topics for the AP meeting.

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Steve. Thank you, Anna. Any discussion of this timing and tasks motion? **Any objection to the timing and tasks motion? Seeing none, this motion stands approved.** That concludes the committee report, and I will turn it back to you, Mel.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Jessica. If you would just turn your hat around, I guess I have you down for SEDAR as well, and so we'll shift over to that report, if you would, please.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Jessica, I just wanted to point out one thing to you, that the SEDAR appointments and stuff come up later in this whole list of reports, and so they're not in this report here.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Brian. That was helpful. All right. The SEDAR Committee met earlier this week and approved the minutes from their June meeting and the agenda for this week. They were provided an overview of the research track and operational assessment process, and the committee wanted to ensure that public participation would still be part of this process.

Then there was a discussion of the statement of work for the 2023 assessments of snowy grouper and tilefish. Currently, the assessments are ongoing for these two species, and the SSC had requested time to revise the statements of work, based on the findings of these upcoming stock assessments.

The committee requested the statement of work be brought back to the committee in March of 2021, after review of the current snowy grouper assessment, and the committee recognized that the tilefish assessment would not be completed by then, but the statement of work would need to be completed prior to the spring SEDAR Steering Committee meeting.

Then the committee looked at the current planning grid for the SEDAR stock assessments and the table of timing for completing future assessments, and the committee recommended a red snapper research track assessment as a high priority, as well as gray triggerfish and red pogy as operational assessments. The committee didn't make any motions, and there was no other business, and there is a draft timing and tasks motion there, if someone would like to make it.

MR. POLAND: I move to direct staff to complete the following tasks: present revised statements of work for the 2023 assessments of snowy grouper and golden tilefish at the March 2021 meeting, after the SSC has reviewed the snowy grouper assessment, SEDAR 36 update.

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thank you, Steve. Thank you, Anna. Any discussion of this timing and tasks motion? **Any objection to this motion? That motion is approved.** I'm going to turn it back to you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Jessica. All right. We shift to Dolphin Wahoo. Anna, are you ready to go?

MS. BECKWITH: I sure am. The Dolphin Wahoo Committee met on September 16 and approved the amended minutes from the June 2020 meeting, as well as the agenda. We began by discussing Amendment 12, which adds bullet and frigate mackerel to the Dolphin Wahoo FMP as ecosystem component species.

Our first motion was to approve Amendment 12 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Dolphin Wahoo Fishery of the Atlantic for formal secretarial review and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate. Give staff editorial license to make any necessary editorial changes to the document and codified text and give the Council Chair authority to approve the revisions and re-deem the codified text. On behalf of the committee, I so move.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Madam Chair, this is going to be a roll call vote, and my question is, John, do you want me to also type in the votes by people on the voting table for this?

MR. CARMICHAEL: I can just call them out like we normally do.

DR. CHEUVRONT: That's what I thought, but I just wanted to make sure.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I've got the form, because we keep this as a record, and so I will just enter things as we go.

DR. CHEUVRONT: No problem.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Ms. Beckwith.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Dr. Belcher.

DR. BELCHER: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Mr. Brewer.

MR. BREWER: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Dr. Christiansen.

DR. CHRISTIANSEN: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Mr. Conklin.

MR. CONKLIN: Sure.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Dr. Crabtree.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Mr. Griner.

MR. GRINER: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Ms. Marhefka.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Ms. McCawley.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Mr. Poland.

MR. POLAND: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Mr. Sapp.

MR. SAPP: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Mr. Woodward.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Our Chair, Mr. Bell.

MR. BELL: Yes. Thank you.

MR. CARMICHAEL: All right. **The motion carries unanimously.**

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Thank you. There was also some direction to staff under Amendment 12, which was to write a follow-up letter to the Mid-Atlantic Council upon submittal of Amendment 12. We then began discussing Amendment 10. Amendment 10 revises the dolphin wahoo management measures, and the committee discussed the amendment and provided the following guidance, as well as made the following motions.

Motion 2 is to select Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative in Action 1. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.

Motion 3 was to select Alternative 2 as preferred under Action 2. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.

Motion 4 was to move Alternatives 2 and 3 in Action 3 to the Considered but Rejected section. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.

The fifth motion was to approve the IPT's suggested edits to Alternative 4, 5, and 6 in Action 3. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries. There was some additional direction to staff for Action 3 to revise and simplify Alternative 1.

Our next motion was to approve the IPT's suggested edits, with the exception of Alternative 1, in Action 4. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any

opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries. We had similar direction to staff to revise and simplify the Alternative 1, no action, in Action 4.

Our next motion was to amend Alternative 4 to reflect a small increase in the commercial ACL. Remove Alternative 2 in Action 4 to the Considered but Rejected section. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.

Motion 8 was to remove Action 5 to the Considered but Rejected section. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.

We had some direction to staff. The subsequent action, Action 6, that focused on the commercial accountability measure for wahoo, is not approved by the committee, and it will not be further considered in Amendment 10.

Our next motion had to do with Action 7, and it was to accept the IPT's suggested edits to Action 7. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.

Motion 10 was to accept the IPT's suggested edits to Action 8, with the exception of Alternative 2. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.

Then we had some interesting direction to staff, and we have Team Blue and Team Green, and I want everyone to take a quick look at these. This was under the discussion of the additional alternative for an accountability measure for the dolphin recreational fishery.

Team Blue was the one that I suggested, which was to add an alternative that would monitor for persistence in increased landings. Under this alternative, if landings are projected to be met, reduce the bag limit for vessel limit first, and, if needed, reduce the length of the recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent the annual catch limit from being exceeded. The Team Green accountability measure is to add an alternative that would reduce the bag limit, or implement a vessel limit, while monitoring for persistence in increased landings. Under this alternative, if landings are met, or were projected to be met, to meet the sector ACL with the reduced bag limit or vessel limit in place, an in-season closure would occur.

The difference between these two is, particularly for the dolphin fishery, my thought is that, given the history of closures for the recreational, when we have had an overage, on the rare occasion, we usually have those years of high abundance, and then, in the next year, it automatically drops down, and so I was a little bit concerned that, if we automatically had an adjustment to the trip or the vessel limit, while being monitored for persistence in increase in landings, we might run into sort of an unnecessary reduction in those bag and vessel limits, given sort of the history of how those closures have worked, and, also, with acknowledgment that Florida may have different bag limits and vessel limits than north of Florida, by the time that we're done with this amendment.

I wanted folks to think about what direction we wanted to go to, and I think the Team Green accountability measure is going to be very appropriate for wahoo, where, if wahoo goes over, we

really do need to sort of drop down to the bag limit, and so I'm going to go to Mel and Jessica for some feedback.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Anna. I think, with dolphin, when we started discussing this, I was thinking more along the lines of blue, myself, and you would basically monitor first, and then you would potentially do something, like you said, to avoid doing something and then maybe not having to have done it.

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree with Mel. I think the blue was what we were thinking. I mean, technically, I think you could add both of these, both the blue and the green, but my preference would probably be to add the blue and then consider the green one for cobia, like you mentioned.

MS. BECKWITH: Or wahoo, rather. Yes.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I'm sorry. I meant wahoo. Thank you.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. So, if there's no other feedback, I would suspect that the direction to staff would be that, for dolphin, we are looking towards Team Blue.

MR. WOODWARD: Another vote for blue.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay, and so we are going to call that a win for Team Blue, if there is nothing else.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Madam Chair, just to make sure that I'm doing this correctly, you want blue for dolphin and green for wahoo?

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, but we'll deal with the green for wahoo under the next motion, under the next -- It's in there for wahoo, and so you can just leave that as it is and just know that it's Team Blue for dolphin, and then we'll deal with wahoo under wahoo.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. That's fine.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. **Motion 11 is to accept the IPT edits to Action 9. On behalf of the committee, I so move.** Is there any discussion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.**

Motion 12 was to accept the IPT's suggested edits to Action 10, with the exception of Alternative 2. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Is there any discussion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.**

You will see that, under direction for staff for Action 10, we have Team Green as an additional accountability measure to be added for consideration for wahoo, and we have an additional direction to staff that, in Action 12, revise the action to also accommodate spiny lobster traps. That's the end of our discussion on Amendment 10.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Madam Chair, did you have approval on Motion 12?

MS. BECKWITH: I believe I did, but I'm happy to do it again if we --

DR. CHEUVRONT: That's all right.

MS. BECKWITH: Let's do it just to make sure. **Motion 12 is accept the IPT's edits to Action 10, with the exception of Alternative 2. On behalf of the committee, I so move.** Is there any discussion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.**

That ends our discussion for Amendment 10, and I do want to make a note for everyone to come super ready to talk about this amendment in December, because I think we're going to be sending it out to the public over the winter, and my hope is that we can actually go through and pick preferreds, so the public knows where we are moving, so we can get proper public comment over the wintertime and then come back in March and move it forward, with the desperate hope to send this to secretarial review in June, and so that is my hope.

After we finished discussing Amendment 10, we did receive a presentation from the Dolphin Research Program. Sorry. We received a Dolphin Research Program presentation, and Dr. Merten, Director of the Dolphin Research Program, presented on recent research into dolphin movements, migration patterns, and fisheries in the western Atlantic.

What we did not get a chance to discuss was topics for the October 2020 Dolphin Wahoo Advisory Panel meeting, and I am not sure if we want to bring up that list of potential topics or if John would like to work with me to develop that list, and so I had that question for John Hadley, and I wasn't sure how he wanted to handle this.

MR. BELL: What was the timing that we needed to have that done by? When is the meeting?

MR. HADLEY: The meeting is on October 28, and it's expected to be a one-day kind of full-day meeting for the AP, and it's going to be held via webinar. Brian, I'm not sure if you got the documents that I sent over, but I am fine either way, and whatever is the will of the committee and council, and we can -- Anna, I can certainly work with you on that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I was just going to provide a little input on that list. I thought that the list was good, and I noticed that Item Number 5 on that list included discussion of bag limit sales for dolphin landed on for-hire trips, and this would be in the context of economic effects experienced due to COVID, and I was just going to say that I was fine if the AP wants to discuss bag limit sales in this context again.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and I had expressed concerns about discussing something that I felt like the council as a whole may not be prone to support, but it seemed like it's of interest to the AP to discuss it, and so I certainly want to give them the opportunity to provide us with any feedback, and we will take that feedback from them.

MR. HADLEY: Just to further that, and you pretty much said what I was going to say, but the reason that that was on there is that was part of the feedback -- Ray Rosher, who is the Chair of the Dolphin Wahoo AP, and I kind of spoke, and that was an idea from him, that there's probably

several AP members that want to at least discuss bag limit sales, and it would likely come up under Other Business. If it's on the agenda in this respect, it's clear that it will come up at some point in the meeting, and it could be a little bit more of a structured conversation, and so that was kind of the rationale for putting it on there as a direct agenda item, and particularly after the AP has been able to work through some of the main business items, so to speak, for Dolphin Wahoo 10 and potentially some of the fishery performance report updates.

MR. BELL: If the discussion is brought into the agenda under the heading of COVID-related stuff, that's fine, and I suspect it won't stay related to that, in terms of the discussion and the input, and so I've got mixed feelings about the whole thing, but I know that it keeps coming up and coming up.

MR. POLAND: I was just going to mirror Kerry's suggestion for the Snapper Grouper AP and maybe add a discussion here on climate change activities by the council and kind of give them an opportunity to provide some feedback on any climate-related issues that they feel exist in the dolphin fishery.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes, and I had mentioned to John that, depending on how the agenda gets -- How tight it gets, that we had taken out some things from the Amendment 10 that we could give the opportunity to the AP to discuss, including the sections on optimum yield, recognizing that we will be talking about optimum yield in sort of a broader context later on, and probably in a more comprehensive amendment, and we had also taken out those actions that I believe they had seen before on the pelagic longline, and it sounded like, from this committee's discussion this week, that there was some interest in the idea of some regional management, and so I didn't know if you guys wanted to sort of scope the idea of regional management to the AP and get some initial feedback from them, and so those would be some potential additional topics, if the agenda allowed for them.

MR. POLAND: I mean, the idea of the regional management had crossed my mind, but we haven't really talked about that a whole lot yet at the council, and I don't know if it would be better to be a little bit more structured before we asked the AP for input on that. I mean, I could go either way on that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I could go either way, too. If they have time, and you're looking for other things to discuss, you could tell the AP that we started a discussion of possibly considering regional management for dolphin and just see what they have to say about that, if you had time for it. If you're pressed for time, I don't know if I would worry about.

MS. BECKWITH: The same really goes for the other two discussions on optimum yield and the pelagic longline discussions, because, since we haven't started a new amendment that had those topics in there, it would be more of a broader consideration, and so, again, if you need -- If you have extra time and want to scope some of those ideas with them, but, otherwise, I think what's on there is fine.

MR. BELL: I was just going to kind of -- Really, Jessica said it, but, if it comes up, just in terms of, hey, we're thinking about this, and just a heads-up, and, at first blush, is that something totally crazy, or can you guys even envision that, and fine, but I wouldn't get bogged down in it at all, and so I guess I could go either way as well.

MR. HADLEY: I guess just clarification, as far as -- Yes, I think that would be good to breach the subject with the AP, but just -- Just what sort of feedback you would be looking for, as far as is it more of an update on these are some of the ideas that the council has discussed, but it hasn't really started to develop, or if there were any specific questions that you had, and, I guess, how in depth would you like to go into it with the AP at this point?

MS. BECKWITH: I would say not very in-depth, and maybe more of a, hey, this conversation has kind of been discussed around the table, if you guys have any specific things that you want the council to think about when they get around to discussing it, and let us know, but there is no real specific ideas on the table.

MS. BECKWITH: What Anna said.

MR. BELL: I am good with that. Like Steve said, we really haven't talked about it in detail, and so it would literally just be a first introduction to them and what do you think.

MS. BECKWITH: Okay. Sounds good. All right, and so the last thing is a timing and tasks motion, and would someone like to make this motion, pretty please?

MR. POLAND: **I move to approve the following timing and tasks: continue work on Amendment 10 for review at the December 2020 meeting; and compose a follow-up letter to the Mid-Atlantic Council upon submittal of Amendment 12.**

MS. BECKWITH: Thank you. Do I have a second?

MR. BELL: Second.

MS. BECKWITH: Excellent. All right. Is there any discussion? **Is there any opposition? Seeing none, that motion carries.** Is there anything else to come before the Dolphin Wahoo Committee? Seeing none, I turn it over to Mel. Thank you.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Anna. Nice job. All right. Jessica, if you wouldn't mind presenting the Executive Committee report.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Will do. All right. The Executive Committee met this week and approved the agenda and the minutes from the June meeting, and then they discussed the AP and SSC composition. This was in a closed session, and so the SSC composition was about adding a seat, and the committee decided to not recommend increasing the number of seats on the SSC. The current seats and their designations are considered sufficient to meet council needs.

The committee did approve the proposed restructuring plan for the Outreach and Communication Advisory Panel. Appointments for the revised seats will be considered in December, and the structural changes will take place once the appointments are made.

The committee also met in closed session to consider modifications to the council's handbook to address harassment prevention measures, and the intent of the proposed changes were to clarify

the council policy on harassment prevention and workplace violence and to provide guidance on how affected parties should respond.

The committee supported including the proposed language, with minor modifications, for addressing meeting disruptions in the handbook revisions. The handbook will be reviewed in its entirety and considered for approval at a future meeting.

The committee also raised the issue of security at council meetings and activities, particularly the council's security obligations as a convener of public gatherings, and, because this issue has implications to the council's Magnuson responsibilities and potentially impacts all councils nationwide, guidance will be requested of NOAA GC, and the question will be raised at the Council Coordination Committee.

Then the committee looked at travel forms, and so Kelly reviewed the revised travel authorizations and reimbursement forms. This way, the new forms can be submitted electronically, and this will be effective immediately, and, eventually, a training video will be developed to go along with these new forms.

The committee also discussed the priorities and the work schedule, and John reviewed the priorities and amendment workplan for 2020, and he reviewed the changes from the August 7 Executive Committee meeting, and the council was asked to consider two potential projects to add to the workplan, the ABC Control Rule Amendment and Coral Amendment 10. The council recommended proceeding to develop the coral amendment, to include one action considering establishing the shrimp fishery access area along the eastern boundary of the northern extension of the Oculina Bank CHAPC.

The access area will be reviewed by the Habitat and Ecosystem and Shrimp APs and comments provided to the council in December. The council will also review options and consider scoping approval in December. The council also recommended proceeding with SSC review on the ABC Control Rule Amendment at the SSC's October meeting, with a status report to the council in December.

The council supported the priorities for the December 2020 meeting and preliminary topics for the March 2021 meeting, and council members will be asked to individually prioritize FMP projects prior to the December meeting, and staff will develop solutions to the overload that develops in June for consideration at the December 2020 meeting.

The council will meet via webinar on November 9, from 10:00 to 4:00, to discuss several recreational fisheries issues, and topics will include overview presentations on the recreational accountability measures and reporting amendments and a final report on the MyFishCount project and a status report from the joint recreational working group.

The committee made two motions. **The first motion was move to require council members to take harassment prevention training through the council's subscription service. Training will be valid for two years. On behalf of the committee, I so move.** Any discussion of this motion? **Any objection of this motion? That motion carries.**

The committee made another motion to move to approve the revised OC AP membership structure and make appointments in December of 2020. On behalf of the committee, I so move. Any discussion of this motion? Any objection to this motion? This motion is approved. Chairman, I turn it back over to you.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Jessica, and I would just point out that we made the decision to move forward with the one action related to getting that long overdue amendment related to help out the deepwater shrimp folks, and we're going to move along with that, because that's part of our EO recommendation, and the other thing that was brought up, related to newly-discovered deepwater habitats, we'll look at that, but we'll look at it separately, for a different process, but we're not going to tie it to that particular amendment at this time. I just wanted to make sure that I had that cleared up, and, Chester, I actually have you next here on the agenda.

MR. BREWER: Thank you, Mel. Mel, before I get started, I have, I guess, a process question. This is the first time we've done this exactly this way, and it was done to try to include more people in the discussions, and also to try to save some time, and the suggestions, or recommendations, that are up on the board right now are just that. The motions have to be made in Full Council and seconded and then voted upon. Do you want me to make these motions all at one time, that being on Items 1 through I think it's 9, or do you want me to do 1 and then 2 and then 3, in that order? I don't think we ought to do each individual person on a motion.

MR. BELL: I agree, and so, procedurally, you're right that we're kind of doing something we haven't done before, but, if there's not a problem with that approach, from a parliamentary standpoint, I'm fine with that.

MR. BREWER: Okay. There's a choice. Do you want me to do them all at once, or do you want to do like 1 and then do 2 and then do 3, et cetera?

MR. BELL: There is nine of them?

MR. BREWER: Yes, there is nine.

MR. BELL: I guess, if we were going to have any discussion at this point about any, that would make it kind of -- If you did them all at once, it would be kind of difficult, but I don't know if we'll have discussion.

MR. BREWER: I am fine with that, and so --

MR. BELL: Why don't we just try one at a time?

MR. BREWER: Okay. Let's do one group at a time, and then you can call -- Once I make the motion, since we are in Full Council now, and this is a motion being made by a member to Full Council, then I will make a motion, and you can call for seconds and see if there's any discussion or any opposition to the motion, and how is that?

MR. BELL: Right, because we are turning into recommendations into motions, and so, yes, we can make that flow pretty quickly, I think.

MR. BREWER: I think so. **Chair, I would like to make the following motion, that we reappoint Rita Merritt and Jeff Soss to the Habitat Protection and Ecosystem-Based Management AP.**

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MR. BELL: Thank you. Okay. You have heard the motion. Is there any discussion of the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? Seeing none, the motion carries.**

MR. BREWER: **Next, Chairman Bell, I would like to make a motion to reappoint Doug Kelly, Shelly Krueger, and Katie Latanich to the Outreach and Communications AP.**

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MR. BELL: All right. You see the motion, and we have a second. Any discussion? **Any objection? Seeing none, that motion carries.**

MR. BREWER: **Chairman Bell, I would like to move that we advertise the commercial seat on the Law Enforcement AP and reappoint Nickey Maxey to the LE AP.**

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MR. BELL: Any discussion of the motion? **Any objection to the motion? Seeing none, then that motion carries.**

MR. BREWER: **Next, sir, I would like to move that we reappoint Gary Robinson and Tom Roller to the Mackerel Cobia AP, that we appoint Paul Rudershausen to the Mackerel Cobia AP, and that we consider the structure of the Mackerel Cobia AP at the December 2020 council meeting.**

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MR. BELL: Any discussion of that motion? **Any opposition to the motion? Seeing none, then that motion carries.**

MR. BREWER: **I would like to make a motion that we reappoint Jack Cox and Robert Freeman and appoint Chris Kimrey to the Snapper Grouper AP.**

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MR. BELL: Any discussion of that motion? **Any objection to the motion? Seeing none, that motion carries.**

MR. BREWER: **I would like to move that we appoint Andrew Mahoney, Tony Constant, and Harry Morales to the Snapper Grouper AP. Where's my second?**

MR. BELL: We need a second.

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MR. BELL: Thank you. We're doing so well. Any discussion of that motion? **Any objection to the motion? Then that motion carries.**

MR. BREWER: **I would like to move that we reappoint Dave Snyder to the Snapper Grouper AP.**

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MR. BELL: Any discussion of the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? The motion carries.**

MR. BREWER: I would like to move that we reappoint Dave Snyder to the Snapper Grouper AP. Did I just do that one?

DR. CHEUVRONT: You just did.

MR. BREWER: Sorry. I knew I was going to lose my place. **I would like to move that we reappoint Vincent Bonura, Richard Gomez, Jimmy Hull, and David Moss to the Snapper Grouper AP.**

MR. POLAND: Second.

MR. BELL: Any discussion of the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? Seeing none, the motion carries.**

MR. BREWER: **Finally, I would like to move that we appoint Chris Militello and Andrew Fish to the Snapper Grouper AP.**

MR. POLAND: Second.

MR. BELL: Any discussion of the motion? **Any objection to the motion? Then that motion carries.**

MR. BREWER: I have no further motions.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Chester. You did a good job with that. That did save some time, I think.

MR. BREWER: I think it did.

MR. BELL: All right. We have cleared Item 6, and we're on to Item 7, which would be Agency and Liaison Reports.

DR. CHEUVRONT: We still have some -- We've got SEDAR.

MR. BELL: Sorry.

DR. CHEUVRONT: We've still got SEDAR appointments.

MR. BELL: Would I be reading that motion then, on behalf of ourselves?

DR. CHEUVRONT: Well, Jessica was the Chair, and so she can go ahead and make those motions.

MS. MCCAWLEY: We actually made motions though in this committee, right, and so these are actual motions and not like the AP.

DR. COLLIER: No, this was the same as the AP Selection. These were recommendations.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. **Then I move that we approve the SEDAR 76, black sea bass, and SEDAR 78, Spanish mackerel, table of panelists, observers, and data providers, as provided below.**

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MR. BELL: All right. Any discussion of that motion? **Any objection to the motion? Seeing none, then the motion carries.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. **I also move that we approve the schedules for SEDAR 76, black sea bass, and SEDAR 78, Spanish mackerel.**

MS. BECKWITH: Second.

MR. BELL: Any discussion of the motion? **Any objection to the motion? Seeing none, then the motion carries.**

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. I believe that is the end of the motions from all of the committees, as well as the AP Selection and SEDAR appointments, and so now, Mr. Chairman, I think you're ready to go into the Agency and Liaison Reports.

MR. BELL: All right. Thank you, Brian. What I thought I would do is start with sort of our guest councils, and I know we have a written report there, and John is still with us, and feel free to make some comments on the report, or just present the report as you see fit. Thank you.

MR. SANCHEZ: I enjoyed being with everybody this week, and I would have liked it more in person, but 2020 is what it is, and, true to form for 2020, we canceled our last meeting, because not one, but two, hurricanes hit us in the Gulf. It's really gotten so bad in 2020 that I went ahead and put my Christmas tree up. I'm ready for it to be over.

Going on to the report that's before you, the Gulf and South Atlantic SSCs met in mid-July to review the SEDAR 64 assessment for yellowtail snapper and determined that it represents the best scientific information available on the stock, and, based on the assessment, they determined the stock is not overfished and not undergoing overfishing. There were some concerns with some projection results, requiring some clarification with respect to OFL and ABC values before they could be recommended, and, as a result, I guess they will be convening a joint Gulf and South Atlantic SSC again on September 30 to try to iron all that out.

We moved on to Madison-Swanson and Steamboat Lumps, and the council recommended prohibiting fishing year-round in the Madison-Swanson and Steamboat Lumps MPAs, because enforcement was becoming problematic, and so happened, and that moved forward.

Moving on to the CARES Act and COVID-19, the industry assistance, it looks like it's going to be handled by the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission for Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas, and Florida will be handled by the Atlantic States, and so we're looking forward to that, as I guess everybody needs some help right about now.

The council was presented with the results of SEDAR 67, Gulf of Mexico vermilion snapper, and the assessment determined that vermilion is not overfished and not experiencing overfishing, and, consequently, they recommended an OFL of 8.6 million pounds and an ABC of 7.27 million pounds.

The council reviewed Reef Fish Amendment 53, which considered modifying red grouper commercial and recreational allocations based on the results of SEDAR 61. The assessment showed the red grouper stock is smaller, and MRIP-FES landing and effort estimates indicate an increase in recreational harvest. We haven't been able to take that issue up, because of these meetings being cancelled, but I'm sure that will be on our radar screen very soon.

Electronic logbooks for commercial fishing vessels is being developed to improve the accuracy and timeliness of reporting, and the SEFHIER, the Southeast For-Hire Electronic Reporting system, is delayed, as you all mentioned in your meeting, until January of 2021, and we're looking forward to that coming online.

We did a one-time exception to our SOPPs with respect to term limits for Chair and Vice Chair, and I am hoping that, at the next opportunity, we're going to be able to continue with our existing Chair and Vice Chair, just because there's been too much COVID-19-related disruptions and meeting challenges, and everybody kind of shared that sentiment, that it would be easier to give them another year-term, just because they were at the wheel when it got disrupted, as well as they were kind of cheated of their second year in their term, and so that should keep things moving smoothly. The red snapper data collection program and calibration is ongoing, and that is, obviously, going to take up a lot of our time, and it's in the to-be-continued mode, and that concludes my report, Mr. Chairman, and congratulations, Mel.

MR. BELL: Thank you, John. I appreciate that, and thank you for being with us virtually, and we look forward to actually seeing you in person at some point in the future, and I totally concur with your Christmas idea, and let's get on to the new year and get this over with. Any questions for John? Okay. I don't see any hands, and so thank you for that. Do we have a report for the Mid or any other visiting councils?

DR. CHEUVRONT: We don't have any missing reports.

MR. BELL: All right. Is Tony still onboard?

MR. DILERNIA: Yes, sir. I'm here, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BELL: Would you like to say a few things?

MR. DILERNIA: Yes, and I've got -- I will be brief, but, since you all last met, we've had three council meetings in that time, since the last time the South Atlantic Council met, and so I will just go through -- What I would like to do is go through the bullet points of each of those council meetings, and, at the end of each council meeting, I will take questions, and, if there's no questions, then I'll move on to the next council meeting.

The week after you all met, we all met together in June, and the Mid-Atlantic Council met on June 16, 17, and 18. At this meeting, we did a few things. We reviewed the scoping comments and provided input on draft alternatives for a black sea bass commercial state-by-state allocation amendment, and so we're working on federal state-by-state allocations for black sea bass on the commercial side.

We also received preliminary results of an updated summer flounder commercial recreational allocation model, and we're going through the same situation you all are going through with the new MRIP data, and there's a lot of talk about reallocating the commercial and recreational -- The percent allocations to the two sectors. We haven't made any decision on that yet, but we did receive some preliminary results.

We provided input on a range of alternatives to be considered in this summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass commercial and recreational amendment, and we discussed that we would put some alternatives out there for further development.

We adopted our ilex, and that's the shortfin squid, or the squid that are found at the edge of the canyons there, and we adopted our ilex squid specifications for 2021, with an ABC of 30,000 metric tons, which gave us a quota of 28,644 metric tons, and we recommended some additional measures to avoid overages.

We reviewed the report on the commercial landings of the unmanaged species from Maine through North Carolina and commercial landings of the species managed through our council's unmanaged forage omnibus amendment, and perhaps, in the future, we'll be also looking at bullet and frigate mackerel as part of that report, thanks to your support of our request and your good wishes, and thank you for that.

We received an update on planning for a research set-aside workshop, and we discussed the feasibility of holding an in-person workshop in the fall, and that's not going to happen, and that's for sure. We're not going to have an in-person workshop, but, in June, we were still hopeful. Then we reviewed Executive Order 13921, Promoting American Seafood Competitiveness and Economic Growth, and we briefly discussed the next steps for developing a response. That's what we did during the June 16 to 18 council meeting, Mr. Chairman, and I will take questions on that report before I move to the July meeting.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Tony. Any questions for Tony on that particular meeting? I don't see any, Tony, if you want to go ahead.

MR. DILERNIA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In July, we held a special one-day meeting, as we developed a limited-access program for the ilex, and that's the shortfin squid fishery that I had

referenced in my June report, and we developed a limited access program, and we created three tiers. We have had a number of control dates that have been put in in the past, and we decided to move forward on the most recent control date, which was the 2013 control date.

Vessels in Tier 1, there is no trip limit in place, but, in order to qualify for a Tier 1 permit, you must have landed at least 500,000 pounds in one year between 1997 and 2013 or purchase and install a refrigerated seawater system, plate-freezing system or blast freezer, between January 1 of 2012 and August 2 of 2013 and landed a minimum of 200,000 pounds of ilex in the 2013 fishing year. That was really designed to define who are the really true major players in the ilex fishery.

Tier 2 vessels come in with a -- They get a 62,000-pound trip limit, and, in order to qualify for Tier 2, they had to land at least 100,000 pounds in one year between 1997 and 2018, and so we didn't hold to the 2013 control date for Tier 2 vessels, and, finally, for Tier 3, which is a 20,000-pound trip limit, you have to land at least 50,000 pounds in one year between 1997 and 2018, and so those are the three tiers, and I would be happy to take any questions regarding that council meeting, should there be any, Mr. Chairman.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Tony. Any questions for Tony about that particular meeting? I don't see any hands, and so you have one more?

MR. DILERNIA: Yes, sir, Mr. Chairman. We had an August meeting, and we -- Actually, there was a couple in August. We had a joint meeting with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission on August 6, but that, in essence, will be captured in what we did during our regular August meeting, and so, when I give the report, or the bullet points, of what occurred at the August meeting, that will also include the one-day joint meeting with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

During our August meeting, we adopted Atlantic mackerel and butterfish specifications for 2021 and 2022 and the longfin squid specifications for 2021 to 2023, and that's the inshore squid, the longfin squid. We reviewed the previously-implemented 2021 specifications for bluefish, and we recommended no changes, and we approved the range of alternatives for the summer flounder, scup, and black sea bass commercial and recreational allocation amendment, and we'll be going out to hearings on that pretty soon, and we adopted the 2021 to 2026 specifications for Atlantic surf clams and ocean quahogs.

We elected our officers, and Chairman Mike Louisi from Maryland was re-elected as Chairman, and we have a new Vice Chairman, and our past Vice Chairman was term-limited out, Warren Elliot, and we have a new Vice Chairman from the State of Delaware, Wes Townsend.

We reviewed public input on Executive Order 13921 and provided direction on possible areas of focus, and we supported the formation of an SSC socioeconomic working group, and we agreed to send a letter to the New England Fishery Management Council requesting that the development of an amendment to address leasing in the full-time limited-access sea scallop fishery be prioritized in 2021, and a number of vessels, particularly from the State of Virginia, are asking that we pressure the New England Council, which has full control over scallops, to ask that they look at the leasing idea.

We also agreed to send a letter to GARFO and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center expressing our concerns about the redeployment of observers and request an extension of the observer waiver through the end of the year, and we were not very happy about the fact that, when you come to the State of New York, for instance, you have to quarantine for two weeks, yet an observer can just come onboard and jump onboard a vessel, and so we didn't like that, and we asked that the use of the observers onboard our vessels be delayed at least until the end of the year.

Finally, I would like to point out that we now have -- All recreational fishermen fishing for tilefish, either golden tilefish or blueline tilefish, must have a recreational permit, and not just the for-hire vessels, but all recreational vessels fishing for bluelines and goldens must have a recreational permit, and there is mandatory reporting in that recreational fishery. All the private boats also must report, and we feel it's necessary to get an idea of the magnitude, to improve our data collection services, because MRIP doesn't do a very good job, in our opinion, of capturing tilefish landings.

That's it for the August meeting, and, if I have any questions about that meeting, I am very happy to answer them, and, also, I knew Dewey is on the line, and I would be happy to give Dewey a chance to jump in here also, and I'm sure there might be a couple of things that I missed that Dewey could contribute.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Tony. Anything else for Tony, questions? Okay. Dewey, do you have a little bit for us?

MR. HEMILRIGHT: No, and he summed it all up. Thank you.

MR. BELL: Okay. A man of few words, and that's great.

MR. DILERNIA: Thank you very much, and congratulations on your election, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to continuing to work with you.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Tony. It's always good to have you with us. You're kind of like family now.

MR. DILERNIA: I feel like I'm family. Thank you very much. Only a year to go, and then I'm term-limited out. Thank you.

MR. BELL: Okay. Let's move on to our federal partners here. I thought I would start with the Science Center first. Clay, have you got a report for us?

DR. PORCH: No, and I gave you that long story on the effects of COVID-19, and I think you've heard enough.

MR. BELL: Yes, sir, and I thought that was a pretty sad story, and I don't want to hear anything else. You did have a couple of good points in there, and so it wasn't totally bad. Regional Office, and, Roy, have you got anything, if Roy is still with us?

DR. CRABTREE: I'm here, and I think Jack had one thing, and then I had something to go over.

MR. BELL: Okay. Jack, if you want to go first.

DR. MCGOVERN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just, real quick, I just want to update folks on a hiring. Tony Lamberte, who is an economist, retired earlier this year, and we're in the process of back-filling him, and we hope to have somebody onboard in October, and that person will be helping out with amendments for all three of our councils, and congratulations, Mel.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Jack, and I know you guys have been working your economists to death on different things, and so, if we have any more disasters, that doesn't help either, and so okay, Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Back in May of this year, there was an Executive Order on promoting American seafood competitiveness released, and there was a section of that that directed NOAA to work with other federal agencies and the public to develop two aquaculture opportunity areas over the next five years, and you may have seen an announcement that came out from NOAA on August 20 that said that federal waters off of the Gulf of Mexico and southern California have been selected as the first two aquaculture opportunity areas.

These are both areas that, over the past several years, there has been a lot of interest in aquaculture operations in some of the areas, and so they were chosen as the first to go through this process, and it's felt that the process of developing these opportunity areas will take about three years to complete. The first year will be focused on gathering information and data collection, and then the following two years will focus on completion of a programmatic environmental impact statement.

The development of these is a planning process, and it's not a regulatory process, and NOAA will not be issuing any permits during the time. There is no predetermined size for an aquaculture opportunity area. However, we anticipate that they will likely be small and obtain enough area for three to maybe five operations, and they will vary, depending on the specifics of the locations.

In the next few weeks, NOAA is going to release a request for information, via a Federal Register notice, and this will invite the public to provide data and information that should be considered when determining which areas of the Gulf or southern California should be the focus for the opportunity areas. There will be a number of webinars held and other opportunities for the public to provide input on it all, and so I wanted to make sure that you were all aware of this, and, if you're interested in hearing more about it, or a presentation or anything, we can make arrangements to do that, and we're planning to have a presentation at the Gulf Council meeting in a few weeks. That's all that I wanted to make you aware of, and I will reiterate congratulations, Mel, to you and Steve. That's all we have.

MR. BELL: I appreciate that, and it will be interesting to see how that works out with the aquaculture. Any questions for Roy? Okay. I don't see any. Roy, we have you for one more meeting, right?

DR. CRABTREE: I suppose so, yes. I will be here for the December meeting.

MR. BELL: All right. Good. Don't get short on us.

DR. CRABTREE: All right.

MR. BELL: Steve, did you have something?

MR. POLAND: Real quick, Roy, these aquaculture opportunity areas, is there any responsibility that the councils have, like explicitly stated in the Act, or are we just going to kind of -- Is the agency just going to kind of keep us abreast of it, and we will just provide comment, as needed?

DR. CRABTREE: Well, at this point, we will keep the councils informed of what's going on, but there will be opportunities, I'm sure, for the council to comment on areas they think would be appropriate, and we will certainly be looking to the Gulf Council for their experience and knowledge of where conflicts with existing fisheries may occur.

For example, in the Gulf, we've done a lot of work looking at VMS data and shrimp trawl logs, trying to identify areas that are important to those fisheries, and so we'll continue to take those into account, and the councils are the experts on that, and they have the best connections to help us deal with the public. The regulatory arena is in flux right now, and you were briefed earlier about the Gulf lawsuit, and so NMFS is not really a permitting agency at this point, and it's the Army Corps and the Environmental Protection Agency.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Roy.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Roy.

DR. CHEUVRONT: If you're through with the SERO report, I wanted to point out, and I've got up on the screen right now, and I don't think we have a representative from the Office of Law Enforcement, but there was a report from OLE in the briefing book, and it was Attachment 7 from Full Council Session 3, and it was the --

DR. ERRIGO: Brian, there is a representative from OLE.

DR. CHEUVRONT: There is?

DR. ERRIGO: Yes.

DR. CHEUVRONT: That's great. I was not aware of it.

MR. WAILEA: I just wanted to introduce myself real quick, briefly, here. My name is Matt Wailea, and I'm the new Southeast Division Compliance Liaison, and it's a new position that law enforcement has created, and I have got counterparts in Alaska, the West Coast, and the Northeast Division as well. Kind of the goal of this position, what I'm here to do and help out, is to help bridge the gap between enforcement, management, and industry, being here for the constituents and help address concerns and make them fully understand the regulations, and, ultimately, help promote compliance within the agency, because that's our main goal.

I have worked with some folks and staff that are attending this meeting in different capacities, through MREP and working with VMS, and I definitely look forward to meeting everyone, once these in-person meetings resume, and I also wanted to note that I believe we have one of our

enforcement officers, Miles Dover, and he's based out of New Bern, North Carolina, and he is also online, and so, if there's any questions afterwards, he's here.

I will try to be brief, and I know it's at the end of the day, and you have it pulled up, and we don't have to go through each one, but I'm just going to give a summary of our report, and this consists of our Quarter 3 report from April to June, and this report actually encompasses all three councils within our division, and so this has stats on the Gulf, the Caribbean, and the South Atlantic.

Outreach and patrols, it's noted in there, but I just wanted to make a note that, since the pandemic started, we're maintaining an active presence and doing so safely, and so we're still getting out and making contact and doing patrols and doing inspections and interacting with the industry. Overall, we've had 223 incidents that we've opened throughout our region, with 140 of those occurring in the South Atlantic region. If you have time to check out the report later, it's on page 3 and 4, and there's a table and graph showing a breakdown of all the incidents in the South Atlantic region by location and law of regulation, and the majority of those fell under the MSA.

Following after that, we actually have a summary of incidents that have been referred to us by our JEA, our joint enforcement agreement, and Coast Guard partners, and, through that, we have forty-four incidents, and that is also broken down by partner and the law of regulation, with the majority, again, falling under the MSA.

As far as action we've taken, out of all these incidents, we've issued thirty-five summary settlements, and twenty-seven of those incidents have been forwarded over to our General Counsel, and the remainder of them were either unfounded or fix-its or compliance, compliance assistance and not written warnings, and, just to give an idea of the breakdown of the summary settlements, there's a table, and that's a section in the report as well, and they range from the lower range from \$275 for retention during closure to a little over \$3,000, and that's for someone engaging in charter activity without the required permits.

Twenty of those thirty-five have occurred within the South Atlantic region, the summary settlements, and they range from seasonal closure violations, undersized retention, and we've had six incidents of fishing in the Florida Keys Sanctuary, bag limit violations, charter permit violations, and it's all listed in there, and so it varies by violation type.

I also wanted to note in there, on page 19, that we have some stats from the observer program, and we continue to support it, and I know you heard earlier about the Southeast Science Center, and that effort has been drastically reduced since the pandemic started, but coverage is -- It has started to ramp back up now, and so we're continuing to monitor and assist them, as needed, as it goes forward.

On page 20, after that, and, like I said, you don't have to go through the report there, but on page 20 is the cases forwarded over to our General Counsel, and there was a total of twenty-seven, with eleven occurring in the South Atlantic and nine in the Keys. In the South Atlantic, they range from TED and BRD violations, and we've had right whale restrictions, some closed areas, bag limit exceedance, seafood permit import restrictions, and I wanted to make note that we had three cases referred over to our U.S. Department of Justice for criminal prosecution. One of those involved seafood fraud, and there were two that involved observer harassment and assault that went over to them.

As far as the nine that happened in the Keys, there was possession without valid permits, and we had some VMS catch share violations going on, and also some damaging violations that occurred within the Florida Keys Sanctuary.

Another section in the report, and I encourage you to look at it and read it fully, is we have enforcement highlights that are broken down by law and regulations programs, and, in there, we also have reports of working with our JEA partners throughout the South Atlantic region, and we wanted to make note that there's some cases working with FWC assistance, and our enforcement officers have been doing offshore patrols with Georgia DNR, offshore on the reefs, and we've been doing some presence patrols down in the Keys Marine Sanctuary.

Lastly, just as far as resources go and what we have, we actually have a couple of enforcement officers that are in the process of onboarding, and we have a new officer that will be stationed in Cape Canaveral, Florida, and Miami, Florida, in support of IUU, and then, outside of the South Atlantic Council, we have an enforcement officer coming into St. Thomas, down in the USVI, and we will also be backfilling and hiring two special agents, one which will be in Charleston, South Carolina, and the other will be down in Miami, also in support of IUU. Quickly, I appreciate the time, and I know we're at the end of the day, the end of the week, and that concludes my report, Mr. Chairman, and I'm here for any questions, or, in the future, please contact me.

MR. BELL: All right. Thank you, Matt. We really appreciate that thorough report, and I would encourage everybody to make sure that you take a look at it, and welcome aboard in your role, and we look forward to work with you, and, Miles, thanks for being at the meeting. Does anybody have any questions for Matt or Miles, out of New Bern, while we've got them here? I don't see any questions.

MR. WAILEA: Thank you for your time.

MR. BELL: Thank you. In the spirit of law enforcement, I don't know if Lieutenant Copeland has anything he wants to say. Welcome aboard, again. If you have a report you would like to give us, that's fine.

LT. COPELAND: Thanks, Mel. I appreciate it. As I stated before, this Lieutenant Bobby Copeland, and I'm located in Miami, Florida. I recently took over this position from Lieutenant Commander Montes. Going forward, I have a few things that I can pass to you guys with the good work that our boarding officers are doing there on the scene. Afterwards, I would like to turn it over to you guys and see if there's anything that you would like from my standpoint, and I don't know if there was something that Lieutenant Commander Montes used to provide you all that you found beneficial for these meetings.

Before going to that, just so you guys know, since our last meeting, our boarding officers completed 332 boardings for the month of July, and they got four violations that they have turned over and routed up to NOAA, and then, for the month of August, there was 128 boardings, with a total of one violation. Of note, probably the decrease in the amount of boardings in August was most likely due to the fact of the hurricanes, for storm avoidance and storm preparation, but that is all that I have at the moment, and I will turn it over, and, pending any questions, that's all I have. Thanks.

MR. BELL: All right. Thank you, Bobby. I appreciate that. Any questions for Lieutenant Copeland that are Coast Guard related? It's a lively bunch. You all must be wanting to leave. All right. I don't see any hands, and so thank you, and we'll move along, and we do look forward to continuing to work with you, and, as we think of things that might be helpful for you to pass to us, we'll make sure we get with you and let you know. That takes us to states, and I guess, just keeping some order to this, we'll go from north to south, and so State Liaison Reports, and we can start with North Carolina and work our way to Florida.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Mel. I will keep it brief, because it's past 5:00. The North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries received word from NOAA Fisheries last week, I think it was, September 9, on approval of our spending plan for the CARES Act money, and, right now, we're just waiting on notification from the Atlantic Marine Fisheries Commission on the awards, and then we will open up our thirty-day application period.

Other fisheries news, we're right in the middle, or a little over halfway through, our recreational flounder season. This year, our commercial season will open up at the end of the month, and reports on the water is there are plenty of flounder everywhere, and people are having good catches.

As far as COVID-19 impacts, it's still here, and there are still cases throughout all the coastal counties. Fish houses and retail markets are still getting reports that there are some impacts from that, and so someone will test positive, and the facility will shut down for a week or two, and so that can cause some minor disruption, but, across-the-board, people are fishing, and recreational fishing effort is still up, and it seems to have been up all year, due to the fact that most people are working from home. With that, unless there's any questions, that's really all I have for North Carolina, and I just want to congratulate you, Mel, on being the Chair, and I look forward to working under you, and thank you, Jessica, for a fantastic two years. You did a great job.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Steve, and congratulations to you. Any questions for Steve? Okay. I will just go ahead and give South Carolina's, really quickly. Obviously, you heard from Clay the concerns about MARMAP operating and those sorts of things, and so we're still working through that, and MARMAP is actually doing day trips and trying to -- So we're not totally idle, but it's just we have trouble with overnight trips, because we have one berthing compartment for a scientific crew of nine, and that doesn't go well with COVID restrictions at the moment, and so we're working through that.

The reef program is actually doing day trips, and so we are trying to keep the big blue boat, the Palmetto, busy. The Lady Lisa, which is our SEAMAP vessel, is still up in North Carolina, in the yard, and so I'm not sure when we'll be able to get her back, and so we're experiencing the same sorts of things that Clay described at his level, and I know all of you guys are probably at different states, and so there's no surprise there.

The CARES Act, that's taking a lot of our staff time to process, and we actually -- Today, we're probably going to start sending out our notification letters for potential awards, and those started going out today, and so we're moving along on that, and I would just say thank God for the USDA and this tariff stuff.

The impact on fisheries, things have improved greatly since March and April, and we're seeing the same sorts of things that you guys are, other states, related to actual increases in fishing activity recreationally, and so people couldn't do things, and so they went fishing, which is great, which they're also buying fishing licenses, which is also great. We did take a bit of a thumping, because we do depend on tourism pretty heavily for part of the coast, and so some of our out-of-state license sales were down for a while, but even that kind of improved a little bit once we kind of got things back online, and so I'm sure everybody is dealing with the same sorts of things there.

Flounder, even though we don't manage them, we're dealing with some potential proposal of changing our flounder laws and fishery regulations for flounder, and we're taking it to the DNR board in a week or so, and so we'll see how the board wants to move on that, and then we'll kind of move with flounder.

Our shrimp fishery, it started out okay, and it kind of tapered off a little bit, and it's just now starting to pick back up, and we had good numbers inside, and so, as soon as those shrimp inside move out into the trawl zone, things should get better, and I have had initial word that they are out there, and the guys are doing a little better now, and so we'll hopefully have a good fall crop of white shrimp, and agencies are -- We're under a hiring freeze right now, similar things that I'm sure all the agencies are dealing with.

We're dealing with potential challenges in budget, and we won't have a clear picture of our state budget until probably October or so, but we're hoping it's not as bad as it could be, and so, anyway, that's it for South Carolina, unless you guys have any questions. I don't see any. We'll move on down to Georgia then.

DR. BELCHER: I have a relatively short report as well, and I will kind of start with some of the easy stuff. At the end of the June, we commissioned our new research vessel, the Reed Harris, and we were hoping to start doing our comparative trawls to at least try to get the two boats in tune with the R/V Anna, and we are contracting with the University of Massachusetts, and, unfortunately, because of COVID and COVID rates, we're kind of on hold as to when the researcher can come down to help us out. Hopefully we'll be able to do that soon, and our numbers are actually looking a little better than theirs right now.

Our work, we have pretty much been operating as close to normal as we can, and we did have some downtime in I guess it was Wave 2, because it was the March/April time window, and the early part of May, that impacted our MRIP surveys, but, for the most part, all of those folks are back working, with a little bit of a modified approach, in the sense of, if there's a lot of people in a particular area, they are not necessarily inundating themselves with the APAIS part of that, just because of social distancing issues, but we're probably operating, most days, between 50 and 70 percent capacity in the office, and people who share offices are kind of doing the hot-bunking approach, where they are alternating days, so that we don't have people in close contact sharing that same space.

All of our surveys are up and running, and we didn't lose a lot of time, thank goodness, for our fishery-independent surveys. Many surveys are going well, and the longline survey -- We've had boat issues, and so that's kind of put it on a rest right now, but we're hopefully working through those, and the big boat is still here. There was the VR-10,000, or VB-10,000, and that was coming around from Texas, and it's currently staging itself down in Fernandina Beach, and there was an

issue with COVID, and so that kind of delayed them, and it was right before the start of the hurricane season, and, obviously, nobody wants to take a chance and start cutting into that puppy in the height of hurricane season, and so she still sits there on her side.

Right now, the schedule is for commencement in the first part of October, to begin cuts, and they are working on -- We've been kind of joking about the biosphere over it, and, over on St. Simons, they have kind of made a compound for all those folks who will be working on that project to go to, in maintaining that kind of quarantine area for them, so that the chances of them contracting COVID in the process of all of this and it taking out the crew -- They have done the best they can to basically sequester all that workforce over there.

Currently, we have hearings going on relative to that, which is the investigation, and it started on Monday, and they are public hearings, so people can come and hear what the investigation is relative to what the cause of the tip is. So far, it's just basically been asking people from the loaders to the captain, I think, actually was the one who was interviewed late today, to find out if there was any indication of what happened on their way out, and, so far, everybody is saying that there was no indication of issues, up until the boat started to tip, and so it will be interesting to see what-all they find out when they start getting into the data.

Then our last thing is, like everyone else, working on CARES, and we did get our spend plan approved a while back, and we actually sent out our letters last week, and we have started getting letters back and applications back, and, until we get -- I guess we're running them through to the middle of October, is how we're working all of this, and then we'll go through an appeals process and all, and then we'll figure out, proportionately, how people are going to get paid.

It was about 500 letters that went out, and potentially more, and we did legal ads, to see if we could shake loose anybody that we currently don't have that are either wholesale dealers or whatever that don't come into our process as easily, some of these bigger processors, and the two companies that we have here in Georgia are Rich SeaPak and King & Prince, and so we'll see if they put in for that, and they were also part of that pool that got our money, or our portion of the money, and so we have to put them into the mix, to at least solicit to see if they have losses of 35 percent or better.

That's kind of where we're at, and we're hoping that, in a month, we'll have most of this CARES behind us, and then, of course, getting prepped to deal with our 2013 and 2018 monies that we still have to work with, and that's it.

MR. BELL: Thank you, Carolyn. Any questions for Carolyn and for Georgia? I don't see any. A simple answer to why did the boat tip over is insufficient righting arm. Okay. On down to Florida. Jessica, do you want to give us a quick update?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I sure can. Most of the agency is continuing to do telework, due to COVID. We're also working on our CARES Act money, and we are still waiting on approval of our plan from NOAA, and we're also working on our Hurricane Michael money, and we're still waiting on approval of our plan for Hurricane Michael, and, if you were watching the news, part of Florida, in addition to Alabama, was hit by Hurricane Sally earlier this week.

Just a couple updates on some items that are coming to our upcoming commission meeting is we're continuing to work on the flounder rules that I mentioned at the last council meeting, and these would be flounder rules in state waters and in federal waters. We are also working on a federal consistency action for state rules for bluefin tilefish and state rules to match the Atlantic hook requirements. With that, I will take any questions.

MR. BELL: All right. Thank you. Any questions for Jessica? All right. Jessica, while I've got you here, and I've got one other item, just one quick item of Other Business, but, Jessica, let me just say that I know that we're not together face-to-face, and so having kind of a virtual change of command, or a virtual turnover, is kind of cold, and it doesn't feel right, but I do want to say that I just greatly appreciate, and we all do, your leadership for the past two years, and we have enjoyed it, and you've just done a fantastic job, and you've done so much, and we really look forward to you just hanging with us.

Steve and I will do our best to keep the train on the tracks and all the progress that you've made in the time that you've been our Chair, and we'll try to keep it going, and so thank you so much, and I just wanted to be able to say that to you, and I can't give you a hug or anything, but a virtual hug, and a virtual round of applause, I guess, from everybody.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Mel. Thank you. It was my pleasure to serve you, the council members and the staff and the public, and I will certainly be here, and I can help you and Steve out however I can, and congratulations to the both of the you.

MR. BELL: Thanks so much, and I know you will. Okay. One other item that I have under Other Business is Steve had brought up earlier a letter dealing with North Carolina dredging issues, and, Steve, do you want to touch on that really quickly, where we are with that and what our timeline looks like?

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Mel. John sent the draft letter out yesterday, or the day before, for comments, and thank you to everyone on the council who provided comments. This week, the Corps of Engineers extended their comment deadline for two weeks, and so comments are due on October 2. As long as the council is fine with it, me, as Habitat Committee Chair, I can work with council staff and Mel to go ahead and button-up that letter and get it ready for Mel's signature. I know, when we discussed this on Tuesday, it didn't seem like there was any opposition among the council for commenting on this project. As long as no one has any concerns with sending the letter, I guess you and I can work on it and get it out the door.

MR. BELL: So that would be the approach, and the letter is a little longer than I had envisioned initially, but it's something that I think Steve and I and the council staff can work with, if everybody is comfortable with that, and we'll finish it up and then get it in on time, and so any objections to that approach? I don't see any.

MR. POLAND: Mel, since we do have an additional two weeks, if anyone on the council wants to go and review the latest draft and provide comments by let's say next Wednesday -- If you have any comments, get them to us by next Wednesday, and we'll incorporate them.

MR. BELL: Yes, and that would be good. If you didn't have a chance to get through all of that and you want to provide a little input there, take a look. If we could get it by next Wednesday,

that would be great. Okay. Is there any other Other Business to come before the council? Then I will turn this over to John, and he's going to discuss the upcoming meeting, John, for a second.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Thank you, Mel. Just for a second. As you can see in the document, there are a lot of meetings that we have coming up through the rest of September and into October and November, and I think I just counted them up, and there's something like sixteen different meetings going on, and so it will be a busy time for us and for the staff, and for you guys as well, because so many council members sit in on these various APs.

The CCC is meeting next week, on the afternoons of the 23rd and 24th, and then we'll go into a number of AP meetings, and there is two SSC meetings during this time, and so we'll be kept quite busy getting you up-to-date. The information for all of these meetings will be available on the council website, as it always is, and the briefing books are available about two weeks beforehand, and that's always the goal as well, and so, if you ever have any questions about this, check the website, or contact the staff person behind it, if you're interested in what's going on or have any questions about what these different groups and committees are doing.

Then we're looking forward to our council meeting in Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina on December 7 through 11, and it remains to be seen if we will be doing it like this again or if we can actually gather in person at that time, and we'll be looking at that with the new council leadership team over the next few weeks and start figuring out when our drop-dead deadline is, in terms of making a decision on that meeting for folks.

We carried this through, through the year, just to give you a sense of -- There's a lot of TBDs, but we do know that, coming into the spring of 2021, we have various APs and the SSC and others that will have to meet, and so, if there's any questions on the upcoming meetings, anything certainly in the near future, I would be glad to take them.

MR. BELL: Any questions for John? One of the downsides, I guess, of COVID and the virtual meetings is you can have a lot of meetings, and so, I mean, we are fortunate that we have the technology and we can actually keep things going at the level we have, and we do have a great staff that have been working, and they're very experienced in using this technology, and so I really appreciate the staff support in allowing us to do what we've done.

I suspect, as we look at December -- You know, obviously, we'll be checking with the states and with the feds, related to travel restrictions or what they can or can't do, and so that will play into what we're able to do in December, but it would, obviously, be nice to get together physically if we can. That's all I think we have. Is there any other business to come before the council? I don't see any hands, and so, at this point, I will say this council meeting is adjourned, and I would normally tell you all to drive safely or fly safely. Okay, everybody. The meeting is adjourned, and thank you very much for your participation, and we look forward to talking to you the next time we talk to you.

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

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Certified By: _____ Date: _____

Transcribed By
Amanda Thomas
October 15, 2020

SAFMC September Council

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

Report Generated:

09/18/2020 08:36 AM EDT

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Actual Start Date/Time

09/17/2020 08:15 AM EDT

Last Name	First Name
00Sanchez	00John
Aukemam	Trip
BLOUGH	HEATHER
BYRD	01JULIA
Bailey	Adam
Beaty	Julia
Beckwith	00Anna
Belcher	00Carolyn
Bell	00Mel
Bianchi	Alan
Bonura	Vincent
Brame	Richen
Brouwer	01Myra
Brown	Julie
Bruce	James
Bubley	Walter
Burgess	Erika
Carmichael	01John
Chaya	01Cindy
Chevront	01Brian
Clarke	Lora
Conklin	00Chris
Copeland	00 Bobby
Corey	Morgan
Coutre	Karson
Cox	Derek
Dalton Harrison	BeBe
Dancy	Kiley
DeVictor	00Rick
Defilippi Simpson	Julie
DiLernia	Tony
Dixon	Michael
Dover	Miles
Duval	Michelle
Errigo	01Michael
Estes	00Jim

Finch	Margaret
Flowers	Jared
Foss	Kristin
Gamboa-Salazar	Keilin
Gentry	Lauren
Glasgow	Dawn
Gloeckner	David
Gore	Karla
Grimes	00 Shepherd
Griner	00Tim
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Hadley	01John
Hart	Hannah
Hawes	Rachel
Helies	02Frank
Hemilright	Dewey
Hiers	Homer
Horton	Chris
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Hudson	Rusty
Iberle	01Allie
Iverson	Kim
Jepson	Michael
Johnson	Alison
Kittle	Christine
Klasnick	01Kelly
Kolmos	Kevin
LaMarre	Brian
Laks	Ira
Laney	Wilson
Lee	Jennifer
Lizza	Katie
Long	Stephen
Lyons Gromen	Pam
Mahoney	Andrew
Marhefka	00Kerry
McCawley	00-Jessica
McCoy	Sherylanne
McGovern	00Jack
Mehta	Nikhil
Morrison	Wendy
Nee	Shannon
Neer	Julie
Nesslage	Genny
Petersen	Andrew
Poland	00Stephen
Porch	00Clay

Price	Patrick
Pugliese	01Roger
Pulver	Jeff
Ralston	Kellie
Records	David
Reichert	Marcel
Reynolds	Jon
Rhodes	01Cameron
Sapp	Art
Schmidtke	01Michael
Scott	Tara
Sedberry	George
Seward	McLean
Shervanick	Kara
Sinkus	Wiley
Smart	Tracey
Smit-Brunello	00Monica
Smith	Duane
Somerset	Carly
Spanik	Kevin
Spurgin	Kali
Stevens	Wesley
Sweetman	CJ
Takade-Heumacher	Helen
Travis	Michael
Vara	Mary
Walia	Matthew
Whitaker	David
Wiegand	01Christina
Williams	Erik
Willis	Michelle
Woodward	00Spud
Zamboni	Katharine
berry	chip
brewer	00chester
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cox	Jack
crabtree	00Roy
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sandorf	scott
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