

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

INFORMATION & EDUCATION ADVISORY PANEL

Webinar

April 14-15, 2020

SUMMARY MINUTES

INFORMATION & EDUCATION AP MEMBERS

Scott Baker, Chair
Lt. James Bruce
Tyler Jones
Jennifer Koches
Diana Martino
Emily Muehlstein
Cinthia Sandoval
Erin Weeks

Shelly Krueger, Vice-Chair
Melissa Crouch
Doug Kelly
Katie Latanich
Sean Meehan
Mark Phelps
Patricia Smith

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Spud Woodward
David Whitaker

Steve Poland

COUNCIL STAFF

John Carmichael
Julia Byrd
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Cameron Rhodes
Suzanna Thomas
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BeBe Harrison

Allie Iberle
Myra Brouwer
Dr. Chip Collier
Christina Wiegand
John Hadley
Cindy Chaya

Other observers and participants attached.

The Information & Education Advisory Panel of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened via webinar on April 14, 2020 and was called to order by Scott Baker.

MS. RHODES: The first thing I'm going to do is just extend our gratitude from the council office and thank you for being here with us today. I know that this is a trying time for everybody, particularly folks who are involved in the fishing industry and our stakeholders, and we really appreciate you agency folks being here, and we appreciate the fishermen who are here, the commercial representatives, federal agency representatives, and we're very grateful to have you guys with us, and we appreciate your time on these kinds of matters, and so thank you very much for being here today.

Before we get into some content stuff, I wanted to do a couple of little housekeeping things. Since we are doing this via webinar, I'm rather bummed that I don't get to see your faces in person, but I'm still really glad that we get to have this opportunity, where we can all meet together and chat about these different best-practices-related items, MyFishCount, citizen science, and get updates from you all, and we are going to set aside some time tomorrow, during our AP member update discussion, to talk about what's going on with COVID-19 and get feedback from you and how you are communicating with your constituents, how you're reaching out to stakeholders, and, if you are a stakeholder, trying to gauge what kind of communication strategies have been most effective for you thus far and what are some things that we all could be doing better to provide you information.

As the council, we don't really have the authority to provide aid or anything like that, but, at the very least, we can become a resource for people and provide information, and so we will take some time tomorrow, during the AP member update discussion, to really talk about some of those things, and so thanks again for being here.

Before we hop into the agenda, I wanted to take a quick look at some other stuff. I sent around a presentation in an email to all of you which had some helpful information on who we are as a council, and it also provided some information about how we can go about hosting this webinar and getting through all of these discussions. This is a unique situation, and we really haven't had to do this as an AP, and I know many of you are very familiar with webinars, but we wanted to just give a brief overview of some of the things and tools that will help you get through the meeting.

For starters, you will know if you are muted on your end if this is in red. If it's green, we can hear you, and so we're going to have everybody unmuted from our end, and we just ask that you mute yourselves throughout the meeting, and, that way, we'll be able to reduce the likelihood of having feedback. In addition, if you would like to ask a question or make a comment related to the content of the meeting, we just ask that you use this icon button here, which is to raise your hand. I am going to take note of the queue, and, that way, we can go through one-by-one, and we won't have anybody talking over each other.

If you have something that's related to the content of the meeting, whether it be a question or you would like to provide input or offer a suggestion, I think the best way, moving forward, would be if you just go ahead and raise your hand, and then I will call on you by name, and we'll go ahead and start sharing ideas with each other.

Then, lastly, if you have any technical issues, like your sound is no longer working, you are unable to see our screen, or something along those lines, go ahead and type into the question box, and we have staff standing by who can help address any issues that may arise, and so I think, with that, we should be in pretty good shape, and I hope you all had the opportunity to take a look at the rest of this PowerPoint presentation.

I'm not going to go through it now, but, just to recap what your responsibilities are as an AP member, and we do have some new folks with us for this AP meeting, and so thank you very much for being here. We've got Ben Prueitt, and we've got Erin Weeks, and we've got Sean Meehan, and we've got Melissa Crouch, and so we're really excited to have some new faces. We also have Mark Phelps, and so it should be a good group, and we just wanted to give you a brief overview and just a refresher for some of the folks who have been on the AP for a while now.

I just wanted to let you know that you can serve up to three three-year terms, and we meet on an as-needed basis. Typically, for the I&E AP, we meet usually once a year. Then you guys are responsible for reviewing outreach and education materials and offering advice and recommendations for outreach and communication strategies on behalf of the council, and we also rely on you all rather heavily to be ambassadors. You do serve as an ambassador for us, and we're really grateful for that. You're able to share information with your communities and your agencies, what have you, and that's really an important and critical role.

Then whatever recommendations you provide are then compiled in an advisory panel report, which is then offered to the council's Information and Education Committee. Spud Woodward is the chair for that committee, and he's with us today, and so he'll be listening in and offering your recommendations as well to the council, but everything will be compiled in an official report for their consideration when moving forward with outreach and education strategies or when making management decisions.

That being said, let's go ahead and head over to the agenda, and, before I do that, does anybody have any tech issues, or is everybody good to go and ready to jump into the content of the meeting? I am not seeing any raised hands or anything like that, and I don't know if Julia is seeing anything in the questions box, and so we'll go ahead and plug along here. The first thing on the agenda is for us to go ahead and approve the agenda, and so that will be for you, Scott.

MR. BAKER: It's real easy being the chair when you're not there. I can't see anybody. I guess I will just ask if -- Can you remind me, Cameron, if we need to do a formal vote for this?

MS. RHODES: No, we don't. You could just simply ask something along the lines of is anyone opposed to the approval of the agenda, and, if nobody has any opposition, then it can go ahead and stand approved.

MR. BAKER: That sounds good. Does anybody have any opposition to the agenda?

MS. RHODES: I am not seeing any hands raised, Scott, and so I think we're in good shape.

MR. BAKER: Okay. We'll roll forward then. Cameron, did you want to take a second and kind of go around the room?

MS. RHODES: I think that would be a good idea, just to get everybody, at least for the record, to state their name and their affiliation, and then we can hop into the content of the meeting. What I will do is I will scroll down through the agenda, and we'll just go based on how folks are listed here. Does that sound good, Scott?

MR. BAKER: That sounds great.

MS. RHODES: All right, and so we can start off with you.

MR. BAKER: Okay. Hi, everybody. I'm sorry we're not there in person, and my name is Scott Baker, and I'm a Fisheries Extension Specialist with North Carolina Sea Grant, based in Wilmington, North Carolina, at UNC-W, but also through NC State. I've been in that position since 2003, and I help the recreational and commercial fishing industry deal with lots of research and management issues and facilitate a lot of cooperative research and things like that. That's it for me.

MS. RHODES: All right. Thanks, Scott. Up next will be Melissa Crouch.

MS. CROUCH: Hi, everyone. I'm Melissa Crouch from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and so I lead our Outreach and Education Group in our Marine Fisheries Division, and this is my first AP meeting for this Information and Education Group, and so I'm excited to be here and listen in, and I look forward to hopefully actually meeting everyone and seeing everyone in the future.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Melissa. Up next, we'll have Shelly Krueger.

MS. KRUEGER: Hello, everybody. I'm the Florida Sea Grant agent for the University of Florida, and I am the agent in Monroe County, which is the Florida Keys. I am also on the Gulf Council Outreach and Education Technical Committee.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Shelly. Up next, we'll have Katie Latanich.

MS. LATANICH: Hi, everybody. This is Katie. Nice to meet you. I am based in Beaufort, North Carolina, and I worked for a long time at the marine lab, and, since our last meeting, I've had a change of role, and so I'm working as an independent consultant with the council process, and so I work kind of across councils and with the agency in a facilitation role, and so it's nice to, I guess, be here with all of you virtually. Thanks.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Katie. Next, we'll have Cinthia Sandoval.

MS. SANDOVAL: I'm Cinthia, and I'm with the Wild Ocean Seafood Market, or Cape Canaveral Shrimp Company, and I'm in the commercial spot, and that's it.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Cinthia. Do we have Doug Kelly on?

MR. KELLY: Yes. I'm a book author and writer and a contributing editor for *Florida Sportsmen Magazine*, a radio show co-host, and I'm from Tampa Bay, home of the former Superbowl champions.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Doug. I appreciate that. Next, we'll have Patricia Smith.

MS. SMITH: I am the Public Information Officer for the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries.

MS. RHODES: Thank you, Patricia. Next, we'll have Mark Phelps.

MR. PHELPS: Hi. I'm Captain Mark Phelps, and I'm a for-hire charter captain here in Charleston, South Carolina. I run two vessels inshore, nearshore, and offshore, that kind of stuff. This is my first meeting for you guys, but I'm happy to be here. Thanks.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Mark. Welcome. Next, we've got Sean Meehan.

MR. MEEHAN: Good afternoon, all. My name is Sean Meehan, and I am the Recreational Fishing Coordinator for NOAA Fisheries for the Southeast United States, and I'm in St. Petersburg, Florida.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Sean. Next, we've got Jennifer Koches.

MS. KOCHES: Hi, everybody. This is Jennifer Koches, Public Affairs Specialist with the Fish and Wildlife Service, based here in Charleston, and I serve the South Atlantic, Gulf, and Mississippi Basin regions as a public affairs specialist, and I can't remember how long I've been on the council, on the advisory panel, and so, otherwise, I would tell you how long I've been around, but I'm glad to see, or hear, the new faces and voices, and I look forward to continuing to be with you all.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Jennifer. Next, we have Ben Prueitt.

MR. PRUEITT: Good afternoon, you all. My name is Ben Prueitt, and I work at the NOAA Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, and, there, I'm doing outreach and social media coordination and a lot of community engagement. This is also my first time at a council meeting, and so I'm glad to hear everyone's voices. Thanks.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Ben. Welcome aboard. Next, we have Emily Muehlstein Lumsden.

MS. LUMSDEN: Hi, everyone. I am Emily, and I am the Public Information Officer for the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and, while I have the mic, I think I will also take a moment. We have a new Outreach Specialist in the Gulf region that works with the Gulf Council, and her name is Carly Somerset, and she is listening in today as well, and so two folks from the Gulf Council moonlighting today.

MS. RHODES: Great. Thank you, Emily, and welcome, Carly. We're glad to have you. Next, we'll have Diana Martino.

MS. MARTINO: Good afternoon. I'm Diana Martino, and I work with the Caribbean Fishery Management Council, and I am the Outreach and Education Coordinator and the Assistant to the Executive Director, and I'm really glad to be here with you guys.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Diana. We're glad to have you. Next, we have Erin Weeks.

MS. WEEKS: Hi, all. This is Erin. I'm based in Charleston, with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. I head up external communications for the Marine Resources Division. This is my first AP meeting, and, Cameron, I just want to thank you all. I know you have a leg up on all the rest of us, in terms of doing remote meetings and webinars, but we're all kind of pivoting to doing this now, and so it's going to be really helpful to see how we run things today and tomorrow, and you're already doing a fantastic job, and so thanks for showing us how it's done.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Erin. I appreciate it. I've got a lot of help behind me, and so I'm lucky. There's lots of well-trained people on all this stuff. Next, we've got Lieutenant James Bruce.

LT. BRUCE: Hi, everyone. I'm James Bruce, and I'm with the United States Coast Guard, and I'm glad to be here, and I'm sorry it's virtually, and I see some familiar names, and so it's good to hear everybody's voice. Like I said, U.S. Coast Guard, and primarily I'm based out of Charleston, South Carolina, and I run the training program for all the law enforcement officers, Coast Guard, and then we also open it up to state officers, of course, for federal fisheries enforcement. Thank you.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, James, and, lastly, we've got Tyler Jones.

MR. JONES: My name is Tyler Jones, and I'm with the Coastal Resources Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources here in Brunswick, Georgia. I am the Communications Specialist for CRD, and, before that, I was a newspaper reporter and editor.

MS. RHODES: All right. Thanks, Tyler, and thanks everyone. Again, welcome, and we appreciate you being here, and we're going to go ahead and jump into our first presentation, which is on FishSmart, and Andy Loftus was kind enough to agree to do this for us today, and so we're going to go ahead and transfer over presentation mode to him.

MR. LOFTUS: Good afternoon, everybody. Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you about the FishSmart Program, and specifically the project that we have going on in the South Atlantic right now. As you can see by the title, it's the South Atlantic Reef Fish and Red Drum Conservation Project, and I'm only going to be speaking about the reef fish component of this today. If you would like information on the rest of it, feel free to send me an email or get in touch with me somehow, and I would be more than willing to share with you what we have.

During the presentation, I'm going to have three primary components to this. One is to tell you about FishSmart and where it started and some of the background information about it, and the second part of it then is I will talk about a previous effort that we had, very similar to the South Atlantic, that focused in on the Gulf of Mexico, and we finished that in I think it was 2017. Then I'm going to talk about the results so far of the South Atlantic component of the project.

I will also, on this introductory slide, point you to the website at the bottom, FishSmart.org, and that's a programmatic website that's really not designed for the public, if you will, although I have found, since we started it, that more and more people have gone to it. The FishSmart website really contains all the information from the first phase of the project, which is pretty extensive,

and we just tried to put everything else on the web that we feasibly could, or possibly could, so that we could share all the information with anybody that's interested in this.

I want to start off, of course, thanking everybody that is a participant in this project, and I will point out that the logos that you see on the screen right now are the supporters and participants in just the South Atlantic component of this, and there are many other supporters in the various other phases. NOAA Fisheries has been a key supporter throughout the entire process, and they kind of kicked everything off, probably ten years ago now, with support to get the first phase rolling.

In this phase, Yamaha is by far the largest financial supporter, and it's from their very deep desire to improve conservation and improve fisheries management, particularly in the South Atlantic, and so we want to thank them, but, also, all of the agency and organization partners, they are the key interface with the recreational anglers, and we have designed the program so that it can benefit the agencies and organizations through improving their interaction and their ability to interact with the constituents, and so they are, obviously, a very important component.

The program is coordinated through the Fish America Foundation, which is the conservation arm of the American Sportfishing Association, and so the industry partners have been very instrumental in getting FishSmart up and running and being a part of it for the entire process, and then, finally, I will mention the recreational boating and fishing foundation, and they have been supportive of us from the beginning, by providing us the opportunity, or the technical capability, for posting our online registration and some information pages and things like that, and so FishSmart really is a product of all of the different organizations that both contribute financially and programmatically to it.

FishSmart started out to be a science-based program driven by the sportfishing community, and I emphasize science-based because we -- All of the information that we gather, we want to make sure it's founded in either best available science or the predominance of management advice. We don't pick information out of the air and say, oh, we're going to run with this or anything else, and we want to make sure it's founded in fact.

I also want to emphasize that it's not a program to promote catch-and-release fishing. I have heard, over the years anyway, a couple of misperceptions that we just want to get people to release their fish and not be able to keep any, and that's completely wrong. It's a program that basically we're saying, if you need to release your fish, because of regulation, or you want to release your fish, because you want to practice catch and release, then do it in a way in which you maximize the survival of those released fish, and that's simply all it really is.

The basic tenets are science-based, as I mentioned before, and the information has to be founded in either fact or preferably peer-reviewed science or, if not, in a predominance of management advice, and then this is kind of an obvious fact, but a lot of people gloss over it, but mortality, release mortality, in recreational fisheries is the culmination of millions of encounters, individual encounters, with a fish, and so, therefore, the solutions that we're trying to develop are empowering those individuals who are encountering those fish with information and tools and techniques and so forth to improve the survival of the fish that they release.

The beginnings of FishSmart were about ten years ago now, and it's hard to believe, and we -- I am going to gloss over a lot of information here, but, again, go to the FishSmart website if you're interested in information, particularly from this first phase.

We held one national and three regional workshops across the country. Particular to the South Atlantic is the one in St. Pete, where we combined both the Gulf and the South Atlantic into a large workshop, where we brought together scientists and managers and anglers and businesses and charter operators and so forth to talk about a variety of issues impacting fisheries with a high predominance of release mortality.

During those workshops, we identified regional research and management priorities, and I've got to say, looking back now ten years, a lot of those priorities that we identified, or people identified, in their various regions, for research in particular, have been addressed, and so I think these workshops helped to focus people's attention on what the real big issues were in their various respective regions.

Then we also, through the process, developed the scientifically-based consensus on best practices, and that's kind of the core of what I'm talking about and what the Gulf effort and the South Atlantic effort have been founded around, are those best practices for improving survival of released fish. The very first best practices started by us going around and looking at all the information and the messaging that was being sent by agencies and organizations, coastal, around the country and picking out what were the commonalities in those messages, and then, through each of these workshops, we refined those more and more and more, to bring together kind of a consensus on what the best ones were that we could apply almost universally around the coastline of the United States.

As much information as we could, again, put on the web, regarding that very first survey we did, is on the FishSmart website, if you want to see what was being conveyed ten years ago, probably eight to ten years ago at this point, by coastal agencies, and so you can see kind of where we started with that.

The result was the best practices that provide a series of general guidelines that could be applicable to all fisheries and then specific guidelines for deepwater fisheries impacted by barotrauma, and then the last thing that we kind of developed in that first phase were basic outreach materials and a video, and, again, all of that information is up on the FishSmart website, if you would like to look at that.

Here is -- Many of you have probably seen this over and over, and here's the basic best practices, and I'm not going to go into these in detail, but I will point out that pretty much on the left side here is the general guidelines, if you will, for the release of fish, and then over here on the right are the deepwater guidelines, and there are a couple of aspects of the deepwater guidelines that I want to point out.

Number one is encouraging anglers to learn how to identify the science of barotrauma. One of the things that we still see are people that feel that they need to use special techniques to release every fish, and obviously that's wrong, and we struggled for a long time to figure out what the common advice, you know fish caught from what depths should be returned, and we kind of settled around

sixty feet, or thereabouts, but we really want people to start to begin to learn to identify the signs of barotrauma.

The other component of the right panel is that we emphasize, if they do need to release fish with special techniques, to first of all use recompression, use a descending device to release fish. However, at the very bottom, you can see we also do include venting in there, and there are some reasons that I will talk about in just a minute about why we include the venting component of it, but we do really want to emphasize the recompression part of the best practices when we're talking with people.

I want to make a brief pause to address two specific issues, and one is descending devices, and then one is the venting, and so, first of all, we do utilize the SeaQualizer in the programs or the projects that we've been involved with. However, there are a lot of devices out there, ranging from the homemade upside-down milkcrates and weighted barbless hooks and things like that, all the way up to the SeaQualizer, which we kind of consider the premium product, if you will.

All of these devices can work equally well if they are used properly and under proper circumstances, and we have chosen to focus in on the SeaQualizer because it's a predominant device that was a premium product that we felt the volunteers in our program would rather receive than let's say a low -- I don't want to name any other particular device, but a lower-cost device, and you get a little bit more buy-in, I think, with a premium product than you would with a lower-cost device, but we've also used Shelton, in the South Atlantic in particular, and then I think Georgia DNR had some Capt'n Roy devices that have been used in a previous project, and so they incorporated those into this project, the South Atlantic project, that we're going to be talking about.

Again, the SeaQualizer was chosen because it was a premium product, and it was effective, and then, also, Melissa, who is on the phone here, had co-authored a report in Florida that, among other findings, they found that the highest level of satisfaction was with a SeaQualizer among the seven different devices that the Florida anglers were using, and I think that actually came out just as we were wrapping up the Gulf effort, but it was interesting to see that, I guess, our choice of device was maybe somewhat verified by the anglers.

The second part, and there's a brief pause that I want to talk about, is the venting, because we're asked about this quite a bit, and why do you still include venting in the best practices, and, again, we emphasize that it should be a last resort, if descending isn't possible, and the primary reason is there is no effective option that is legally accepted where large numbers of fish can be descended in a short period of time, particularly as might be encountered on headboats.

I say legally accepted because we have explored a variety of options with law enforcement for things like let's say a tank onboard the boat or a cage over the side of the boat, where you drop the fish and then descend them periodically or something like that. Whenever you put a fish in, or you restrict the fish's movement, you are legally retaining that fish, and so they might be -- They might sound very good, but, in fact, we've explored the use of these over-the-side-of-the-boat cages and things like that, but it was still considered retention, and so, at current, there is no effective option, and I know Sea Grant has actually explored various ones, and I think Virginia Sea Grant explored a few different options, and nothing could be found that was usable for the headboat operators, and so venting is still there, and we encourage anglers who are going to continue to vent to learn how to do it effectively, and we point them to catchandrelease.org, which is the Florida Sea Grant

website, and it has some great informational videos and so forth about learning how to vent properly.

This graphic came from a paper by Scyphers et al., and up at the top is the citation, and it's a really good paper, if you get a chance to go and look at it. If you need it, drop me an email, and I can email it back to you, but they provided this image of -- As part of their study, they provided this image of a fish to anglers, and they said, where is the proper place for venting? Now, the image they gave them was just the fish, and it didn't have the "X", which "X" marks the spot which is the ideal location for venting.

You can see, for example, that 45 percent of the people identified the stomach, intestine, gas bladder, and, in fact, this area in particular was where the highest predominance of locations that people identified as the appropriate place, when, in reality, it was up here. They concluded that the majority of locations identified by the anglers would actually cause mortality, and, of course, then you've got some others way up here in the spinal cord and the muscle that might not cause immediate mortality, but it certainly isn't going to be too helpful for descending a fish.

A couple of other conclusions that they came up with was that fishing experience didn't have any relationship to the knowledge of proper venting technique or venting location and that there was a lot of misperception that was being conveyed among the anglers, regardless of experience level, and so, whether anglers self-identified as a very experienced seasoned angler or self-identified as a novice angler, there was no relationship between that experience level and knowledge of proper venting.

Those are some concerns that we have about venting and continuing to promote venting overall, but, again, until we develop a solution, for headboats in particular, we do include it in the best practices, and so, with those couple of issues addressed, and those were some common questions that I am often asked, I want to turn to the Gulf of Mexico effort that we conducted in 2015 to 2017.

The broad goals of that effort, and you will see these goals again for the South Atlantic effort, are gauge the effectiveness of descending devices in the conservation of saltwater fisheries, and in particular red snapper, and then also increase the awareness of best practices and descending devices, and so we engaged 1,100 for-hire operators, and you will see there are 222 of those that were in the South Atlantic, and so it wasn't a lot, and most of them were in the Gulf of Mexico, and we engaged them mainly through the agency partners, but also through our web-based communication, education, and registration site to participate in this project.

They were provided with the best practices material, either in video form or brochure form, and some agencies customized it, and, in fact, we engaged, for example, IGFA to reach out to their membership in the region, and they turned it into an electronic format, but the consistent messaging was the core of it, and so they didn't change the best practices, but it was just how they presented it to their various constituents or memberships, and so some were video, some were electronic, and some were brochures.

The majority of it was handed out by the agencies directly to the individual anglers, and then they were supplied with a descending device, a SeaQualizer, along with those materials, and then asked to participate in a survey that I will talk about now.

The survey, we had almost a 50 percent response rate, which, in the survey world, is considered very good, and, in fact, I was hoping, optimistically, to get a 30 percent response rate, and so I was really happy when we did get 50 percent response, but I will say, as I watched the responses come in, after the first 100, the results really didn't change percentage-wise, and I actually found that consistent with other surveys that I've done in the past.

Through that survey, we found that we increased awareness, and 72 percent of the people had little or no knowledge of descending devices prior to this project, and roughly two-thirds of them found that the best practices materials were helpful to improving the way they released fish, and the question I had on this effective education component was they said they were helpful, and they changed the way they released fish, but we never asked them a follow-up, which was how did it change your behaviors.

In the South Atlantic effort, we have corrected this, and so you'll see it when I talk about the South Atlantic results so far, and we do have some more information about how that did change the way they release fish, and then roughly three-quarters of them are now likely to use a descending device to release most or all of their fish, and I emphasize when needed, because we asked them a series of questions about their ability to recognize barotrauma and so forth, and so, again, that same theme about trying to educate people and that they don't have to descend every fish they catch, only ones that are exhibiting signs of barotrauma.

78 percent believe that descending devices would be helpful, or very helpful, to reducing the discard mortality in the red snapper fishery, and then we tried to get at how many people were being exposed to our messaging beyond the 1,100 that we engaged in the Gulf effort, and we found that 95 percent that I talked with involved other anglers in the use of their devices.

I extrapolated these results to our entire participant database, because we asked them also how many fish did you release, and how many people did you talk with, and things like that, and so we had somewhere between 3,000 and 6,000 additional individuals above and beyond the 1,100 participants who were exposed to our materials or the information about descending devices during the couple years of our project.

Somewhere between 16,000 and 28,000 red snapper were released during that project period, and then somewhere between 13,000 and 22,000 other fish, which we didn't identify, and we were really concerned about red snapper, and we did ask about other species, without identifying those other species.

I took those results and, working with Florida FWC and the Research Institute and some of the folks over at Texas A&M, Greg Stunz's crew, and we looked at how many red snapper potentially survived through the descending process versus being released on the surface, and so we calculated that, during the project period alone, somewhere between 3,000 and 9,000 red snapper were saved, quote, unquote, by application of descending devices, versus just surface release.

Then, of course, an unknown number of the other fish that were released probably benefited from the improved handling and use of descending devices, and remember it was two-thirds of people said they changed the way they released fish in this project, and so we don't have a quantitative estimate of how many fish benefited from improved handling and release techniques like we have

a quantitative estimate of how many fish can potentially survive by being descended versus surface released, and so there is some benefit there, but we don't know what it is, for improved handling and release techniques.

Then I think one of the important things is the conservation benefits of this effort will continue to improve in the future, as those anglers continue to talk with their peers about descending and they continue to practice best practices and they continue to use descending devices in the proper way and so forth, and, of course, we don't have a follow-up to really gauge what that is.

That brings us to the -- We were kind of wrapping up that Gulf effort, and we were approached by the South Atlantic states, Georgia and South Carolina and North Carolina and so forth, and they said, well, you only had a couple hundred people in that first project, and can you focus in on the South Atlantic and work with us on our constituents, and so we started this project, which, again, the goals are pretty much identical to the Gulf goals, which are to educate anglers on best practices, the use of descending devices when needed, and then, again, through a survey, to evaluate the adoption of the best practices and the use of these devices.

The distribution strategy was pretty much the same, although we focused, in the South Atlantic, to a much greater degree on the direct distribution through the state agencies, for a couple of reasons. Number one, there is a lot of added value there when you can supply agencies with both educational materials and devices. They can then go and use those to build goodwill with their constituents of, hey, here's a free SeaQualizer device and information, and it's a \$50 device, and so it's obviously something that anglers like to have, and so agencies can build some goodwill there.

Probably, from my perspective, I have a much better feeling for those devices that are handed directly to an angler, and there is a sense of quality control there, as opposed to the web-based registration, which we still have, but we haven't used -- As you will see in a minute, we haven't used that very much. I do some quality control with the web-based, but there's only so much you can do, and you don't know exactly who is getting that device, and, obviously, it's easy to screen out the people from Alaska and Guam and Great Britain and every other place in the world that tries to get these devices, but, after a certain point, you just have to say, okay, I've done my best to do quality control and then send them a device.

Then we also have the Nature Conservancy and Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary holding some angler workshops, and they have adopted the best practices, and we provided them with the SeaQualizers to utilize in those workshops too, and so that's the other way that we're distributing devices right now in the South Atlantic effort.

This is kind of a busy table here, but this is the -- First of all, this is through November 30 of last year, and this figure is for distribution, and the first two columns on the left are the number of devices that are being distributed, both the SeaQualizer and the Shelton. The state-registered participants are the number that the agencies have contacted directly, and so we've got 391 state-registered. Then the web-registered participants, this is both participants and devices, and we only mail -- When we do so many registrations through the web, we only give them one device, and so we have 115 individuals and devices being distributed through the web.

I will also point out that some agencies have chosen to give out more than one device to an angler. For example the Shelton, which only costs a few dollars, and they might give a couple of those out, plus a SeaQualizer, which is a \$50 product, and so that really is at the discretion of the agencies of what they do, and I just want to know where the devices are going and who is getting them, getting contact information, so we can do a survey with them, and so, between the devices distributed, plus South Carolina has about forty-nine participants from the previous effort that they are continuing to engage, we roughly have 550 people engaged in the reef fish component of the South Atlantic project right now.

Jumping into the results, we have done -- Actually, we've done two rounds of surveys with the South Atlantic participants, and this only reflects the first round of surveys, which was completed in late June of last year, and we just completed another round of surveys, but I can tell you that I haven't looked at -- I just glanced at the results of the round that we just completed, and they are very similar to what we saw in June, and so there's not going to be a huge change in these, I don't think. We will probably do one to two more rounds of surveys this year. We send the survey out to anglers who have had the materials and devices for at least six months.

I have compared them here with the Gulf results that I have just shown you. What's remarkable here, for the most part, is how identical the percentages are. The devices are being used eight months in the Gulf, versus eleven months in the South Atlantic, but the second row here, increased awareness, does show something I think that's quite an interesting difference between the South Atlantic and the Gulf, in that, in the Gulf, we had 72 percent with little or no knowledge, and now we have 44 percent, and I'm just guessing that's because of increased -- Not only efforts that we're doing, but just particularly the South Atlantic Council's actions and other communications that is going on with agencies and organizations, and more and more people are becoming aware of descending devices prior to participating in this project.

Some other results that we found are, again, we had 67 percent in the Gulf and 69 percent in the South Atlantic that found that best practices materials were helpful to improving the way that they released fish and that a similar percentage are likely to use a descending device to release fish when needed.

I will point out, in the South Atlantic side though, we expanded on the question about how to improve your release of fish, and we found that 63 percent changed the way that they handled fish, and 56 percent had used a descending device for the first time, and 16 percent changed the gear that they used to catch the fish, and 25 percent changed how they brought the fish to the boat, and so they could choose multiple, and, obviously, that's why that doesn't add up to 100. They could choose whatever habits or change in behavior that they wanted to. That was interesting to see, and that's how the best practices, based on what they said anyway, best practices have changed their behavior.

Then, finally, looking at improved perceptions, again, this is remarkable in that it is not that much different, and 78 percent in the Gulf and 73 percent in the South Atlantic believe descending devices would be helpful at reducing the discard mortality of red snapper, and an equal percentage, 95 percent in each region, had talked with or involved other anglers in the use of descending devices.

Translating that into what we're all really interested in, and that's conservation, how many fish are being saved, again, remember that 3,000 to 9,000 red snapper were in the Gulf were saved. In the South Atlantic, we haven't done that calculation yet, for a couple of reasons. Number one, in the first round of the survey, we discovered, during the survey, that there was a flaw in the way that the question was -- The question about how many fish did you release was operating in the Survey Monkey instrument, and so, rather than change it during the round, we let it go, and we did correct it for the second round of the survey, and so we'll get a better estimate of how many fish are being released by species.

The other thing though, and I've talked with various scientists and managers about this, is pretty much we're thinking that, in the Gulf of Mexico, where you've got warmer waters and you potentially have some deeper waters and some really, really stringent thermoclines, that the improved survival from the use of descending is probably going to be higher than what we're going to see in the South Atlantic, and I'm not sure that we're going to be able to do any really good calculations to get the number of fish that are saved, if you will, and it was just fortuitous during our project period in the Gulf that Florida was also wrapping up, or conducting and then wrapped up, as we did, a study on improved survival, and so we had some good comparable information, and so I'm not quite sure what we're going to see there, but I guess stay tuned on that one.

With that, that was a quick overview, and I think all of that material is in your packets, or your briefing book, and so, if you have any questions though, you can certainly email me, contact me, and I will be more than willing to share with you what I have, and so I will close, again, with the slide of the people who have made this possible, and, if there are any questions, I guess, Cameron, I will turn it back over to you.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Andy. That was great. It was super informative, and it's really neat to see the comparison between the Gulf and the South Atlantic, and it's nice to see that those numbers really are reflective of each other and seem to match. We do have a question from Doug Kelly, and, if anybody else has a question, please feel free to raise your hand, and we'll get you in the queue.

MR. KELLY: Thanks, Andy. You mentioned, I believe, that the SeaQualizer was about \$50?

MR. LOFTUS: Yes, roughly \$50.

MR. KELLY: Fifty bucks. Okay. The other one was of a lesser quality, and what do they range?

MR. LOFTUS: The Shelton is probably the lowest-cost device on the commercial market right now, and we're not, of course, counting the homemade devices, but those are a few dollars, and I forgot exactly what I pay for them, but I think they give me a discount, and it's \$4 or \$5, or maybe it's even \$3, and it's fairly inexpensive. I will say SeaQualizer also has a got a prototype of a much lower-cost device, and it's similar, in some respects, to the Shelton fish descender, but I guess that's probably going to be your range, somewhere between say \$5 and \$50.

MR. KELLY: Okay. Now, when it is -- When the SeaQualizer does bring fish back down to the depths, how do you know that when it's released that it survives?

MR. LOFTUS: That is done on studies, and so all the SeaQualizer really does is release it at depth, and they have various models of SeaQualizers, and each one has a different set of -- You can choose three depths at which to release it, thirty, sixty, and ninety feet, for example, and so you can set it at like I want to release it at ninety feet, and it's not precise. I mean, it releases it kind of around ninety feet, but we've talked with the SeaQualizer folks about this, and, if it's going to err, it's going to err on releasing it a little bit early, and that's by design, because, when they designed it, they went into this whole issue of spring technology, which I didn't understand, but they designed it so that, if it was going to release at -- Instead of ninety feet, they didn't want it to release at ninety-five, because people wouldn't -- They would then bring the fish back up, and it hadn't been released, and so, if it's going to err, it's going to be a little bit shallower, like eighty-five feet, for example.

How do we know it survives? That's where we have to rely on the scientific studies, and I mentioned the one that Florida has done, and there's been some studies out of Texas A&M and so forth, and so we've got kind of a -- There's lots of studies out on the west coast, by the way, and so we've got some estimates on survival of fish that are descended.

MR. KELLY: Okay. My last question is you mentioned there's a 3,000 to 9,000-fish red snapper survival in the Gulf, right?

MR. LOFTUS: In that project period, yes. Of the 1,100 people that we had working with us during the two-and-a-half years that we worked with them, there are somewhere between 3,000 and 9,000 red snapper saved that would have died, had they just thrown it onto the surface.

MR. KELLY: Okay, and so that's 3,000 to 9,000 that they caught or that they released or that's the percentage of the ones that --

MR. LOFTUS: That 3,000 to 9,000 is the number -- We had the estimate of how many fish were released, red snapper were released, and then we had the estimate from the scientific studies about how many survived being descended versus released on the surface, and so we just applied those percentages to come up with that 3,000 to 9,000 survived that would have died had they just been thrown out on the surface.

MR. KELLY: All right. Thanks a lot.

MR. LOFTUS: Sure.

MR. PHELPS: This is almost maybe a comment more than a question, but I've been a part of the program for the South Atlantic, and I've probably had one SeaQualizer for maybe eighteen months now, and I'm a very proponent of it. I think it works great, me and a couple of other captains that use it, and we love it. I mean, I feel like it should be required on every vessel, and I've seen it work very well, and I've seen it release early, in very clear, calm water, and seen a fish that was not going to go down, no matter what, at like fifty feet be released and just swim right straight down, no problem, and so I really enjoyed it, and I use it, and I have a rod dedicated for it every time when I go offshore now. I think it's a really, really useful tool.

MS. RHODES: Does anyone else have any questions or comments for Andy before we move on?

MS. MUEHLSTEIN: Hi, Andy. Thank you for the presentation. It was really informative, and one of the things that I wanted to point out on your sort of extrapolation numbers from your project in the Gulf, and you may or may not be aware of this, but I think it's something that's kind of cool to share with everybody else, is a lot of the captains, because that was mostly a for-hire effort, who participated in that program have now actually, in their own sort of captains organizations, made it mandatory, although like the Gulf Council and NOAA Fisheries has not yet made it mandatory, and so, sort of as a barrier to entry or participation in their captains groups, you have to commit to using a descending device.

Then the other thing that those captains do is teach the folks onboard -- So they teach their clientele to use those devices and the importance of those devices, and so I imagine that that has to have an exponential effect.

Then the other thing that I wanted to point out was venting is something that we have sort of struggled with in our recommendation with that as well, and it was interesting to hear your perspective on that, and one of the things -- Because I don't think anybody has come up with a good solution for headboats that doesn't involve containing the fish illegally for a while. However, some of the headboat captains in our area are actually pushing for educating the folks on their vessel to do venting properly, and so like, when they're motoring out to a spot, actually putting on a bit of a clinic on how to either descend or vent the fish that are onboard, and so I think that's kind of a really neat tool that is starting to evolve in the Gulf, and, just generally, I appreciate all the work that you've done. You know, we're obviously following what you've done as a playbook in the Gulf, and it's good to hear from you.

MR. LOFTUS: The for-hire community has been extremely helpful in this whole process, and we involved them in the development of best practices through the workshops, for example, and some of the advice that the managers and the scientists were saying, oh, we should include this in best practices, the for-hire guys would say, well, wait a minute, that's not practical. That sounds good, but, when you get on the water, it's not practical, and so they really did help with everything from the very beginning, and they have -- You're right that they stepped up, in many cases, in their own community to encourage or require that their members use these devices and use best practices, and so, when we had the west coast workshop, right afterwards, a couple of the big charter groups out there, at that very meeting, got in the corner with the SeaQualizer guys and went off and made their deals, and they bought SeaQualizers in bulk to give out to their members and things like that.

It is very encouraging, and I have heard of some charter operators who have actually incorporated the use of descending devices and proper release of fish into their charters as a -- They kind of specialize in -- I don't know what they call them, but let's call them conservation charters, but they go out fishing, but they really do emphasize conservation messaging to their customers, and so it is great, and the for-hire community has been very instrumental in phases of the FishSmart project, and that's kind of what we have designed it to be. Instead of regulations or mandates or anything, what we accomplish through the peer-to-peer interactions and the voluntary compliance and things like that with the recreational community in general.

MR. PHELPS: I agree with everything that was just said as well, and I do the same thing. I incorporate it with the charter, and they really enjoy seeing the mechanism work, and they feel like they've done some good. I will say one thing about the device itself. Me and a couple other captains -- In our fishery, we tend to go out and be able to fish in the ocean, in the South Atlantic,

and then it may be a week or two before we get back out there, because of weather or different charters or what have you.

We have noticed, after a full year of using them, that, if the unit is used and then not rinsed off and just put away, and it goes back to be used again a month later, that there tends to be a little bit of rust forming, and it's not quite the quality of let's say an actual grip that might last twenty years and never touch it, maintenance-wise, and there may need to be some maintenance, as far as like spraying it down with a non-rust product or something, and so I would be a little concerned about the lesser-quality ones not working, and like working great the first time, but then you go to use it three months later and it may not work as effectively. We noticed that we had to do some spraying of ours, in order to get them to not release incorrectly, and I don't know if you've had any problem with that or not.

MR. LOFTUS: No, but that is something -- The SeaQualizer folks are extremely receptive to addressing issues with their device, and I talk with them quite often about various issues, and, in fact, I brought up to them the whole issue about early release and, instead of ninety feet, it's releasing at eighty or eighty-five, and then so they are aware of that, but this is an issue that I will actually bring up to them and see if there's anything that they can do about it, but --

MR. PHELPS: I'm happy to work with them, and we did tell the agent in DNR for us that gave them to us, and we told them that, and I don't know if it got back to them yet or not, but we did notice that like you could spray it with some 6-56, for example, and you would see some rust coming out of it after it had set for three or four months, because we had problems like we used it, and it works great several times, and then, the tenth time you go to use it after three months, it was kind of sticky, if you will, and the spring wasn't as strong, and I don't know if there's some decrease in the spring rate or if it's just the mechanism itself needed a spring, but, I mean, other than that, it's a phenomenal product, and we should all use it, and, like I said, we all like it, and so thanks for the comments.

MS. RHODES: Great. David Moss, who is not on the Information & Education AP, and he's a member of the public, did ask a question, and I think it's a good clarifying question, and so I'm just going to go ahead and pose it to you, Andy. David asked how is it calculated that between 3,000 to 9,000 fish were saved in the Gulf?

MR. LOFTUS: We had an estimate when we surveyed in the project, and we asked them how many red snapper did you release during this time period and how many other fish did you release, and so they told us, and they gave us an estimate then of how many fish that they released, and then we had an estimate from the -- Particularly from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, but also estimates from the Texas A&M researchers about how many fish that were released on the surface survived and how many fish that were released with a device, descending device, survived, and so we got that benefit, if you will, of how many more fish would survive if you use a descending device, and so we just multiplied the number of red snapper that were released by the project participants by that percentage that survived from the research studies to come up with the 3,000 to 9,000 estimate.

MS. RHODES: Thanks for that, Andy. I am not seeing any additional hands raised. If anybody else has a question that they would like to ask Andy or an additional comment, go ahead and raise your hand now. Otherwise, we're going to go ahead and move on to our next discussion topic,

and, Andy, I fear that I did you a disservice by not introducing why we are really focusing on best practices as a council and why it is so highly valuable to have the FishSmart campaign in developing our own campaign, and so thank you very much.

As many of you know, the council recently approved an amendment which would require that descending devices be readily available for use onboard vessels that are fishing for snapper grouper species in federal waters of the South Atlantic, and, in addition to that, there are some other best-practices-related items in that amendment, including some new circle hook requirements, and we are relying rather heavily on FishSmart and on other agencies that people are representing here today to put together all of these resources, so we can let people know about these upcoming regulations that are being proposed and get people to not only understand why these devices are useful, but also that they're available.

It seems like lots of the projects that are going on, including this recent one with FishSmart, is helping to improve that awareness, and so thank you, Andy, and we really appreciate you being here, and, if anybody has an additional question for Andy, I would be happy to put you in touch with him and others at FishSmart, and so just give me a shout. Let's go ahead and head on over to our next topic. Thanks again, Andy.

MR. LOFTUS: Thank you.

MS. RHODES: Guys, this is a little bit different than what I had initially intended for you, and we were going to have Dr. Sean Tracey online with us today to give this presentation, and I totally whiffed when everything became the COVID-19 structure and we need to go to a webinar, and I forgot that he is based in Australia, and the time difference is pretty significant, and so this was going to be a presentation that was going to occur at three o'clock in the morning for him, but we lucked out, and, fortunately, he had done a conference a while back, and they had recorded and done a live feed of the conference, and so we actually have a video presentation, where you'll be able to see Dr. Sean Tracey, and he's with the University of Tasmania, and he helps to run the Tuna Champions Program.

As part of the council office, we've been really thinking about how we could go about working with members of the community to promote best fishing practices, and Tuna Champions has been wildly successful at doing that, and so this presentation focuses on how you can engage people and incentivize them and provide them the tools they need so that they can spread the word with their stakeholders and their communities and with their friends, and so we're hoping to implement some of the things that we're going to learn from this presentation today.

If you have any questions, following up on this presentation, Dr. Tracey said that he will be able to answer them in time for our meeting tomorrow, and so, if you have a question, just please send me an email following this webinar session today, and I will pass it along to Dr. Tracey, and then we can review his answers during our session tomorrow morning.

Bear with me. I'm going to go ahead and get this video up and running. It might be a little bit jumpy, and so I apologize. Yesterday, we tested it out, and the sound seemed to work well, but, just in case, he might not come through as clearly, and, if that's the case, just let me know, and we'll try to re-jigger some things.

DR. TRACEY: I'm a research scientist by trade, and I work at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, and you've heard a couple of talks today from people at the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies, and one thing we pride ourselves on doing a lot of is cross-disciplinary research, and so our biologists and oceanographers and sociologists and ecologists do a lot of things thinking across the board.

Interestingly, we've got a little bit of time as well, and so our main headquarters is a short walk around the wharf, and we have a gallery under there, where we actually have art exhibitions, where we pair up with artists, sort of art-science collaborations, and so I think the current collaboration is on kelp, and so, if you have time, it's worth going over and having a look.

In saying that, the other group we work a lot with is the community, and, obviously, we're talking a lot about citizen science here. I have colleagues that work on ice cores, and I have colleagues that work on mud, and so I get the fun job of getting mud samples and looking at cracks in ice, and I think I've done pretty well. I get to work on fish, and not only fish, but I get to work with the recreational sector, and I also get to work with some pretty cool fish, and so some large pelagics.

For about five or six years, I worked very closely with the recreational fishery on a project looking at post-release survival of southern bluefin tuna, and it was a very large study. It was done through Victoria, Tasmania, and New South Wales. I got to fish with some amazing people, and I had some of the most amazing fishing trips of my life, and I was on the job. I was getting paid to do this, and I was putting satellite tags out.

Without working with the recreational sector, this job pretty much would not have gotten done. What we were trying to do is replicate recreational fishing activities, and so how they fish, and, obviously, the best way to do that is to fish with recreational fishers, and we did do some fishing off of our own boat, and we got pretty good at catching tuna at the end, working with a range of very good fishermen, and we learned a lot of secrets, and, interestingly, as a scientist, I like to sit back and learn, and it's an interesting group, the recreational fishing community.

Some people are very committed to their thoughts and may not -- The way I do it is the way it should be, and so it's interesting. I would highly recommend sitting back and listening. You're a very informed bunch, and, actually, listening to each of you, you can learn a lot.

Working in this fishery, we got a lot of tags out, and we got a really robust estimate of post-release survival for southern bluefin tuna, and they're pretty robust. If you look after them, greater than 85 percent of the fish you release will survive. We did look at some factors as well of things that might actually affect that survival rate, which I will come back to in a moment. We also got some really neat tracks, and so the satellite tags also give us a lot of information on movement, and so I am really interested in the recreational sector.

What I realized, sort of working with this group for about five years, was there's a lot of wastage in the fishery, and it wasn't sort of through neglect or anything, but it was just through a lack of information, and so southern bluefin tuna are rebuilding, and they did go through some serious overfishing in the 1980s, and from the commercial fishery, and so, for a lot of recreational fishers, southern bluefin tuna in the last ten years is a new thing. It's a new opportunity, and so what we're really starting to see is the stocks rebuild, and there's been some very good cooperative management, and the availability to the recreational fishery is increasing.

They're not your traditional fish. They are large fish, and they're also warm-blooded fish, and so endothermic, and so the need to take ice is imperative. They are also very sensitive fish. If they're not handled properly, and so those people lifting fish by the operculum and going it's fine to throw back in, but you've just damaged the gills, and so we, as scientists, put together a lot of information, and we put them into these reports that no one ever reads, and we have lots of equations behind it, but one of our challenges, obviously, is how do we then communicate that information so it's digestible to our target audience, and so there's a lot of things going one way that could be done better.

We produced codes of practice, but, again, producing something and -- We can produce that, but how many people in the room have read that code of practice? Four. So that's great, and so that's kind of, as scientists doing communication, we produce something that, in theory, is easier for you guys to read, and so you all read it, and you've shown to get behind it, but what I saw there was definitely not the case.

What we wanted to do was actually work -- You know, get our scientific research and have some good analysis, and so evidence-based research, on the best way to handle these fish and then communicate it in a way that we might actually see some behavioral shift.

In fisheries, we all know that regulation, enforcement, and legislation, that's the way things are usually done. With some of the sociology, there's a lot of talk about using education and behavior from within a sector, and so using education as the basis, and we've done a lot of research, and you'll see that we're also learning through the commercial sector, and they invest a lot of money in research, to make sure they're getting the best quality product they can.

We're then using what's called nudge theory, and so this is proposing positive reinforcement, and what it does is basically get people thinking about the right thing to do. We are just sort of setting the stage, and then what we want to happen is, within each sector, as this is engaged and people can see the positive benefits, it starts to snowball, and it becomes just the way we do things now.

Out of that was born the Tuna Champions, and so it's an initiative of the Australian Recreational Fishing Foundation, in collaboration with IMAS, and it's funded through the Australian government, through the Fisheries Research and Development Corporation, and so I had the opportunity to sit in with the Fisheries Minister at the time and talk about my research and sort of say, well, I think there's hope here to do some really good things, and bluefin was very topical at the time, and they agreed, and we got some funding to do this program.

What the program is looking at doing, fundamentally, is reducing wastage, or unnecessary mortality, in the fishery, and we look at all aspects, and so regarding catch, what's the right way to do it, thinking about fight times and thinking about stress. Handling, what's the best way to handle the fish, and then we're talking here not just about keeping it, but also releasing it. With releasing, do you know how to tag a fish properly? Should you be taking them out of the water?

Then keeping, and how do you dispatch a fish humanly and make sure that it's going to be the best quality, and prepare, and so, also, how do you prepare the fish to get the most out of it, and so what we're doing here is we're not polarizing it, and recreational fishers are a very polarized group. You have got your hunters, and you've got your release fishers, and you've got your freshwater,

and you've got you saltwater, and so what we're doing here is saying to engage with the fishery, but just be informed with the best practices, whether you're going to take a fish home or whether you're going to release it.

This prepare thing has been a really interesting one for us, because we've been able to hook into the sort of foodie world and the hipster world about how to maximize the use of meat, and so not just knocking a fillet off a thirty-kilo fish and taking ten kilos of meat how, but you can use the cheeks, the collars, the eyeballs, for those that are more brash, and this is something that is happening a lot in the culinary scene at the moment, and Josh Nyland, who is a famous chef in Sydney, and he's winning all kinds of awards, and he's got an amazing new cookbook out about using all parts of the meat, and so reducing wastage. What we're trying to do here is empower the recreational sector to reduce that wastage so that they're all good stewards in this fishery.

How do we do that? I'm a scientist, and it's quite interesting sitting in these meetings and listening to scientists and managers, et cetera, talk about how we communicate stuff, and I was in a workshop recently where we were talking about which groups were doing it well, and it was kind of like, well, anyone that saw Paul Nagy's talk -- He's the Chief Creative Officer for Y&R Marketing, and it's a massive international marketing company that works for Yamaha and Skittles and a whole range of things, and he did a presentation that stood out to me, and I still remember it, and, actually, it was about branding of recreational fishing, but he was looking at things from such a different lens.

It really intrigued me, and we got talking over a beer after the conference, and we were talking about this idea, and he said, well, you know, I'm more than happy to help you out, and I had some very long conversations with him about formal presentations on the emotion of color, and the squiggly line means -- It totally did my head in, and I was just like what are you talking about, and this makes no sense, but, after engaging him and doing some branding, I can now see the benefits of engaging experts in that field, and we've got marketing people in here, and both advertising and marketing companies get paid to do this job, and they do a really good job at it.

We have a communication plan, and we have a clear brand, and we have some clear messaging, and, again, we keep that non-fragmented, and so we just really want to keep it focused in on the tuna at the moment, although this is relevant for other species as well, but, if we can do a really good job here and take the message and get that message within the fishery, then it will natural snowball out into other fisheries as well.

Websites, websites are interesting, and we think it actually plays a very important role, because we need a hub for our information. We don't want to sort of go here's how to release a fish on one social media post and here's how to ice it on another one, and so, if you are trying to tell your mates that, well, I saw something the other day that would be really interesting to you, you don't have to try and scroll back through to find a Facebook message, and good luck, and so we use this as our information hub. Anyone that says, oh, I saw something on Tuna Champions the other day, you can go here, and you can find that information and share it with your friends, and so it's our hub.

We also use traditionally written media, and that's a really important thing. It's kind of the backbone of recreational fishing, and I think a lot of fishers spend a lot of time not catching fish, and they may sit there with a magazine and read that in the quiet moments, and so it's still a very

important medium, and we've got a good arrangement with *BlueWater*, and we do regular articles in *BlueWater*, and the print bodies -- Also, they are all stakeholders, and they sit on the steering committee, and they all help by getting the information into the bulletins and newsletters as well.

Communications without social media these days -- It's hugely important. It's a great medium for us, and it's really mixing the messages up as well, and so we can actually get out some of the information on the site, and so where these fish were going, and so we use this medium for facilitating the science.

This is an interesting one as well, spiking a fish. It's one of the things for relaxing the muscles, so you're going to get the best meat quality, but it's also the most humane way, actually, to kill a fish, and that's going to be a big issue, I think, coming in the next ten or twenty years. We talk about social license, and if we can be stewards on the front foot and seen to be handling and respecting the fish to the best of our ability, that is a positive thing.

It's simple things as well, little things, and so this post here got a quarter of a million interactions, and that was purely showing people that, when you're bleeding a tuna, you don't need to be stabbing in deep. It's actually just under the skin, and it was a light-bulb moment for so many people, and that's great. It's just simple messaging, but it makes a massive difference in how people are doing that. Instead of having deep cuts, where all the blood is pooling back into the meat, they are now getting good quality meat and trading a lot more and using it properly, rather than throwing it out because it doesn't taste very good.

We've heard a lot of talk about ambassadors, and they're a massive part of our program as well, and we could do a whole talk on managing ambassadors and what means, and we have a diverse range of people from across Australia, and we have fishing identities, local fishing identities as well, and so people that a lot of people may not know, but, in the bluefin fishery, which is quite a niche, they are quite well-known people and well-respected people.

You need to be careful with your ambassadors, because they've got a brand as well, and so you've got to be careful about what they're selling for you, and, also, if they're volunteering, how much can you actually put on them to do it, and this is a consideration.

We have some more high-profile people as well. This is one our highest profile tuna ambassadors over here, and we've got culinary people as well, and so we've got chefs as our ambassadors, and so we want this message getting out broadly. Obviously, the high-profile people, they are very good, and they have very big networks, and they have been very, very useful for getting our message out broadly.

We're going to see the *Life on the Line* documentary, and that's an amazing story, and that's by one of our Tuna Champion ambassadors, and we had a big launch recently, and it was an amazing event. This is Thomas, and he works in the market chain, sort of with the commercial fishery, but he's good at making sure that all the tuna is used to the best of its ability as well, and so that's a really neat thing to have, to have the commercial sector also looking in and going, wow, the rec sector are doing an amazing thing here, and we want to be part of this, and we want to see how we can improve our practices.

We've got a YouTube presence, and we're going to start this with some short snippets on -- We're trying to do that as sort of a light-bulb moments thing, and so we did some work where we took a couple of fish, and we used the traditional methods of putting a wet towel and a bit of ice in the gut cavity. After six hours, that fish didn't even come down to water temperature, and we then used an ice slurry bag, at minus-one degree, and it still took a long time to come down, but we've got a YouTube video of that, which just shows, in a really interesting way, how important it is to take ice. It's the kind of thing that makes -- It's a talking point.

We've also got an episode coming out on IFish soon, and that's going to be an interesting one, and we actually bleed the fish, and it might be a bit graphic for a lot of people, but that will be interesting to see how it goes, but Paul was very keen to show it. He said, if Channel 9 will do it, this is the best way to do it, and I want to promote it, which was really good, because it's the kind of thing that would often maybe be a little bit too graphic on a fishing show.

We have heard, multiple times today, about taking it to the people, and that's a crucial part of tuna champions, and so to get people hearing about this and understanding it, and we do a lot of work with going out to the tuna competitions around Australia, and we hold forums, and we're really starting to see the momentum building now.

Communication, particularly engaging marketing people, it costs money to do it properly, and so having the support of politicians and people in positions who hold the purse strings is important, but I can really say the positive benefit to not only fishing, but also the broader community here, and so they've been very supportive of it.

Are we having an impact? That's a very difficult thing to measure. If I talk to Paul, our marketing guru, he goes, oh, you just hold a focus group, and they will tell you it's all wonderful, and we are trying to be a little bit more scientific about it. We've got a survey coming up later this year, and so early next year, where we'll be asking some questions, but some examples already are the Hooked on Tuna Competition in Portland. It runs over four weeks, and they bring in quite a lot of fish. This year, they committed to weighing them, and so all those fish can now actually be used, and previously they weren't weighed, and they weren't bled, and they weren't particularly good for anything, and so that's a massive change happening within the recreational sector.

This is an image that's quite a powerful image from the post-release survival work, and here we have a treble hook, and now this doesn't have the guy over the side of the boat with his fish. By the time they land it, that treble hook will be pulled out, but you can see all the damage it has done into the gill filaments there, and we satellite tagged that fish. Guess what? It didn't survive, and we found that the post-release survival rate with treble hooks was down around 60 percent, and so it makes a big difference, and so getting that information out there and using single hooks if you're going to be releasing.

The Port Lincoln Tuna Classic, which is a big competition in Port Lincoln, in south Australia, they have had a couple of years where they have released 600 or 700 fish in a weekend, and so, this year, they have initiated a program where they are going to ban treble hooks from the competition and it's a catch-and-release fishery competition, and so they have made that change, which is massive. Then the tackle industry has jumped on as well, and so the tackle store in Port Lincoln is now going to change up the hooks for free for participants in the fishery, and so that's some evidence of real change.

Finally, who can be a tuna champion? Everyone can. It's simple, and it's small ways making big differences, and it's communicating to your peers, and it's getting that message out there, and it's everything from catch, handle, keep, release, and prepare, and that is it.

MS. RHODES: All right, everyone. Again, I don't necessarily feel comfortable answering questions about his presentation, but, if anybody has a comment they would like to make or some kind of suggestion -- Does anybody have something they would like to say or add, following this presentation?

If anybody has a question that they would like me to pass on to Dr. Tracey, please feel free to just shoot me an email, and I'll make sure that I get it off to him this evening, so that he can answer it while we're sleeping, and I will go ahead and share that information with folks tomorrow. Doug, would you like to say something?

MR. PHELPS: Just a comment. It really brings to the surface one of the more interesting things when you're trying to describe things to regular anglers, and certainly recreational anglers, about some of the release techniques and best practices, et cetera. Dr. Tracey also even combined it with the best way to clean and gut a fish, so that you can enjoy more of it from a cooking standpoint, and it's kind of like you go in to buy a boat, but you can also -- You really want a boat trailer and motor, and so it kind of, to me, brings a full circle into what you're describing to people, from the beginning of obviously fishing and trying to catch the fish to either releasing it or keeping it, and, if you're keeping it, what's the best way to gut a fish, for instance, or clean it without ruining most of the meat, and so, to me, it was a nice, full-circle presentation, and that is just a comment.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Doug. I fully agree, and I think this program is really interesting, and their approach to how they work with ambassadors is -- It rivals what you see with clothing companies, like Pelagic or other companies, like Shimano, and so it's really neat to see it coming from the government side of things and research driven, from the scientific community, and it focuses on best practices, and so I think there's a lot of things that we could take from that presentation, especially when we're thinking about putting together the council's campaign for best practices following the approval of Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 29, which is that best practices amendment, and so I think that's a really great presentation.

Again, if anybody has questions that they would like me to share with Dr. Tracey, please don't hesitate to send them my way, and, with that, Scott, I don't know -- We are a little bit behind schedule, and so it's three o'clock now. We can dive into our best practices presentation that I'm going to be offering you all, which is related to the development of the council's communication and outreach strategies, but I wasn't sure if you wanted to take a break before we do that or if you want to just keep plugging along, for the sake of time, and so I'll turn it over to you, as our Chair, to see what direction you want to go with that.

MR. BAKER: Thanks, Cameron. I say we just blaze on. If people need to step away to go to the restroom or something like that, we're not going to tell on you or anything.

MS. RHODES: That sounds like a good plan to me. Thanks, Scott. Let's go ahead and get into this one. Before we get started, I just want to remind everybody who was on the AP last year that we had quite a bit of discussion about best practices, at our meeting in January of 2019, and we

discussed best practices and what the council ought to do if the best practices amendment were to move forward and whether the council should consider developing their own resources or if they should rely rather heavily on what's already been developed.

It seemed like there was some general consensus among the group that it would be wise to rely on some of the resources that have already been developed by state agencies and federal agencies and anglers and researchers, and so what we've done today is we're just going to breeze through some of the best practices material that's already available, and then we're going to hop into what the council has been brewing in anticipation of this amendment, and we'll go into the draft version of the council's webpage, which we'll get into some of the details of the development of that webpage, but we owe much of that creative design and layout to our friends at the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council.

They are way ahead of us when it comes to a lot of this best-practices-related stuff and these discussions, and so we relied quite a bit on what they had put together to guide the direction for our webpage. It does look quite different, but a lot of the information is similar, and so we're opening up the floor to you guys, to offer some suggestions for how we can maybe make our webpage look a bit different, if there's additional information that should be included on that webpage, if you have other suggestions for helpful images, and so we'll get into the nuts and bolts of that in a little bit, but, before we do, let's just dive into some of the already available materials, and, again, I'm going to breeze through this rather quickly, since much of this you've already seen, and it was shared with you in your briefing book materials.

Since we just got a presentation from FishSmart with Andy Loftus, and, if Andy is still on, thank you, Andy, for that, but this just gives you a general overview of some of the materials that are available through FishSmart. Like you saw in Andy's presentation, there is a brochure that's available, and they do have an ongoing project that encourages the use of best fishing practices, while also providing anglers with descending devices. Again, I'm just going to breeze through these, since they are available in your briefing book.

The North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries has also put together two really nice brochures on ethical angling and a guide to responsible fishing and best practices for ethical angling, and these two brochures I will just show you briefly, and they include a lot of the information that we see across the different agencies, and what's nice is, when we were putting all of this together, and I owe much of this information to Christina Wiegand. She was instrumental in putting all of this information together in her previous presentation to the council, and so thanks to Christina for providing this synopsis of the materials that are easily accessible online.

Christina felt, and I have to agree with her, that, if she was able to find these materials online by doing a quick Google search, that anglers and commercial fishermen would likely be able to find these resources as well relatively easily, if they do have internet access, and so this is one of the brochures that is available through North Carolina DMF.

They focus quite a bit on partnerships with universities, to investigate release mortality of snapper grouper species in relation to different recompression techniques, and we have seen that actually through countless videos, and Doug had asked an interesting question to Andy about whether or not you can prove that that animal survives after being released, and there are quite a few videos and studies that would suggest that animals, or fish, do survive upon being released using a

descending device, and much of that work is coming out of North Carolina, and so NC DMF's relationship and partnership with them is really beneficial to all of us here in the South Atlantic.

North Carolina Sea Grant also has some really great resources available, and they have an incredible blog series, for those of you who are not familiar with it, and I would highly recommend that you take a look at the blog. We enjoy it quite a bit from the council office, and we often find ourselves learning a lot, but this blog, in particular, highlights a project that came out of the council office in partnership with South Carolina Wildlife Federation, and we'll discuss that tutorial a little bit down the road.

The blog just highlights lots of key information, and it keeps it simple, and it has everything that a person might need, but it also provides them with information on where they can get additional tips and where they can learn more, but, ultimately, it is provided to people in way that's clean and easy and concise, and, given the limited attention span that I have, and likely other people have when they are online, I think having this kind of format is highly beneficial to people who are trying to get the general consensus of what's going on in the fishery.

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources has a similar style, and they have a coastal resources blog, which is a phenomenal blog, and it shares lots of really great information, and this blog post shared lots of really great information about what you can do to mitigate barotrauma in fish. There are nice images, and, again, it's a clean approach, and there is helpful videos, and it's urging people to try it out themselves.

With the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, in partnership with NOAA Fisheries and staff at the council office, they put together a tutorial, and, for individuals, 350 anglers, who participated in taking that tutorial and signed a pledge that they would later participate in a survey, and they would use the descending device, which was a SeaQualizer in this example, they would, in turn, get a descending device, and so we set up this tutorial, which we are really proud of, out of the council office, and it seems to be doing relatively well, as far as engagement with users. We post it on our Facebook pretty often.

I am not going to go through the whole tutorial, because it will take a little bit of time, but there's lots of good information in here, and it gives people the opportunity to learn as they go, choose their own path, and go into as much depth as they would really like to, but, if you wanted a SeaQualizer, you had to go all the way to the end and sign that pledge, and then you would receive it in the mail.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources has blog posts and videos, which turn out to be more like a dedicated page, where you can find information about this project that's ongoing with FishSmart, and, again, it's a clean, easy approach to the different kinds of tools that are available to people, and it has videos, and we also feature these videos on a lot of our channels at the South Atlantic Council office, and this is one of those North Carolina State University videos from a research project, which I think is really compelling.

That's Brendan Runde, for those of you familiar with him, and he does a lot of this work out of the North Carolina State University, and this video, just for time's sake, I am going to speed it up, and, Doug, you might find this one interesting, and so we've got this red grouper, and you can see that the gill plates are all puffed out, and the fish doesn't look too good. The fish is starting to look

pretty good now, and it's starting to swim, and it seems like the fish is recompressed, and this fish is hooked up to a specialized SeaQualizer rig that Brendan Runde has developed for research purposes.

Then the fish is released, and swims off, and we've been able to show this to council members, to fishermen, both commercial and recreational, to really show that these devices really do in fact work, and some of these fish have been satellite tagged, so that they're getting information back from them, or they've been tagged with an acoustic transmitter, and they have been able to see the fish's movements for a number of days following release, and so it's really encouraging to see things like this, and I think, in many ways, it's convincing.

Georgia Sea Grant, under the leadership of Brian Fluech, in particular, who has a lot history of working with the promotion of best fishing practices, they have really been busy working with the Nature Conservancy and Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary to try to promote best fishing practices, in addition to promoting awareness of the sanctuary itself, and, as part of this project that has been ongoing with the Nature Conservancy and the council and Gray's Reef, in addition to some other partners, they have been able to host a series of workshops, and some of those workshops have been cancelled as a result of COVID-19, but they do expect that they're going to get picked up again down the road, when we find a smidge of normalcy, but attendees received a free descending device, and they pretty much got a solid workup, via presentation, showing them how you can use a descending device, and a whole bunch of different ones, and not just a SeaQualizer or not just a Shelton, but they're also focusing on other descending devices that you can make at home. Largely, it's to promote best fishing practices with those individuals and encourage them to take those new tools back to their community.

Then Florida, and I'm talking about Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, in addition to Florida Sea Grant, have been super active in the promotion of best fishing practices across a whole bunch of channels, which, honestly, I was almost overwhelmed when Melissa wrote back with all of the things that they've been actively doing and the different statistics and analysis that they had available for these different tools and resources that they've put out into the world for people to use, and so they are really actively involved in the promotion of best fishing practices across all of their channels, and it seems like they take these opportunities to directly engage with the public about these issues often, and they do that in-person, showing people how to use the descending device, showing people how to use a de-hooking tool. They attend lots of different outreach events, and they attend clinics, camps, and they offer presentations, and, in some cases, they have provided circle hooks to anglers directly.

FWC also has a Catch a Florida Memory saltwater angler recognition program, which is relatively recent, but they have been able to encourage anglers to target a diversity of species, and they have also been able to provide suggestions for best fishing practices and fish handling through communication to anglers.

In addition, they have a catch-and-release brochure, and it's similar to what you see in the other states. It's very clean, and there is tons of information in this brochure, not only for deepwater release, but also other quick tips that could be useful to angler or commercial fisherman. In addition to that, they have a number of publications and communications that are ongoing, field guides and things of that nature, and they have a dedicated fish handling webpage, which is quite

nice. There is lots of information, and it's easy to navigate. There's some really cool stuff, and there's a lot of information for people to absorb.

Then one of the things that I can personally attest to is the use of videos on YouTube for FWC, and I was recently in the Florida Keys, attending a seafood festival there, and we were going to be presenting on best fishing practices, and we realized that we didn't have our descending device rigged and readily available for use, and so we needed to figure out the best way to do that for the descending device that we had on hand, and I watched YouTube videos to try to train myself on the best way to do that, and it was really helpful and easy to find, easy to follow, and it definitely was a helpful tool to me, and so I would imagine that it would be a great tool for others as well.

We have also participated in descending device studies, and it's very interesting to see the statistics that came out of that and the number of descending devices that were distributed to people. It's an impressive number. Then Florida Sea Grant has also been actively involved in the promotion of best practices. They're one of the early ones who really took this on and developed lots of different tools for people to use.

They have agents who are actively participating in offshore fishing trips, to encourage the use of best fishing practices like descending devices, and they also have angler surveys, to gather the understanding of knowledge of barotrauma and its mitigation. Then one of the things that I think is really interesting with Florida Sea Grant is they have this catchandrelease.org page. Similar to what you saw on FWC's page, there's lots of really great information here, and it's all housed in one central spot, which is nice.

Then, in addition to what you might see at state agencies, or what you might see at the Sea Grant offices, there's also lots of other different avenues where people can find information. Like I showed you earlier, this is that YouTube video that showcases that red grouper being released, and there's also a campaign called ReleaSense, and this is put together by a number of different partners, and Shimano happens to be one of them, and I believe CCA is also involved in this, and this is another webpage that is strictly dedicated to fish today with tomorrow in mind, and so it's promoting best fishing practices, and there's lots of helpful resources in here, and it's not focusing strictly on snapper grouper species, but they do get highlighted in here as well.

Then we're very proud that Spud Woodward, our Information & Education Committee Chair, was able to write this article with *Sportfishing Magazine*, which highlighted the many different ways that people can responsibly release fish, and it was a super comprehensive approach. It focused not only on management stuff, but it also focused on an angler's responsibility to being able to release fish, improve survivorship, and then ultimately have fish for the future and future generations of anglers, and so that's a really great article in there, and I encourage you to take a look at it if you haven't already. Then this is, again, that video that was produced by Brendan Runde.

We were very fortunate that many of the folks that we reached out to on the Information & Education Advisory Panel were willing to give us analytics, and so we had some really great ways to look and see what types of resources seem to be performing the best within the fishing community. Now, it's difficult to compare state-to-state, because we have very different stakeholders in every state, but we did find that it seemed that there was a general theme that videos and blogs and dedicated webpages seem to be doing the best of lots of the different resources that

were out there and that it seemed that the more interactive resources that are available seem to be getting the most engagement from folks, which almost seems intuitive, but, at the same time, it's nice to see that many of the things that we are gravitating towards at the council seem to be doing well with members of the fishing community.

Just to give you an example of some of the statistics that people shared with us, FWC and their fish handling webpage has had 15,880 page views, and the average time that somebody has been on that page has been almost four minutes, which is rather impressive, and that really does indicate that people are reading through the material or digging around and trying to learn more information, and so seeing numbers like that is encouraging.

Their milkcrate descending device video, which is a nice video, in that it's something that people can access rather easily, and it's not necessarily a commercial device, and so you can use a milkcrate that you may already have and use that as your descending device, as long as it's weighted appropriately and attached to the necessary amount of line, and that video itself had 16,000 views, and so that's a pretty significant segment of the community, and that is definitely an encouraging sign, that those resources that are being put online are definitely being utilized by individuals.

In addition to that, and this is our last one, is the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources blog post has had 2,000 page views, and, again, this one had an impressive average time of three minutes on the page, and so people are reading blogs, especially if it's synthesized in a way that's easy for people to navigate and provide information cleanly and has lots of pretty pictures, and it definitely seems to play a role, just as a general rule, but we're really appreciative for everybody who submitted those analytics, and it's definitely helpful to us when we're starting to think about what we want to do as a campaign on behalf of the South Atlantic Council, and, again, the reason that all of this is coming into play is because of the amendment's recent approval, and the council noted that they felt that outreach is going to be absolutely critical to make sure that individuals are not only educated on the regulations, but, again, aware of the fact that these tools even exist.

Although there are all these really great resources out there online, there still seems to be some missing piece, and we haven't really identified what that is, and I'm not sure that the council is going to be the entity to figure that out, and I don't know if we're necessarily the go-to location for people to get that information, but it definitely poses some interesting questions about what's going on in the community, where people aren't necessarily aware that barotrauma mitigation tools exist, or maybe they don't even know what barotrauma is. They may have seen it on the water, but they don't necessarily know what's causing it, and they don't know how to fix it, and so it really poses some interesting questions for us, and for you guys as our advisory panel, about what we can do as a council to help fill these gaps.

Just to fill you in on what we've been doing, as far as the council's campaign, we've been trying to think about and prepare for this upcoming regulation, and that does pose some tricky things, in that it is a regulation, and we're not just educating people so that they have this information readily available at their fingertips, but we're educating people because it's very likely that, down the road, if approved by NOAA Fisheries, it's going to become the law.

The council really urged staff to make sure that we're focusing on behavior modification with this best practices outreach campaign that we're going to be doing, especially since the amendment

says, as it stands now, that the descending device has to be readily available for use, but it doesn't say that you have to use it, and so we're really trying to push this whole behavior modification approach, which is something rather different for us as a council.

We have been going to lots of different cool places, and we went to the Miami Boat Show. We sent Christina Wiegand, and she went with Spud Woodward to the Yamaha booth, and they were able to speak to the needs of making sure that we improve survivorship of released fish and the different kinds of descending devices that are available.

In addition to that, we've had BeBe Harrison with MyFishCount, and she's been actively out there, not only promoting MyFishCount, but also the use of best fishing practices, and so we've had a lot of on-the-ground work going on, but we haven't really done that much in terms of directly engaging community members, and that's something that we really wanted to start to push on our end, and trying to see how, since we are, in many cases, viewed as the man, and we are a quasi-federal agency, and we are a management body that ultimately leads to regulations, it seems like it would be best for us to reach out to prominent members of the community, to try and drive more people being aware of what's going on and more people being aware that these best practices are necessary to the survivorship of released fish and the future of our fisheries as a whole.

With that, we have started to -- I know I'm running pretty close here on time, and so we might have to either extend a little bit into today's meeting or potentially roll over to tomorrow, but I will quickly get through this bit really quick.

We've been working with community leaders, or thinking about how to work with community leaders, and we're really focusing on these influencer-type people, and, when I say influencer, I feel like teenagers roll their eyes in the back of their heads, but we're really looking for those people who have the ability to influence potential buyers of a product or service by promoting or recommending the items on social media, and I really think that we could see some real changes if we got the information that we need people to have in the hands of those individuals who have a network, much like what we saw in that Tuna Champions presentation.

Since companies and campaigns have already been doing this, it seems only fair that we would be able to do it too, although, yes, we're a management body, and, yes, we're not going to be able to provide people with monetary support for their time, but I think it is a good way for us to partner up with people, and we have seen Shimano and Yamaha and Pelagic and countless others be able to do this, and the Kardashians are the perfect example, right? They are actively doing this kind of stuff, and so it's definitely something that I think we're ready to start tapping into, but, with that, there are always going to be some caveats.

We're really excited about one partnership that is going to be coming up with Fly Navarro, and Fly Navarro, for those of you who don't know him, he is a huge personality, and he's been very interested in working with us on this best practices issue and promoting the use of best practices. He typically has a standard approach to how he does videos, where he interviews an expert. In this case, we would probably have a recreational fisherman, a commercial fisherman, maybe someone representing NOAA Fisheries, and a council member.

He would be discussing with them why best practices are important, the different tools that are readily available to people, and how you use them, and he would actively be doing that on a fishing

trip, and so we're really excited about this partnership, and I think it could lend itself to lots of cool things out of our office, and it, again, is something that has been postponed as a result of the impacts of COVID-19, but we're hopeful that we'll be able to get this on the agenda in the near future. This is just to give you a little bit of who Fly is.

He's a really big personality, but we're really excited about the direction of this, and it definitely could lend itself to some neat projects down the road, and we're hoping that this doesn't just end with best practices, but that it could extend to other things that we have going on, potentially fish identification or upcoming regulations, and there's lots of room for that to grow.

With that, I just threw a lot of information at you, but I wanted to see if you all had any other suggestions for folks that we should reach out to. We've got a growing list of ideas of people that we should maybe get in touch with and see if they might be interested, but I wanted to see if you guys had any ideas for people in your community who might be good to reach out to.

We do have some influencer-type people on the phone right now, or on the webinar right now, one of which happens to be Mark Phelps, and he's sponsored by Shimano, and so he might be able to speak to some of this and how it has benefitted him and how he's been able to share information with his followership, but I definitely think this would be a good time to open it up to you, and, if folks need to get off the phone, we can continue this until tomorrow, and I don't know, Scott, if you want to gauge whether we should wrap up now or if we could continue on and run over time a little bit.

MR. BAKER: I mean, I'm happy to go over time, but maybe we should ask folks. I can't see, but for a show of hands to see who might have to leave, and maybe we could go an extra thirty minutes.

MS. RHODES: I see we've got some hands raised. It's looking like we're getting some hands here.

MR. BAKER: I guess I should have clarified. Maybe raise your hand if you cannot stay.

MS. RHODES: Hands are going away, Scott. It looks like we're in pretty good shape then, and so we're going to go ahead and keep moving on. If you need to hop off the call, I totally understand, and I apologize for running over time here, and so we'll try to get through this, as much as we can, but I will turn the floor over to you guys. If you have a question, please raise your hand, and, if you have a comment or a suggestion, feel free to chime in now.

MR. PHELPS: I mean, I'm not the best at social media, but definitely, working with Shimano, we have certain requirements, and we do a lot of social media, Instagram and Facebook. I don't do a lot of tweeting, but I guess some people do, and Instagram and Facebook seems to have a lot more visual picture stuff, and so that makes more sense for us, but, I mean, the power in that is amazing, and I've actually been to some classes that teach professionals in my business how to address this, and, like the one you guys said before, webpages are almost dead compared to the value you get from social media, and it's amazing how quickly you can distribute information via social media. I mean, whether it's somebody catching a fish or how to release it and showing a video, and it's instantaneous that hundreds or thousands -- I mean, I'm nowhere near what some people are, and some people get thousands of hits from one post, and I don't quite get that, but some people do. I

have seen the stuff that the South Atlantic does, and I think it's either Facebook or the Instagram page, and I think it's Facebook, correct?

MS. RHODES: We have both.

MR. PHELPS: I see stuff posted, and it's great, because having that in an email, it both kind of confirms for me that, okay, there's a change in something, and I need to look at this and address it, and it's just another way of helping get the information out, and so I think, the more stuff we can do with that, the better.

MS. RHODES: Thanks for that, Mark. I appreciate it.

MR. JONES: In kind of preparing for this, I spoke with CRD's Kathy Knowlton, who deals with a lot of descending devices and things like that, and something that she brought up that I thought was a good point is that there may be bait shops and tackle shops and places like this that don't even have descending devices and things like that on the shelves yet, and so that may be something that we kind of want to look at, as far as reaching out to -- I know that they're not particularly like online influencers, but they are community influencers, and, if they can be educated about what these devices do and why it's important to have them stocked on their shelves, that may be something that is helpful.

Another thing that Kathy and I talked about was some consistency in messaging, and so any kind of like graphic design that we use for this, or just print messaging, or the wording of how we want to say this kind of stuff, if we could all sort of be on the same page, I think that would be kind of helpful. Thank you.

MS. RHODES: Thank you, Tyler. I agree, and I like that bait shop idea. Maybe, when we discuss the AP member updates, when we're talking about how we can better stay in touch with other and exchange information, maybe we could talk about how we could reach out to those individuals, because, at the South Atlantic Council, I don't think we know who the appropriate bait shops would be to reach out to in Georgia, but I feel like folks like you and Kathy Knowlton and other state agency representatives might know who those individuals are, and we can give them the materials that they might need.

We're going to be developing some swag that's related to best fishing practices, in preparation for ICAST, and in addition to just having it readily available for any other event that we might attend, and so it would be good to know who those people are, so that we can distribute things to them, and I think that's a really good idea.

MR. BAKER: This series of presentations has kind of got me thinking that -- I guess I'm curious, and maybe that's part of our meeting here, but the way that the council is going to move forward in terms of what's been profiled as a series of independent efforts that are very common to a single issue, and you look at the success of a lot of these traditional outreach and education campaigns, and they are centered around a branding or a message or a logo, a brand name, and a tag line, and there's a pretty clear science on how to develop that, but, if you go that route, you also have to put some advertising and put some muscle behind that to get it out there and to sustain it, and so the question I'm asking, I guess, is the desire of the council to create its own type brand, for example, like FishSmart and Tuna Champions? What would the brand name be for the council's efforts?

Would it be something catchy or something, or would it just be, in other words, like we want you to do the right thing? I will just leave it there.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Scott. I think that's a really great question, and, based on the discussion that we had at the council table about a year or so ago, I would say that -- I don't want to speak for council members, and so, if Spud or David, or I saw that Steve was on the call too, and if any of them want to speak up, please just raise your hand, and I will go ahead and make sure that you can get your word in.

I feel that, based on the discussions that we had, that it seemed like the council was leaning away from branding its own campaign and going to rely rather heavily on resources that are already available, but to create a central location for those resources. Then, as part of not necessarily branding, but, as part of getting that information out, we were going to get in touch with folks like these influencers or prominent members of the community, to get them to be the brand, if that makes any sense, for getting this information out.

They all share information differently, and they all have their own set of sponsorships, but it seems like information coming from them has a lot more weight, and I don't think the council, at this time, has the resources to dedicate to a full-fledged brand for the promotion of best fishing practices, but I think it's a really good question, and it poses lots of additional questions for the council to consider at their meeting in June. I don't know if any council members want to speak.

MR. WOODWARD: Thanks, Cameron. You summed it up pretty well. I don't think we have a desire to reinvent this wheel. It's already been reinvented several different ways, and, as Cameron presented, state agencies is sending out messages, and Sea Grant is sending out messages, and you've got FishSmart and ReleaSense, and the message is out there, and I think our concern, all along, was consistency in the messaging, and we certainly don't need to add to potential confusion by rebranding or reinventing something that already exists. The key thing is to figure out how to get the message in front of the most people, the most effective way, through sheer repetition.

I mean, some people are going to have to hear it multiple times, but, as has also been mentioned, it's the peer pressure and the influencers that are going to have a lot more impact on changing people's behaviors than rack cards and websites, and so we've really got to focus on that, and I liken this back to a lot of other behavior modification campaigns and the human experience, and sometimes it takes years to effect a meaningful change, and so we're going to have to be persistent. The more people that are saying it, and saying it the same way, the better, but we don't need to be reinventing it.

MS. RHODES: Thank you, Spud, and, as a follow-up, Scott, I think, based on what we've put together on our draft webpage, we are relying really heavily on what FishSmart has put together, and so it seems like we're going to be focusing in on those best practices, to model after what they have already worked hard to put together, and so that the messaging will remain consistent from our office, and then we will offshoot people to the state agency resources, Sea Grant resources, and the other resources that are available online. Does anybody else have a question or a comment they would like to make?

MR. BAKER: I just wanted to say thanks for that. That's great. Just some thoughts after stream of consciousness, I guess, after watching these presentations, but, when you think about the

smallest organized group to get around, I think what I heard about the Gulf of Mexico charter captains kind of getting together and informally making this like a credo for what they should be doing, I think that's pretty powerful, and so I think a lot of people, particularly the private anglers, who might be watching those for-hire people, on social media or whatever, doing what they're doing, ultimately, they might want to emulate that, and I think what Spud is saying is right on.

I mean, if you look at the science behind behavior change, there's a very strong connection with social pressure and nudge theory and all that kind of stuff, and, basically, something as simple as, well, you know your neighbor is doing this, and so you should be doing it too, and so there's a lot of opportunities there, and I think -- I mean, for me personally, I think starting with some of those for-hire guys is really a good start.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Scott. That's a good idea, and I'm making a note of that now.

MR. KELLY: As far as influencers, I am taking for granted that you have already approached people like Guy Harvey and IGFA and Bass Pro Shops, et cetera?

MS. RHODES: We actually haven't, and I think that's a really great idea, and so I know that, with Guy Harvey, the magazine has done a number of features on the states, but I don't recall if there was a best practices focus in those, but I think that's a really good idea, and so you said Guy Harvey, IGFA, and who was the other that you mentioned?

MR. KELLY: Bass Pro Shops, of course, is not just on bass and fresh water. They are also -- They have a huge saltwater portion of their nationwide, if not worldwide, reach, and so I know Johnny -- I don't know Johnny Morris, but I would think that he would be an advocate of this, and I've seen his name on a lot of different conservation organizations. Guy Harvey, of course, right now is still in Grand Cayman, sort of waiting out the COVID-19 situation, but he's reachable by email, and I do know him, and I'm a member of IGFA, and so, if I can help in those regards, I would be glad to.

MS. RHODES: Okay. We will definitely take you up on that, because I don't even think that we were considering things quite at that scale, but I think that's a really good idea, and so what I will do, Doug, is I will circle back with you, following the end of our meeting, probably tomorrow, and maybe we can get up some plans on how we can go about reaching out to those folks, and possibly you could introduce us, if you would be okay with that.

MR. KELLY: That would be fine. One question. The video with the SeaQualizer, showing the red grouper swimming away harmlessly, that was rather convincing, and I know venting has always been questionable, and I actually did a venting video with Florida Sea Grant a million years ago, but I know a lot of people still do venting, and probably not very successfully, and you can't always wait for a fish to float to the top to decide on mortality, because they can be consumed before they get up to the surface, but what about having a SeaQualizer with a camera going down with vented fish, to get a better handle on what the survivability is?

MS. RHODES: That could be an idea, and it might help that one of the things that the council is trying to do is they're not necessarily discouraging the use of venting, but, much like what FishSmart and Andy described in the presentation, is that they are really encouraging the use of

descending devices, but, if people know how to vent, they just ask that they review some materials, to make sure they know how to do so properly.

That came up with the headboat community, as Emily had noted in her comments earlier, and we had quite a few headboat folks that were really worried about this amendment and how it could affect their fishing, and we made sure that they understood that you need to have this descending device onboard, and it needs to be readily available for us, but, if you are most comfortable with venting, and you know how to properly vent, then you can go ahead and do that, and there's nothing in the regulation that would prohibit you from doing that in federal waters of the South Atlantic.

I don't know if the council would want to have a demonstration video showing people venting. What they have done, or what we have done as staff, is we have included a link to the Sea Grant video, which is very good and shows people where to vent a fish, and maybe we could talk to the Sea Grant folks about possibly having an underwater component associated with that and talking about survivorship, and so that's something that I could get with Shelly about that, and Florida Sea Grant, and see if that's something that might be of interest, and I don't know if Shelly wants to chime in on that, and I see that she's on here. We've got lots of hands raised, and so this is great, guys. I love that everybody is all jazzed up about this.

MR. WOODWARD: I was just going to say that, when we did our Georgia featured edition of *Guy Harvey Magazine*, I was able to do a few-page article in there on descending devices, and so the editor, Fred Garth, of the magazine, is certainly aware of the importance of the topic, and I'm sure that Guy Harvey is too, and so I'm sure there is opportunity to bring Guy Harvey into the process and to continue to use that magazine as a platform for information exchange.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Spud.

MR. POLAND: I was just going to respond to Doug Kelly's comments. There is a study going on right now in North Carolina, and it's the same group from NC State that's already done a lot of the work on the SeaQualizers, looking at the different effects of the SeaQualizer and venting and, of course, a control with no treatment right now on quite a few species off of North Carolina.

They are looking at multiple depth strata, and so I think they've got a shallow depth, inside of I think like seventy feet, and then seventy to a hundred feet, and then out -- It might be seventy to 120 feet and then out past twenty fathoms, to try to get at what is the relative effectiveness of descending devices and venting, not only comparing it to practices, but also comparing it across multiple species, and so that work is being done right now.

MR. KELLY: Excellent.

MR. PHELPS: I was just wondering what if -- I have worked with CCA, as well as Shimano, when they did the ReleaSense stuff, and I'm just thinking in terms of their ability to offer something like they do the Star Tournament, like we have done in DNR, where we did a tagged fish and got money or something, and is there any incentive that we could do where, through the social media South Atlantic page, or there is some kind of incentive through ReleaSense and Shimano or CCA or somewhere that somebody -- Everybody that wants to can post a picture of them using a SeaQualizer, or using another approved device that somehow somebody would get

picked out and randomly get a rod-and-reel or a gift certificate or something like that. It's just as some incentive to get some churn out there and get some awareness and say, hey, if you do this, and kind of trick them into using the thing, because, once you use it once, you really realize the value of it.

MS. RHODES: We've been playing around with incentives via the MyFishCount project, and BeBe Harrison has really taken the lead on that, and what we've found, since we are quasi-federal, is incentives get us into a little bit of a tricky spot, and we were able to do -- MyFishCount was able to do incentives for their project via Angler Action Foundation, and so it becomes a little trickier to figure out, as a quasi-federal agency, our role in being able to provide some kind of incentive.

We can do things like send us your pictures of you using a descending device, and we share it across social media channels or something like that, but I do think it's something that we should investigate further, and maybe, like what we have set up with Angler Action Foundation, we would be able to get some of these bigger companies, like you suggested, Shimano or CCA, and maybe they would be interested in participating in something like that, and so I will definitely make note of that, and then we might be following up with you in the next couple of days, to see if you can maybe introduce us to folks at Shimano, if you would be up for that.

MR. PHELPS: Sure, and I could maybe mention it to CCA and them and see if they would have some ideas of how they could do that, through ReleaSense or whatnot.

MS. RHODES: All right. Thanks, Mark. I appreciate it.

MS. BYRD: Cameron, I just wanted to note that Shelly -- In the question window, and she was muted, and we now have her unmuted, but, when you were talking about working with Florida Sea Grant on videos, she said they would be happy to work on that, and so I just wanted to share that with the group as well, and hopefully, Shelly, you're unmuted on our end, and so, if you want to speak up, you can unmute yourself now. Sorry about that.

MS. RHODES: Sorry, Shelly.

MS. KRUEGER: No worries. Thank you for sharing that.

MS. RHODES: All right, guys, and so I think we're at a point where, again, I'm going to pose it to Scott, and then I guess the group, and we still have quite a bit to talk about relevant to best practices, but I realize that we've gone over time quite a bit here, and I don't want to take up too much of your day, if you guys have other things that you need to tend to, and so, again, let's see if there's a show of hands if you can't stay for another hopefully just a couple of minutes, and we might have to push off our draft webpage review until tomorrow, if folks can't stick around. It looks like everybody can stay. Scott, are you okay with us to proceed?

MR. BAKER: Yes, I'm fine with that.

MS. RHODES: All right. Thanks, guys, and, again, I apologize for us running over time here. We're still trying to figure out the whole webinar structure and how long things will take to get

through via the webinar, but you all have been highly participatory, and I'm really grateful for that, and so thank you.

As I mentioned earlier, we did model much of our draft webpage off of what we saw on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's website, and so I just wanted to show you guys that, so you can take a look and see what they have developed. They worked really diligently on putting this together, and they had lots of meetings, and they've been really active in posting these workshops, where folks can talk about all these different best practices tools and communication strategies.

I will just go ahead, and let's take a quick peek at this, and you will see lots of new material on here, if you want to find more of the formalized reports from symposiums and workshops and their official policy, and all of that is available on this dedicated webpage. They also provide some really good information on why this is so important, and that comes down to the data.

For those of you who haven't been to this page, sorry I'm going through as quickly as I am. I am hopeful that some of you were able to take a look at it as part of the briefing book, and I know the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council reps have had ample opportunity to review this webpage, I'm sure, but they have got lots of cool things in here.

Our best practices are going to differ from this a bit, since we are really sticking, as it stands now, to what's been illustrated in FishSmart, but they also have this really nice map, and, if you click on one of these states or areas, it takes you to lots of different resources that are available from that swath of area, and so it's a really nice way to highlight all of the different resources that folks like you and other groups have worked diligently to put together.

Let's go ahead and jump into our draft webpage, and I've got a series of discussion questions for you guys to go through, but, before we do that, I will go ahead and show you the best fishing practices webpage, and I apologize that this is the first time that many of you are going to see it, and it took us a while to get everything up and running, and we wanted to make sure that we were in good shape before we sent anything out, and so this is what we have in mind. Please note that this is your time to let us know if you think the things on this page really need to change.

We are limited, at the moment, to our website's current structure. It's very likely that, down the road, that we're going to be doing lots of different things to change the way our website looks, but, for right now, this is what we have to work with, and so we do have some limitations, some style things, but, overall, we really want to hear your thoughts on this and whether or not you think that this is going to be an effective way to get the point across to people and to let them know it's coming, as far as the regulations are concerned, but also to just give them a general synopsis of best fishing practices and the different things that are out there.

For those of you who are familiar with our best practices tutorial that I showed earlier, which is part of a project with NOAA Fisheries and the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, we really started to utilize this software, with is Articulate Storyline, and that's what you are seeing here embedded into the webpage. Articulate Storyline offers lots of cool features that allow you to really kind of go through things and pick the way that you want to learn stuff, and so it's really been a nice format.

Based on what we've learned from those earlier analytics that you all shared with us and we discussed a little while ago, we learned that, the more interactive the tool is, it seems that it performs better, and now whether it be a video or something that you can actually click through and watch different graphics play out, and it seems like those things tend to be doing quite well across-the-board among the different agencies.

I just wanted to show you what we have in mind, and there are a couple of different options here, and this is in draft form, and so it's not as beautified as what we would have when we send it out and make it public, but I will just give you how this all works, and so we wanted to feature this video from Brendan Runde, which is that video, Doug, that we were discussing earlier, and we also agree that it's super compelling and convincing, and so that's why we wanted to feature it at the front of this webpage, so that people could stumble upon it, and it would automatically play, and it would hopefully grab their attention.

We've got best practices that takes you right into the tutorial, and that's what we wanted to really highlight here, and there's tons of really helpful information in that tutorial, and so we wanted that to be a main feature, for people to go in and play around and discover all the different tools that are available and why it's important.

Then we also wanted to highlight state resources, and, based on what we saw with the Gulf Council, we really liked that map, and so we wanted to make sure that we had something similar in our region, and so, if you click on one of these, it takes you to a state website, and so wanted to poll all of you and make sure this is the appropriate length. We are a little hesitant, but we can, obviously, be guided based on what you guys think today, and we were hesitant to have all of the different resources that you put together, like brochures and videos and different tools that you might have, different programs that are available -- We were hesitant to have that listed on the website, simply because they are likely going to be updated rather frequently, and we didn't want to miss anything new that came out.

If you guys feel that it's something that we absolutely should do, and we should pursue, we will most definitely move forward with that, and we can make the necessary modifications, but, again, we turn this over to you for your advice and your input, especially the folks from Sea Grant and the state agencies, and also folks from the fishing community. If you think it would be most helpful to have a series of resources, like what you saw on the Gulf Council's page, we can most definitely accommodate that.

This is would be the landing page that we have available for South Carolina. Again, I'm not sure that that's really the appropriate landing page, and so, Erin, please feel free to speak up relative to that in a couple of minutes, and then we have Georgia's page, which takes you to this location here on their website, and, again, maybe that's not the appropriate spot to send people, and so we open the floor to you, and then, for Florida, we take you to the fish handling and gear page, and so, again, there's plenty of room for us to discuss what's the appropriate way to go about making sure people have access to all the information they need.

Then we, of course, wanted to feature FishSmart's best practices, and they are noted in the best practices tutorial, but we thought it would be helpful to have them here as well, just so we keep reiterating this information, and people can learn as much as they want to about this, but we're hoping, if we grab them here, then we've captured their attention early on.

There are a number of ways that we can -- We also have a “get involved” tab, and so looping people back in to all the different projects that we have ongoing that are somewhat related to best fishing practices, and were typically always going to promote Fish Rules, because we feel that it’s a best practice to know what’s open and what’s closed, so you can appropriately decide what fish you need to target at that time of year.

There are a couple of different things, and I’m going to pause before we move further onto the page, but we really wanted your opinion on how the Articulate Storyline should be laid out, if we were to include it on our webpage, if you guys feel like it’s a good fit, and so there are a couple of different things you can click on. This is Option 1, this layout here, as you see it, and the video automatically plays. If you go to Option 2, it looks quite different. Keep in mind that we can change colors, and we can do whatever you guys think is best to make sure that people get the information they need and it captures their attention, and that’s really the main focus that we’re trying to get here, is how do we grab people.

Then we’ve got Option 3, where everything moves down here, and so, within our office, we have very differing opinions on which format we like best, and I would imagine that there could be differing opinions here with the AP, but we really wanted to talk to you all about it and see if you even like this format and see if you think that this will be helpful.

Then we also scroll down a bit, and we have additional information with icons for the best fishing practices, and these were put together by Allie Iberle, who is our FISHstory staff lead, and she’s incredible, and she has a really great eye for design, and so she put together these icons, to hopefully, again, grab people’s attention and make things a little bit more interesting.

Then we have the featured best practices for deepwater release, and we’ve got a tab for recognizing barotrauma, for folks who might not know what it is or how to identify it. This is similar to what you saw in other sites, like on FWC’s page, and we have a table, and this was put together by staff, in preparation for the amendment, and this table highlights the different kinds of descending devices that are available, so we’re not highlighting just one descending device, and there seems to be a lot of pressure on the SeaQualizer, but there are lots of different devices that are out there that people can use, things that they can make, and, in addition to that, we do mention venting devices and how they can be properly used. This, again, goes back to a helpful video that really illustrates how to do this.

Then that red grouper video keeps making its debut on our website and in other locations, as it should, because, again, it is a compelling video. Then we feature the upcoming regulations. As noted earlier, people would be required to have a descending device onboard and readily available for use, as noted here, and these proposed regulations are not necessarily set in stone, and so it’s very possible that they could change, the codified text could change, and it’s possible that NOAA Fisheries wouldn’t fully approve the amendment, or could entirely disapprove the amendment, and so this is all up in the air. We haven’t had a proposed rule published yet, and so there’s still ample opportunity for things to be adjusted, but, as it stands now, this is what was approved as part of the council’s amendment.

We’re displaying this information, and it’s a little bit legalese right now, and it’s not necessarily the easiest thing to get through, but, as we have a better handle of what the regulations will be, we

feel confident that we'll be able to make this something that's more palatable, and so I'm going to turn this over, and I know this was like lightning speed, but I'm going to turn this over to folks, to see what their initial impression is of the website. Does it get after some of the things that you think are really important? Does it really address the needs of everybody?

That's something that the Socioeconomic Panel for the South Atlantic Council mentioned to us, that it was really important that we make sure that the information we provide is not just tailored to the recreational community, but that it also meets the needs of commercial stakeholders. If they need additional information on this, is there a place for them to go to get it where they feel like they are represented?

I am going to take a moment to pause and see if anybody wants to chime in. I can toggle through these different options, if folks want to see the different options for this layout, and so, again, I turn it over to all of you. I see some hands raised.

MS. SMITH: I really love the video being there on the front, because I think it's very engaging, and a lot of people are going to really go straight to that. The very first layout that you have there, with the different layers going down, I really like the way that looks, and my concern about it is when I was looking at it -- When it first came on, I was like -- I wasn't real sure that it was links, and, when I'm using a webpage, I would probably go and hover over them, to see if they were links, and I'm not sure that all of our fishermen would know to do that, and maybe that's something that other people would have a little better idea on, of whether or not people are going to -- If they are going very quickly looking for something and if it's -- It's not real clear that those are links, to me.

MS. RHODES: We can definitely take a look at that, and I have to say that Chip Collier, who has been really instrumental in launching the use of this program, and he's the one who put this together for us, and so I'll get up with him and see if there's a way that we can make those buttons potentially look more clickable, so that folks know that it's something that they can click into and get more information. Thanks for that, Patricia.

MS. WEEKS: This Articulate Storyline or narrative thing looks really cool, and I look forward to looking into that for myself, and I just wanted to make a comment about the different layout options, kind of similar to Patricia's concern. I am just curious, and you all probably know from your website metrics, the percentage of folks that access it by mobile, and I'm just thinking that Option 1 is going to be less mobile friendly than 2 or 3, just because it's -- You've got your navigation on the left there that's going to be taking up some prime real estate that could be the full-screen video, and so I really preferred Options 2 and 3, because, especially if you're looking at in on a mobile phone, the video is just going to be front-and-center and taking up the whole screen.

MS. RHODES: That's a great point, Erin. We'll make sure to take a look. This program has done really well on cellphones, from past experience, and so we'll take a look and see how each of those different formats plays out on the phone, and I think that's a really good point, because we want it to be easy for people to navigate, and so thank you for that.

MR. BAKER: I was actually looking at that same thing as well, and I typed the website into my phone, and the Option 1 shows up exactly like that, and so, when you play the movie, it does say

restricted in its size, and I know that a lot of websites, I guess, can be mobile optimized, and I guess it's probably a default setting for some. I like -- I mean, I like all three options as well, but the one thing I would think about would be basically having some form of call to action, and I can see where people are immediately going to be thrust into watching that video, and then it's going to get towards the end of that video, and then you're going to have to worry about are they going to stay and go to the next step, or are they going to leave, and so maybe -- I'm just, again, just spit-balling here, but maybe if there was some text or a statement or something superimposed on that video that says, you know, are you ready to take the next step, are you going to do something about this, or are you just going to watch, something that engages them to make the next step.

MS. RHODES: I think we could definitely facilitate that via the Articulate Storyline, and so I will follow-up on that, and I think that's a really good idea, is some kind of call to action. I think this page was missing that, and so I think that's a really good suggestion. Thanks, Scott.

MS. CROUCH: I just wanted to say that I really liked those icons, where, if you scroll down a little bit, under the best fishing practices, I think that first tab, or the second one, and I can't remember, and so those are great. I almost think maybe throwing some of those at the top would also be eye-catching, and I know videos are really great to have at the top of webpages, but infographics, or these quick little icons, might help kind of drive home what the purpose of this page is, in addition to some text, and so just some thoughts there on trying to highlight those.

MS. RHODES: I think that's a great idea, and, as another note, just to big up these icons even further, Allie, in addition to developing these icons, she also put together a best practices sticker, which we are going to be using as a swag item, and that sticker is going to feature some of these icons and then link to this webpage, so that people can get more information, and, just as a little preview of what we're expecting, it's going to be a black silhouette of a grouper, and then it's going to have these best practices icons embedded in there, and so I think it's going to be really cool. It's going to be big, and maybe even a tool for people to use as a comparison when measuring their fish, and so these icons are definitely going to get lots of use, and I think adding them to the top of the page could be a great way to showcase them again and grab people's attention, and so thank you for that. I think that could be a helpful tip.

MS. LATANICH: I will add a plus-one to the comment just now about making those icons more prominent, and I had a couple of thoughts too about the list of state resources. First, I understand your concern about linking to resources that might shift or be updated, but I do think it's helpful to reduce the number of clicks that people have to make to get to those resources, and so I guess I would advocate for linking directly to those, just like you've done in the briefing materials for this meeting.

The other thing that I wanted to raise was, I guess when you look at a map like this, your natural inclination is to click the state you live on, but I think what's great about kind of the council sourcing resources this way is that you can be a fisherman in North Carolina or from Georgia or Florida and read this resource just as well, and so I don't know, and I'm not sure what my advice would be, but I think just playing up what these recommendations have in common is really helpful, and so I think emphasizing those kind of helps do that. Instead of directing you to try to find your state's particular resources for best practices, emphasizing all that we share in common is the thing to do. That's it.

MS. RHODES: All right. Thanks, Katie.

MS. SANDOVAL: You said the council wanted you to have access to both commercial and recreational, and like this type of information for both, and, to me, when I look at this, I don't really see something that would engage a commercial fisher, like would engage the interest of commercial fishermen. I think it's going to really depend on what you're going to house it under, like what link or URL, and I think, if you put it somewhere where there is commercial fishermen information, maybe with quotas and whatnot, and have a link to this particular page, under something commercial, then you are more likely to get commercial fishermen to look at it, instead of them trying to search for it specifically, this information, on your website.

MS. RHODES: All right. Thank you. Do you have any recommendations for -- Are you thinking embedded within our website, or are you thinking on other websites that commercial fishermen --

MS. SANDOVAL: Within your website, and so, under the site menu, like where you have regulations, commercial regulations.

MS. RHODES: Add the --

MS. SANDOVAL: Yes, or fishery management plans, like in the commercial section, and that's where I would embed it under. Also, the only reason I don't see this really geared towards commercial fishermen is because -- I mean, I think the video is very eye-catching, but I only see a singular fish on there, which, to me, like when I think commercial fishing, I think a lot more fish at a time. Do you know what I mean?

MS. RHODES: Absolutely, and so would it be helpful to maybe, on this page, or embedded within the Articulate Storyline, to add some imagery that is clearly from commercial vessels?

MS. SANDOVAL: Yes, that would be helpful.

MS. RHODES: We can do that. I think the main goal -- Since it seems that commercial fishermen have a tendency to know a lot of this stuff already, and so I think this is definitely more geared toward the recreational community, but we certainly don't want to leave commercial stakeholders out, and so I think that's a great idea, and we'll definitely be sure to add this to the regulations by species page and the regulations page, and I think this is ultimately going to get placed in lots of different areas over our website, and so we'll be sure to get it in the spot that we know that commercial users are relying on. Thank you for that.

Does anybody else have something that they would like to add, or do you want to weigh-in on which option of these you like better? I would be curious to know, Mark, as our recreational representative, if you have a preference for this layout, or even if you think that it would be effective for someone like you, or for others that you know in the community, if you think that this layout is beneficial.

MR. PHELPS: I like the first layout here, and I haven't had a chance to look at my phone, but definitely whichever one is going to be the most mobile friendly is going to be the most useful, because everyone is -- I mean, we're on the computers, because this is a long meeting, but I would

say, 90 percent of my time, I use everything on the phone as possible, and so whichever version is going to be easier to use on the mobile devices is probably going to be the most useful.

MS. RHODES: Okay. Great. Thanks, Mark. Yes, I definitely think that that's a super valid point, and we're going to have to tailor much of this webpage to accommodate mobile use.

MR. PHELPS: I know the best fishing practices, and I think you or someone last year sent that to me, and I did use it through the mobile device, and we had a couple of bugs, but I think they've been worked out, and so some of this has already been looked at through the mobile, but definitely walking through all of this in detail, through a mobile device, would be very valuable.

MS. RHODES: Okay. Great. Does anybody else have anything they would like to add?

MS. LATANICH: Just a quick follow-up question, and I'm sorry if I missed this, but do you know yet where the site is going to live kind of under the main hierarchy of your site? You said you're going to embed it in several different places, but, if you're just trying to find this quickly, have you thought about where it would go?

MS. RHODES: That is still up for discussion, and we're definitely open to any suggestions that you all might have, and I have a feeling that it's likely going to find its way under the site menu as its own clickable link there, and then, once we're able to really think about this whole website design that's likely going to come down the road, then we'll really start to think about where this could live in a new website.

I think it's pretty likely that, since this is regulatory by nature in some ways, that there is an upcoming regulation, that this will be linked on every single species page on our website, and it will likely also be linked on our fact sheets relative to commercial trip limits and recreational bag limits, and so we'll be sure to have it linked in lots of locations, since it is regulatory by nature, and so folks are going to need to have this information, just to make sure that they're playing by the rules, let alone making sure that they're doing everything they can to improve survivorship of released fish, and folks want to.

This has been a wildly popular amendment for us at a time when we don't have that many things, regulatory, that are received positively at this time, and there's just a lot going on in fisheries, especially with this COVID-19 situation, and so we're really excited to see how many people were really engaged and wanted to see this amendment move forward, and so it's going to live in lots of places, to make sure that it gets showcased and people know it's coming.

MR. PHELPS: When are we thinking this amendment will be activated?

MS. RHODES: I think it's a little difficult at this point to assess, and I don't know how NOAA Fisheries is going to be impacted as a result of COVID-19, but, based on some of the early discussions that we've had with them, potentially maybe late in 2020, or early in 2021, and don't hold me to it, but, as far as we know, I think that's the direction we're heading. There are some folks on the call who might be able to correct me if I'm wrong, but that's my understanding at this point.

MR. PHELPS: Okay, and I agree. I think, like whenever it is implemented, a link to this, or something, should be right on the homepage of everything immediately, at least for the first few months, just so it can be seen, because that's the first thing they're looking for, right, when there's a change, and so they want to go to the webpage and be able to see that change immediately.

MS. RHODES: All right. Thanks for that, Mark. That sounds good. Does anybody else have anything they want to add? I think we're about a good hour over what I had originally allotted for you all, and, again, I am super apologetic for taking up more time in your day, but I don't know if anybody else wants to make some final comments on this or any other direction, and we can always check back in on this.

I didn't go over the discussion questions with you, but I think you covered many of them, and, if there's something that was missed, I can definitely bring it up tomorrow, as we carry over into other agenda items, but today was really great, guys. I really appreciate all of your insights, and I really appreciate you being here online. It's a different feel, a different experience, but you all have been highly participatory today, and it makes a big difference, and so thank you. I am not seeing any hands raised, and so, Scott, I will turn it over to you, and you can either bring up other things that you might want to discuss or we can adjourn for the day.

MR. BAKER: I think that's fine. We can adjourn. Before we do that, I would just remind folks that, if you have any questions for Dr. Tracey, to email those to Cameron. One of the things that I was just thinking about, quickly, was -- I don't know if he would be willing to share, but any -- How much financial resources have been put towards that effort, either between his program or in terms of contributions, like what percentage, anything like that that he could share, and I guess he hit on some of that during his presentation, some of the Facebook metrics and stuff like that, but it costs money to do that kind of work, and so I was just kind of curious.

MS. RHODES: I would be happy to ask him that question, and so thank you for bringing that up, Scott. If anybody has questions that they want me to pose to Dr. Tracey, please just shoot me an email. Any follow-ups that you want to address, based on the discussion we had today, please don't hesitate to give me a shout, and, again, thank you very much for your time. We really appreciate it.

MR. BAKER: Thanks, Cameron. What time are we starting tomorrow?

MS. RHODES: We're starting at 10:00 tomorrow.

MR. BAKER: Great. I guess we can adjourn then.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed on April 14, 2020.)

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APRIL 15, 2020

WEDNESDAY MORNING SESSION

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The Information & Education Advisory Panel of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council reconvened via webinar on April 15, 2020 and was called to order by Scott Baker.

MS. RHODES: Good morning, and thank you for being here today. We appreciate you being back, and, again, I apologize for how long we went yesterday, but I was really thrilled to see the discussion we had, and it definitely seemed like you all were super engaged and providing lots of recommendations and insight, and so thank you. We really appreciate that.

Before we jump in, I just wanted to point out that we are going to have to elect a Vice Chair at the end of the meeting today, and so, if anybody is interested, you can mull over that and think about whether or not you would like to serve that role. Rich Abrams was our Vice Chair, and, upon his retirement, that role, obviously, went away, and we now have Melissa Crouch, and so thanks, Melissa, for being here, and so just keep that in the back of your mind, in case you might be interested in serving as the Vice Chair.

The I&E AP is really low key. If you have any questions, I would recommend just shooting a quick email over to Scott and asking him how things run, since he's our Chair, but you will have not too much responsibility in that role, other than if Scott is unable to attend a meeting, and you would be able to step in and help facilitate meetings, or you would be a primary contact for reaching out ahead of meetings and planning the agenda and things like that, and so, if you have any additional questions about it, feel free to send me an email while the meeting is ongoing, and we can chat about it a bit further.

On another note, we did not receive any public comment. We solicit public comment two weeks before the meeting and close it the day before the meeting, and there were no public comments via the online public comment form. If anybody who is on the call would like to submit a public comment, we will hold a public comment opportunity toward the end of the meeting, likely after other business, and so stick around if you are interested in providing public comment. With that, Scott, are you ready to go ahead and jump in, and we'll kick everything off with MyFishCount?

MR. BAKER: That sounds great, Cameron.

MS. RHODES: All right, and so BeBe Harrison, who is the staff lead for MyFishCount, is going to give us a presentation.

MS. HARRISON: Thank you, Cameron, and, although I work with an app, I am very technologically challenged, and so Cameron has graciously agreed to help me with presenting this today, and so thanks a million. The MyFishCount app is really still considered a pilot project, and we are wrapping up the third year of this pilot project this year. It was originally designed as a one-year pilot project, but it has gone on a little longer, and so, around September, we will be transitioning this app back over to the Angler Action Foundation, or the parent of that iAngler at the top of the logo.

Within the app, it is a voluntary reporting app for recreational anglers, and, like I said, this is the final year for the pilot stage of this before we turn it back over, and it was designed as a response to anglers asking for a way to provide valuable information directly to fishery managers, and you can log information about your fish, both kept and released, into the app, and you can use it as

your own personal log, to discover your own trends and patterns, and it's got some really cool features that will help you become -- It will really sharpen your skills as an angler, but one of the new things that we have just done, in addition to a fantastic new weather feature on it, is we have opened this app up now to be able to use all across the states of the South Atlantic, and so, from the mountains to the sea, you can log any fish that you catch, and that will promote retention in the app, and so having people have the ability to log fish wherever they are in the state and keep track of that as their own personal logbook, which is great.

The council is still considering an electronic reporting requirement for certain species, and it is not something that's an immediate, but it is still on the table, and so that is one of the reasons that we are looking so closely at the MyFishCount app, but, like I said, it will be turned over to the Angler Action Foundation in the fall of 2020. They were very interested, and there are a lot of fishing apps out there, but they were very interested in making sure that the data they collected would be valid and valuable and able to be validated, so the fishery managers could actually use that.

The design of the app was very specific, and, anytime we make changes or update the app, we make sure that it is something that is going to be effective for all that are using it, for the anglers as well as for science, and, currently, we are trying to finalize those details of the transfer.

The improvements that I was mentioning, the new weather feature is phenomenal, and I've had several people actually tell me the weather feature is better than any of the weather apps they have on their phone. Even if they don't fish, they're telling their friends to use this weather feature, and it's got some great -- It will give you weather alerts, and it gives you the forecast, and it gives you the marine moon phases and tides. It's pinging off of buoys, off of ships, off of fixed locations, and it's really extensive.

Now, when you submit your trip, if you don't want to keep track of how the weather was, to help with your log, twenty-four to forty-eight hours after you close a trip, there is a weather stamp that's put on your trip, and so it will tell you what the weather was like, and so, if you fish -- If you like to fish overcast conditions, this will tell you if that was the case.

There's a new tally screen for your catch log, and we have streamlined that design for how you log your fish into there, and you can do a quick log, where, if you catch multiple of a species, and let's say you're out and you catch five or six dolphin, and you can log them all at once, and then there's a regular logging component. If you don't close your trip, there is reminders now that will go out to help you remember to close those trips, and then, like I said, the range has expanded to cover the entire state, and so, if you live in the upstate and you fish for stripers, and then you have a boat down on the coast that you go offshore with your friends, you can log everything within the app.

We have tried to do as much outreach as I could possibly cram into my schedule, and Cameron can attest to that, but, unfortunately, we've come to a screeching halt, because of all the conditions that are out there now, but I'm anxious to be able to get back, because I really think that the in-person outreach has such a great success, and so we've gone to -- West Marine has been very helpful in letting us partner with them, and Boaters Exchange in Florida, and several tackle shops that we've had events and just set up tables at the front, and we've been to ICAST.

The state events that they've had, and Georgia CoastFest was great, and the South Carolina DNR one got cancelled, unfortunately, and the ASA Sportfishing Industry Summit, which was amazing, and we made some great connections there and got some great partnerships set up and established at that event, and then North Carolina and South Carolina both did an in-state sportfishing industry summit, again making great connections and spreading the word, and the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, and we've presented on both the fisheries track and the I&E track.

At that point, we were not -- We did not have it spread across freshwater, and so we didn't have the ear of as many people as I had hoped, but we have -- We are turning that table, and so now we've got some support all across the states, and it's just growing, and so we are increasing the participation.

We have made visits to fishing clubs, and we've done podcasts and radio shows, and the RBBF State Marketing Workshop, and we actually helped sponsor that, and we connected with Fishbrain at that event, who is also a fish-reporting app that we spoke with, and I think that could be a great partnership down the road, if we can get tied in with them, and then one of the best events that we joined with was the George Poveromo National Saltwater Seminar Series.

They do those every year, and they pick a trail down the east coast, and I think there's a few on the Gulf in Florida, but we picked the four locations that were within the South Atlantic region, and we have been really, really pleased with the outcome of that, because those particular events are a pay event, and so those anglers are paying to go and hear what he says, and they are -- George Poveromo is amazing, and he brings in nationally-recognized anglers as well as local guys and women, and so there's a lot of buy-in into what he says and what he brings, and so, when he says to go outside and look at the MyFishCount table, and this is a photo right here from that, and they did. They came out, and they downloaded the app, and they wanted to see what we were about, and it's been a huge, huge success for that, for MyFishCount.

For our outreach planning for 2019 and into 2020, we developed an information kit, or packet, outreach packet, and we updated the website, and we created a Facebook page and an Instagram page, and we have the MyFishCount Message, which is a monthly update with incentives that I will talk about in a second, and the training toolkit video update -- I am still fighting with some of those, but we do have two tutorials up now on the weather feature and how to create a profile to get started. The how to log your catch is coming, and I have a few versions, but, before I put that out on our webpage, I want to make sure it's just right. I am also going to be, on a side note, doing an Instagram live, which I have not done before, on Thursday on how to log your catch, and so I'm going to try and get some attendance at that.

We are working with the states' R3, showing that the MyFishCount tool could be a tool for recruitment and retention, and maybe even reactivation, in some aspects, and so, if you've got new anglers that are learning how to fish, if you get them set up with MyFishCount and being able to log, because we've always talked about having logbooks as a tool to help new anglers, and so this is just an electronic way for them to do that, but incorporating it in with what the states are already doing is one of the things that I'm shooting for. I'm working with industry partners and those big outreach events, which clearly have slowed, but we're hopeful to get back on there. I will touch base on that incentives in a moment.

The information kit that I was mentioning, there's going to be -- We'll show you a sample on what's attached at the end of this presentation, and it's going to have some how-tos, and it will have a news article about the MyFishCount, testimonies and quotes, and it will have images, images like Instagram posts and things like that that individual industry folks, or state folks, are going to be able to share on their site as well, and then, if you want to click on the black screen, I will show a little video. All of those individuals were saying that my fish count, and so do yours, and so that's the message that we're trying to get out, is having anglers understand that they have a voice.

Here is the new website design, and we have worked with Elemental Methods, and they have been very responsive and very helpful for getting that website and some of the other components, even the app and the website, to look really sleek and to make sure that things are updated in a timely manner and everything is current. We have some little features on there, and one of the great things on this website is it has the social media feed, and so, even if you don't have an Instagram or Facebook account, you can go to the website and scroll to the bottom and see the most current things that are coming up on social media, and so we are doing some contests and things like that.

On Instagram, we just started, and I think it was right before Christmas, or right after Christmas, and so they are new, but they are growing, and that's one of the places where we are using some of the things that you all were talking about yesterday with influencers and social media, and I know we were talking about incentives yesterday, and I think Mark was talking about that, and so those are some of the things that we are doing or trying to use, and so, for our monthly message that we send out via Constant Contact, we kind of drive people to the social media site, and we don't -- The Angler Action Foundation has been very helpful in letting us partner with them and use them to be our way to distribute an incentive, so that it's not really tied to the council, and so, when a company partners with us, we give them a month, and so, right now, ZMan Baits is partnering with us, and so they are promoting MyFishCount on their feed, and we are promoting them on ours.

Now, we can't say log as many fish as you can and be entered, or the one with the most -- We have to be careful, so that the data is not skewed, and so all of the incentives are really focused on sharing the information and getting more people to see what it is, and so, right now, the incentive is to tag MyFishCount and tag a friend and use the hashtag #myfishcount on one of their posts, and so sometimes it's show us your favorite thing in your tackle box, and sometimes it might be tag three friends, and so everything is really driven to kind of spread the word, instead of making people log a trip that might not exist. We have to be very careful in how we word those incentives, and then, at the end of the month, we do a random drawing for whatever that sponsor has given.

Some of the partners that we've had so far are Gilz Performance Apparel, Angling Women and Old Bridge Outfitters, and that's that one in the top bubble, and then *Saltwater Sportsmen Magazine*, which has been amazing, Engel Coolers, ZMan, and then Plano is going to be coming up here shortly, and so, the *Saltwater Sportsmen Magazine*, I'm just going to touch base on them really quickly.

Right now, they are offering, for people that download the app, you can get a free three-month trial subscription just for downloading the app. Once you download it, that Sunday following, you will get an email with a link to be able to get those three free magazines. Now, for the people that

were already signed up, we have a survey going on right now, and, once you complete the survey, you will get that same opportunity, so that everybody is covered.

Engel coolers was our March incentive, and we just gave that away, and the fellow that won that has already posted photos with it, using it, and so it's been very good to get these partners recognized and to have the support.

The survey that I mentioned, we revisited a 2018 survey that was conducted by Erin Spencer, because we wanted to make sure that we had something to compare. The MyFishCount team worked together to develop the current survey, to make sure that we could build on her efforts, and it really is focusing on factors affecting the recruitment and retention of app users.

One of the things that we really noticed, and this was mentioned yesterday too, is anglers being influenced by peers, and so, like Mark was saying, and somebody else was saying, about in the Keys, about captains and people that are using the descending devices and kind of pressuring other people to use it, and so that's kind of the same mentality that we're thinking about for here, and this is -- One of our app users is a captain, at the top of this photo as well, and he's been super helpful in spreading the word and telling his clients what he's doing, kind of in the same fashion as the best practices, but we will compare both surveys, so that we can just see how it has progressed.

It was just recently distributed, and then the data will be analyzed and compared in-house, and it was distributed via Survey Monkey, which we don't recommend. We did struggle with that a little bit, and then, like I said, there was an incentive offered, because new sign-ups are able to get that three-month subscription, and, those that were already in the program, we wanted to offer them that same thing, and we had to have a way to do that, and so, once you complete the survey, you are emailed a link to be able to get those free magazines. In addition to that, *Saltwater Sportsmen Magazine* has offered a one-year subscription, and so you don't have to enter any financial information to get those three free magazines, but, if you would like to buy a year subscription, they're offering it for five-bucks, which is amazing, and so they have been very, very supportive of it as well.

This is what we've sent out to the folks that are new users and those that complete the survey. These are the main players in that, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the Angler Action Foundation, and then it is through a NOAA Fisheries grant, and so I just wanted to kind of give a nod to them, and those are the three big players, and there is tons and tons of other people and other logos that I could throw up there that have gone into contributing, but these are the main ones.

Then how you can help is even -- I know a lot of you probably know about MyFishCount, but actually downloading it and using it would be a tremendous help, and, once you use it a few times, and spreading the word to your peers, we would love to have you use that and see you use it consistently, and we do have some fellows that do that, and we appreciate it. I would love to -- Once we get back out of this, when we have large events, where we can attend, I would love to have suggestions on really fishing-specific events that this would be a good fit, and so, if you have something in your state that you recommend, once things are back on the schedule and back on the calendar, I would love to hear it.

The fishing industry partners, we have such a huge number of industry partners, sportfishing industry partners, within the South Atlantic, and would love to be able to use all local folks, but, if you have folks that you think would be a good fit, and would be in agreement with the message, I would love to hear them, for some future MyFishCount monthly messages.

Then sharing the information on social media platforms, we post two or three times a week, and we would love for you to share that on your own pages, and then, any additional input that you have, I would be happy to hear it, and these two fellows did a little clip for me. These are two of our council members who were gracious enough to let me film them, and, yes, I get a lot of posts and feedback from them and information, and they've been great supporters, but, any information or suggestions, I am very excited to hear what you have to say and to try new things. Like I said, we have a short time to work on this, and I'm trying to kind of throw everything I've got at it.

The packet is going to be sent to industry partners as well as state agencies and folks that are interested, and these are just examples -- The full-color logo is at the top, but these are examples that she is scrolling through, and they are examples of social media posts. They're simple, and they have a message, and they have a request, a call to action, if you will, and they're just -- We just are trying to get people engaged and make sure that they have some best practices kind of information, and then we've got the article that describes what the project is.

It's got a lot of background information and things that are important to the actual project, and we will also, in the packet -- We've sent out a few of the simple packets, and we will also be including the tutorials, and we will have some frequently-asked questions that we'll have attached to that as well, and so that packet will go out, and I'm still working on the best way to send that packet out right now, and it's looking like a link to a folder, and then it will have everything in there that you can take and use for your own social media accounts or for your newsletter or something like that. That's all I have for you, and I will be happy to answer any questions.

MS. RHODES: Great. Thanks, BeBe.

MS. SANDOVAL: I just wanted to know -- Like what's the official hashtag on that? Is it #myfishcount, I'm guessing?

MS. HARRISON: Yes, we use #myfishcount, but we also use #logyourcatch, #makeyourcatchcount, and sometimes I will do #myfishcountandsodoyours, but Cameron tells me that's too long.

MS. SANDOVAL: Okay. Cool. I just wanted to know, just for letting people know.

MS. HARRISON: #myfishcount is the one that we normally use to check to see if people are entered into a drawing, and so we'll search that at the end of the month and see how many people have used it, and then we'll put those names into the hat.

MR. PHELPS: I have several things, I guess, and I will try not to take up too much time. From a high level, and this is for all states, obviously, and, for those other states outside of South Carolina that is having some form of recording it's great, but, for us as charter captains in South Carolina, we're required to use the VESL app, and so I guess my question is I install this, and I looked at

this a day or so ago, but, if I record a charter log, a report for a charter vessel, and it's also logged in VESL, is that going to count as redundant information from two different agencies?

MS. HARRISON: It's my understanding that there are safeguards in place to prevent that, but that's above my knowledge level, but, Cameron, if I'm right, but Chip has worked that out, so they are not double counted, and do you know if that's correct?

MS. RHODES: That was used predominantly for the red snapper seasons, when this was initially launched, and I do believe that those structures are still in place, but it just requires a little bit of cleaning of the data, and that's my understanding, but the initial plan for this app is for it to be for private recreational anglers, as opposed to for-hire guys like you, Mark.

Since the federal for-hire amendment is finally coming down the pipe, we are likely going to see all federally-permitted fishermen in the South Atlantic reporting electronically, and that will begin likely in September, and so that duplication will certainly be more of a concern then, and I'm positive that that will be worked out, if it hasn't already. I know that it was being worked out for those red snapper seasons, and so there is something in place, but the situation likely will flesh out that charter captains will not necessarily be asked to use MyFishCount, and they will be asked to primarily use their reporting method, which you've been doing for years and years.

MR. PHELPS: Right, and I was just kind of bringing that back up, because this is a good app as well, but it's kind of redundant in some form, but I think making this more towards the recreational or whatever would be better, probably.

MS. HARRISON: Mark, the part that I'm concerned with is if you take somebody, and they have the app, and not necessarily saying that you're recording it, but, if you're recording your own trip, and then you've got a guy on the boat that has the app, and we track it, that would be more my concern, but, like I said, there are some safeguards in place for that, and I'm just not familiar enough with them to --

MS. RHODES: BeBe, John Carmichael has his hand raised, and so go ahead, John, whenever you're ready.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I was going to say the concern of double-counting isn't a big concern, because, as the programs exist now, MyFishCount isn't used for generating any of the official catch estimates. The catch estimates from the private come from MRIP, and the catch estimates from the charter and for-hire come from those reporting programs in the future, and charter, right now, will continue to come from the MRIP charter boat survey.

What MyFishCount really offers is quite a bit of additional information on things like the discarding of fish, the use of descending devices, more detailed information on locations of where fishing is occurring, and the MRIP relies on a pretty big area, from three to 200 miles, to capture the offshore fishery.

It's a little bit more refined approach towards defining target species and how you fish, and so all of those things together we pretty much consider ancillary information that helps us get more content out of the general MRIP data, and that's for the here and now, in the present and in the next few years, but where we're really hoping this goes, in the future, is there are techniques out

there that allow things like MyFishCount voluntary reporting to function within a general survey framework like the current MRIP program, and so what we would really like to see is this become something that provides some additional content and can be used to refine those MRIP estimates, and that's actually why MyFishCount has been extended for us, was to -- In this realm, to think about what it takes to get people into a program and get them to participate, because, if we're going to use this on a broader scale and use it to improve the MRIP survey, we've got to deal with some of those basic building blocks upfront. I appreciate that question, and that is a really big point, and I don't think people really understand where this kind of information fits within the other sources of catch estimates.

MS. HARRISON: Great. Thanks, John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: You're welcome.

MR. PHELPS: That's a good answer for that. Thank you, guys, very much. The other thing, BeBe, is I would be happy to work with you, like outside of this meeting, personally, in the next week or so if you want, and just I did mine on the Android version of the app, and there's several fields that could like use some tidying up, as far as like it doesn't really show you that drop-down and that kind of thing, but that's kind of -- We could do the details outside of this meeting, and I would be happy to work with you on some of those things that I found, to make it more user-friendly.

MS. HARRISON: Thanks. That would be perfect. I will holler at you.

MR. PHELPS: Just let me know. One thing I did have a question on, and this is just -- It has a feature where it's kind of requiring you to have your location turned on, and it really likes to have your location on, in order to -- That seems to be a negative, in my opinion, for a couple of reasons. One, being kind of driving all over the place, going out in the ocean and going through the bay somewhere, you lose reception on your phone, and you're going to run your battery down, being required to have that on and to be able to log a catch, like actively during the trip, as opposed to sitting at home and saying this is what I did today, and so that seems to be a negative for that.

The other thing is I'm not a very proponent, and I don't know if you guys know this or not, but I never, as a charter captain, never turn my GPS location on when I'm taking any kind of photo for a picture for a fish, and the reason is I have this is, several times a year in the last couple of years, but twelve-year-old kids sit at home and look on social media, and look on any picture they can find, and they're able to right-click and look at the information on that photo and tell exactly, to the GPS coordinate, where that fish was caught.

I have done some tests with this, and I have caught a fish in a bay, in a cove, and taken the picture with the GPS locator on, and, when I went back and looked at it, I could tell which side of the cove I was in from the picture, and so I tend to never do that, and I have kids that tell me all the time that they look all week at pictures online and write down GPS coordinates and put it in their dad's GPS and tell them, Dad, these are the ten places that we're going on Saturday morning, and so that's one thing to like maybe we should back off of that a little bit, although I realize the value of the location is important, and I'm not sure how to get around that.

MS. HARRISON: You can access your data that you enter, and you can see the photos, but other people are not able to see the photos unless I contact you and say, may I use a photo in a monthly message, and so there's not any risk, really, for that, and then, on the location, you can -- If you don't have your location on, you can drop a pin where you are, or when you get back you can drop the pin, and just don't close the trip, and you can edit your trip. You can put it in the area where you were fishing and not have it be my location at this moment.

MR. PHELPS: Okay.

MS. HARRISON: Does that make sense?

MR. PHELPS: Yes, I understand.

MS. HARRISON: Again, other people -- There will not be anything -- At least three anglers have to report within I think it's a two-square-mile, two or three-square-mile, area before anything is really shown, and so it's a very small chance of anybody getting any information like that from MyFishCount, and it's really just for the fishery managers to see, so that we know what locations to protect and to be thinking about and that kind of thing, and so everything is kept confidential, and it's not like one of the iAngler tournament apps, where you're kind of competing against other people. This is really for you and for science.

MR. PHELPS: Okay, because I've seen some of these apps where ten people fish in an area, and now everybody knows to fish that area, and they all just go there, and so I wasn't sure how that was different, and that's my fault for not knowing as much about the app.

MS. HARRISON: That's okay. I appreciate you checking it out. Any other hands, Cameron?

MS. RHODES: It looks like that's it, and we're going to go ahead and jump into citizen science stuff. Thanks, BeBe.

MS. HARRISON: Thank you.

MS. BYRD: Hi, everyone. I am Julia Byrd, for those of you I may not have had an opportunity to meet yet, and I am the Citizen Science Program Manager for the South Atlantic Council, and so I'm just going to give a quick presentation, to give an overview of what's been happening in the Citizen Science Program since you guys met last January, and then I'm going to turn things over to Allie Iberle, who is the Project Coordinator for one of our pilot projects, FISHstory, and she is going to walk you through a demonstration of that project, and then that project will be launching soon, and so we're hoping to kind of pick your brains a little bit and get your input on how best to kind of promote that project.

The first thing I wanted to give you guys a quick update on was what's been going on on a programmatic level with the South Atlantic Council's Citizen Science Program, and, since you all met in January last year, we've had a lot going on. The first thing I wanted to mention is, in March of last year, the Citizen Science Association held a conference called CitSci 2019, and the South Atlantic Council had a team that led a symposium at this conference, kind of highlighting our efforts to develop the council's Citizen Science Program, and we had members from each of the

Citizen Science Action Teams kind of help present, and Scott Baker was one of the folks who graciously gave his time and presented at this conference.

It was a really wonderful conference, and a lot of people came to our symposium, and it was really well received, and then I think it was really invaluable for kind of folks from the council's team to go to this, because we were able to meet folks who work in citizen science in a variety of a different fields, working on a variety of different kind of natural resource issues, people at the Forest Service, people at EPA, and so we really were able to make some connections that have been helpful as we've been trying to kind of build the program and move it forward.

We've also been working on kind of a program evaluation, and we've been working with Rick Bonney and Jennifer Shirk, who have been -- We've been really lucky to have them involved in the development of our program, and they are kind of our citizen science gurus, and they have been working with us over the past several years, and, on this evaluation, we're also working with our Operations Committee, which is one of the Citizen Science Advisory Panels, and so we're working to develop kind of draft programmatic level objectives, strategies, and indicators of success that will go the council for their review and input in June, and then, after kind of getting those, getting feedback from the council on those, we'll be putting together kind of options for kind of an overall program evaluation plan.

We have two primary Citizen Science Advisory Panel teams, and one is this Operations Committee that I just mentioned, and they are responsible for kind of overseeing kind of policies and procedures for the program, and they have met via webinar multiple times over the last year, and then we also formed the Citizen Science Projects Advisory Committee last year, and they met for the first time in October, and this group is basically made up of representatives from each of the council's advisory panels, and they provide kind of feedback on updating our research priorities and also providing insights on kind of volunteer engagement, as well as serving as ambassadors for the program.

We also did a number of presentations for various council advisory panel meetings in the spring and in the fall, and then there are a couple of presentations that I wanted to mention that were outside of that, and the first was in May of last year, the Council Coordinating Committee meeting, which is basically leadership from all of the councils across the country, and they met here in Charleston, and the South Atlantic Council was able to put together kind of a presentation on several things going on within the council, and citizen science was one of the things that we highlighted in our presentation, and we got a lot of great feedback and interest from other councils in the program.

In June of last year, we also presented and served on a panel discussion for the Federal Community of Crowdsourcing in Citizen Science group, and, basically, they had a meeting that focused on how citizen science can impact kind of policy and decision-making, and so we presented on the development of our program and kind of served on the panel discussion, and then Allie Iberle, who will be chatting with you all in a few minutes about the FISHstory project, actually gave a presentation on FISHstory to the South Carolina Marine Educators Association last fall.

We have also been working on a *Bioscience* manuscript with Rick Bonney, and he's been kind of leading the charge on this, and the paper really goes into kind of marine citizen science and citizen

science in the kind of marine fisheries world, and then it talks a lot about the development of the council's program, and we submitted it last summer, and we're working on revising it this year.

We also worked to update our citizen science research priorities, and I will show those to you guys in just a second, but these priorities are really important to the program, because they really guide what projects the council will kind of pursue or support, and so those were reviewed and adopted by the council in December. We are also putting together a symposium with folks from NOAA that should hopefully take place at this year's American Fisheries Society meeting, assuming that it's still going to happen in late August, and what this symposium is focusing on is kind of how citizen science and other kind of non-traditional data sources can be better incorporated into fisheries management and stock assessment, and so we're hoping to get a lot of kind of interesting presentations from across the country at that symposium.

We have also done a number of kind of promotional and outreach events. Last year, the council's Citizen Science Program was featured at our ICAST booth, and then we participated in Georgia CoastFest and a North Carolina fishing industry summit last year, and we have also developed a number of kind of programmatic outreach materials, and Cameron, especially, and the rest of kind of our outreach team has been really helpful in developing these.

We now have a citizen science brochure, and there's a citizen science corner article in our quarterly newsletters, and we also have something called CitSciFri, where we try to post information on a variety of different citizen science projects every Friday through our social media accounts, and we're putting together an email distribution list, and we'll be sending, distributing, an annual report by the end of the month.

One other thing that I wanted to mention too that we are kind of doing this month is April is kind of global citizen science month, and so this month we're doing kind of extra social media posts that are kind of highlighting some of the volunteers who are working with us on some of our pilot projects, as well as kind of other happenings and activities in the program, and so, if any of you guys follow the council on Twitter or Instagram or Facebook, please check those out, because we really -- We're really highlighting some wonderful people who have been kind of instrumental in the development of our program and providing data for some of our projects.

Quickly here, I just wanted to show -- This is the list of the updated citizen science research priorities. I am not going to walk through them in any detail, but I wanted you guys to kind of have them in the briefing book. Again, these are the topics where we'll kind of support projects or pursue projects, and we're always looking for partners and collaborators, and so, if you or anyone you all know are interested in pursuing projects that cover any of these topics, we would love to talk with you about those.

That's a quick programmatic-level update, and then now I want to give you a quick update on some of the projects that we have underway now and about some of the projects and collaborations that we are working to develop, and so, first, I want to talk about a couple of projects that are under development now.

The first one is kind of this rare species observations, and we have partnered with both UNC, NOAA Fisheries, SECOORA, and the University of Tasmania, and so what we're trying to do with this project is to develop an app or a website where folks who are on the water, whether

they're fishermen, divers, anyone else kind of out on the water, can report kind of rare-event species, with the idea that that may help serve as an early warning system for shifting species. We worked to put together a prospectus, and we submitted that to a funding group, Lenfest, in January of this year. We didn't end up getting funding, and so we're looking for other opportunities that could potentially fund that project.

The next project I wanted to mention is one that is working with recreational divers to get observations for data-limited species, and so we're partnering with REEF and SECOORA on this one, and so what this would try to do is get recreational divers to collect information on the length of some kind of data-limited species down in the Florida Keys as a pilot, and so we're concentrating on things like several of the grouper species, hogfish, some parrotfish, and the idea is that getting some of this length information could provide information on the health of a population, kind of in between when there are assessments on several of these species.

Chip Collier kind of led the effort for putting this grant together, and a proposal was submitted to the Coral Reef Conservation Program in January, and we're waiting to hear back on that, and then the third kind of project that I wanted to mention is a series of participatory workshops that we're doing that focus on the dolphin wahoo fishery. These workshops are being -- We are collaborating with the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, and, in particular, Mandy Karnauskas and Matt McPherson, and those guys did a series of workshops in the Gulf in 2019 that focused on the West Florida Shelf snapper grouper fishery, and kind of these participatory workshops -- What they're trying to do is kind of bring fishermen and other folks in fishing communities together to kind of develop a conceptual model of what is going on in the fishery.

What I mean by that is they want to kind of get, from the fishermen and from the fishing communities, kind of the major factors that they think are affecting their fishery, what the people kind of value in that fishery, what risks they see to the fishery, and so it's concentrating not on just kind of the biological information, but also kind of the socioeconomic piece, and so Mandy and Matt were really interested in bringing this series of workshops to the South Atlantic, and so they reached out to us, and we kind of chatted with them and suggested that they focus on the dolphin wahoo fishery kind of here in the South Atlantic.

There is kind of very different perceptions of what's going on in the fishery if you talk to someone in the Florida Keys, versus if you talk to someone in the Carolinas or in Virginia, and so the council is planning to take kind of action, management actions, for the dolphin wahoo fishery, and so we thought this would be a great opportunity to kind of provide information on kind of how the fisheries work kind of down in the Keys and in the Carolinas, and you can compare those differences, and we thought that information would be really helpful to provide to the council as they are talking about dolphin and wahoo management.

We held a series of workshops in North Carolina and Virginia at the beginning of March, and, tentatively, we're scheduled to hold workshops in the Florida Keys this summer, but, of course, that has kind of been put on hold, based on kind of the COVID issues that are going on, and so we're still hopeful that, once things get back to normal, we will kind of plan the workshops down in the Florida Keys, and then this information can be provided to the council kind of late this year, at perhaps their December meeting.

Now I wanted to kind of quickly walk through a couple of the projects that we have underway now, and the first one is the SAFMC Scamp Release project, and this is a project where we worked with scientists and fishermen to develop an app to collect information on discards, or released fish, and the app that was developed is called SAFMC Release, and it's being pilot tested now to collect information on released scamp grouper.

Last January, when you guys met, we were still kind of beta testing the app, and the app launched last June, and this app is really specific in trying to collect information where there is a data gap on released fish, and we wanted to collect information on the size of released fish, the location of the released fish, the depth those fish were caught, and then whether there were things like barotrauma reduction devices, and did someone use a descending device to release a fish, did they vent the fish before they released it, that sort of thing.

Right now, we are continuing to work on kind of recruitment and retention of commercial, for-hire, and recreational fishermen to participate in the program, and there's also been a lot of interest in other organizations when we were developing the app. Many folks have kind of the same issue, where they need to collect more information on released fish, in order to kind of help with management decisions, and so North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries kind of approached us last year, and they are actually kind of taking our release app and developing it into their own app called Catch You Later, to collect information on recreationally-released flounder.

We recently worked with North Carolina DMF to put together a proposal, and we'll be receiving funding probably in the next month or so to kind of combine our SAFMC Release app with North Carolina DMF's Catch You Later app, so there's this single, flexible kind of app that can collect information on released fish that can be customized for other kind of state or federal agencies that need to collect this sort of information. What this grant will also do is -- Right now, this app is only collecting information on scamp, and, by the end of the year, we hope to be able to be collecting information on all shallow-water grouper, and the funding for this grant will allow us to do that.

We also submitted a proposal to do a series of what we're calling outdoor writer media tours, to help promote the app, and so the idea is that we would charter a fishing trip and take outdoor writers out on the trip and kind of target scamp and show them how to use the app, talk about why it's important, and also talk about kind of best practices and use of descending devices, that sort of thing, and that grant was submitted in November, and we're still waiting to hear back. The data collected through the app is going to be submitted for review at the SEDAR 68, which is the scamp stock assessment that is going on right now, and we're also working with a College of Charleston student, who is going to be kind of reviewing user perceptions of the app.

The second project that's underway now that we're participating in is one that kind of Cameron mentioned yesterday, and the Nature Conservancy is taking the lead, and we're also working with Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, the National Marine Sanctuary Foundation, Georgia Sea Grant, Georgia DNR, and FishSmart, and so Andy Loftus, who presented to you all yesterday, is kind of a part of this grant as well.

Basically, what this grant does is it's trying to kind of increase awareness of Gray's Reef among recreational anglers and to encourage and promote the use of best fishing practices for deepwater species, in particular the use of descending devices, and then also to promote collaboration through

kind of citizen science efforts to help fill data gaps, and so this project did a series of kind of focus groups last spring, and then we are hoping to do a series of what we're calling fishing learning exchanges this spring, and we were able to host a couple of meetings in March, in Brunswick, but then kind of things got put on hold with COVID, and so, once things get back to normal, we will be kind of trying to get more kind of descending devices into anglers hands and hosting some of these fishery learning exchanges in the future.

Then the last project that I wanted to touch on is the FISHstory project, and I will give you a quick update on this, and then I'll turn things over to Allie Iberle, who is the Project Coordinator and has really been leading the efforts on this project. The FISHstory project is kind of a pilot project, where we're hoping to use kind of historic for-hire fishing photos to document catches and length estimates from kind of fish caught on these trips back from the 1940s to 1970s, and this is kind of prior to when catch monitoring programs got underway.

Since you all -- I think you got an update on this project at your meeting last January, but, since then, we have kind of hired Allie, who has really taken charge and is leading the efforts on this project, and we also have a project design team that has formed, and so this is a group of scientists and fishermen and outreach specialists that are working together to develop the project.

The photos for this project are being provided by Rusty Hudson, who is a retired commercial and recreational fisherman out of Daytona Beach, Florida, and all of these photos are from his family's fishing fleet in the Daytona Beach area, and so this project kind of has two components. The first component is we're trying to get information on kind of what species they were catching back in the 1940s to 1970s and to see if the species they were catching kind of changed over time, and, to do that, we are using crowdsourcing.

We have hundreds and hundreds of photos, and so we want to use kind of the power of the crowd to help us analyze this data, and so, to do this, we have created a project in Zooniverse, which is an online crowdsourcing platform that allows you to kind of upload your photos to a website, and you can design tutorials and training materials so that kind of members of the public can help you analyze the photos, and, in our case, we're asking members of the public to help us count and identify the fish in the photos.

We also have a validation team that's made up of fishermen and scientists to help kind of verify the species identifications that are being made by citizen scientists when they analyze these photos, and so, right now, we are beta testing the project in Zooniverse, and so we have some of their kind of gold-star volunteers testing it out and providing us feedback, and we're also working on kind of our communication plan and getting promotional materials together, and we're hoping to launch this later in May.

Then the second piece of this project is to collect information on the length of fish in these photos, and what we're trying to do is use the kind of two-by-fours, or two-by-sixes, where the fish are hanging as a scale to get an estimate of the actual fish length in the photos, and so, right now, what we're trying to do is to develop kind of a method to do this, and we're going to test it out on king mackerel, and then, if the method proves successful, we want to expand it to other species that you see in the photos, and so, that way, we'll be able to look at things as kind of the size of fish back in the 1940s and 1950s and 1960s, and we can see if there have been any changes in the size of

fish over time. That's a quick overview of the project, and now I want to turn things over to Allie Iberle, and she's going to do a demonstration of the project within Zooniverse.

MS. RHODES: Allie, before you get started, I see that we've got a hand raised from Patricia Smith.

MS. SMITH: I just had a question, and I know you said that these photos were coming from Florida, and North Carolina DMF has a ton of those types of old photos sitting in our office, in files, and is that something that could be of use to you?

MS. BYRD: I think that will definitely be a -- We would love to kind of talk with you more about those. I think one thing that we've found out -- We have kind of presented this to kind of some of our advisory panels too, and it seems like there are pockets of these types of photos in many different places, within headboat or charter businesses, within state agencies, and so, right now, we're kind of pilot testing our methods, to make sure we can use kind of crowdsourcing to analyze the photos and that we can get good length measurements. Right now, we're not soliciting kind of new photos, but we're trying to keep a list of who may have pockets of these photos, so that, in the future, we can work to get photos from different geographic areas along the coast to analyze.

MS. SMITH: Okay. Thanks.

MS. BYRD: Thanks, Patricia, and so I may follow-up with you on this afterwards, or Allie or I will, just to touch base and kind of get more information on the photos that you all may have.

MS. SMITH: Okay. All right.

MS. IBERLE: As Julia mentioned earlier, we're using this crowdsourcing platform called Zooniverse, and this is a project that we've built within Zooniverse. This is our main page that kind of helps to hook the user and really get them interested in our project, and it gives you a little bit of a description of what you're going to be doing, a cool dashboard that gives you specs on how the project is going, a nice quote from Rusty, and then, again, some more background information and links to learn more about the council and the project.

The project incorporates a lot of information in the about section, and so we created an about section, and it really goes over all of the details of the project, about the photos, how the project got started, and then a little bit about the council, because we're catering to kind of a different audience, not just the fishing realm, and so we're catering more to this overall Zooniverse crowd, people who may just be interested in classifying these photos, and so we give a little information about us and the Citizen Science Program.

Then we also go into a little bit more behind the photos, and so the location, where they were fishing, and then the captains and vessels, and so I don't want to go through all of this, and it's a lot of information, but we have worked to really put this together, to give people an opportunity to dig deep into the photos and learn a little bit more about what's behind them, and then, as the user goes through the project, the classify tab is where they're actually going to be collecting data.

In this tab, they're going to be shown a photo, and they're able to zoom in and pan around, and then they will be given a series of tools, and these are kind of like point-and-shoot tools, where

you can click on the photo, to identify the fish, and we have separated the fish out into kind of two main groups, and so species that we see often and in pretty large numbers in the photo, and then so the most common species, and then the less common species.

We gave you this point-and-shoot tool for the most common species, to help you keep track, because, when you've got fifty fish to identify, you can lose track of where you are counting pretty easily, and so those species are red snapper, amberjack, which is greater, lesser, and almaco, king mackerel, and then all the grouper species. The grouper species, you are given an opportunity to identify down to the three main species that we have seen in the photoset.

I do want to back up one second, and I know Julia mentioned the training materials, and, as we're catering to a little different of an audience that may not be as well versed in fish identification, we have built in some really great training materials. There is a tutorial that will pop up the first time the user enters the workflow, and this kind of just walks you through the directions on how to complete this workflow. It makes sure that you know how to work the site, and it gives you a little bit of information on these most common species, where to get more help, because, obviously, you're only provided a small picture.

Then what to do if you find an obstructed fish, gathering information on anglers, to help kind of calculate a rough effort, and we really wanted to explain why we're having them count these anglers, and then the less common species, and I will show you that in a little bit more detail in just a moment, and then, again, where to get more training.

This field guide is the bulk of our training materials, and this includes tips and tricks for the basic structure of fish, which, again, if you were well-versed in fish ID, you might not need. However, someone may not be familiar with these terms, and so we wanted to definitely introduce them. Then some things about discoloration and other kind of obstacles that you might see in the photoset, and then we go into detail about really providing some photos and tips and tricks to identify them, along with practice photosets, and so we give you a photo, we zoom in for you, and then we give you the answer, and so it will kind of help you to get more comfortable on fish ID, especially with these specific photos.

Then we tried to find some really good example photos from the photoset that provide images of each individual species and how to compare and eliminate one species from the next, because it can be tricky in real life, and with high-definition color photos, and so it's getting even more difficult here, where you only have black-and-white kind of grainy photos, and so we wanted to try to do our best to help our volunteers really be able to distinguish one species from the next in the photos.

I am going to go back to the workflow, and we've got tools for those obstructed fish, like you saw in the tutorial, and so these photos were meant for memories, to commemorate your trip, and they weren't meant to measure fish, and so, a lot of times, we have fish that are obstructed, and then that angler tool, and so helping us get that rough effort, counting the anglers in the photo, and, again, we don't know if everyone was fishing, and so this is going to be a little bit of a rough calculation.

Once the user clicks next, if we have any marks on the photo, those will carry over, and I can't mark anything right now, because, as Julia said, we're beta testing, and so I don't want to collect

any data, and then you're going to be shown a list of species that you may also encounter in the photo, and so these are seen less seldomly, and in less numbers, and we give you a little bit more information on these species, and so some more photos of them, a description, and then you can identify how many are in each photo.

We also have some filters, and so you can filter by shape, by body shape, and then you can filter by tail shape, and so, again, if you are not well-versed in fish ID, this can help, and these species we just really tried to separate out as things that we still wanted to collect data on, but were less common, and then, after you have identified all the fish, then can click "done". Another really cool feature of Zooniverse is the talk section, and so the talk section really allows us to get in touch with all of the people that are participating on our project.

I have already been communicating back and forth with some of our gold-star volunteers, checking in with them and letting them know how they did, and so it's a really great way to reach out to our users, and then they can also pull photos aside, into collections, and this is cool if a user really likes a certain species, and they can make these collections, and other users can go through and look at these as well.

That's about it for the Zooniverse platform, and I will open it up to anybody who has any questions on this, and I know that was kind of quick and fast, but I wanted to make sure that we had some time, and so does anybody have any questions.

MS. RHODES: I am not seeing any hands raised. Does anyone have any comments they would like to make on the FISHstory project or thoughts or suggestions on ways that we can get this in the hands of people?

MS. BYRD: I was going to say that I know, in the overview, we had some kind of specific questions for you guys, as far as kind of target audiences, and we have been thinking about kind of who may want to use or be willing to volunteer and help us collect this information, and we thought about kind of the general fishing public, scientists, students, and classrooms, and so, if you guys have any suggestions of people we should kind of promote the project to, that would be of interest, or, if you guys have any kind of feedback on kind of any volunteer recruitment approaches that we should use to get volunteers, that would be greatly appreciated.

MS. WEEKS: This project is so cool, and we've really been -- Since we have had to cancel a lot of our public programming this spring, we have kind of been cultivating an audience that I think would be a really good target for this, and so I just wanted to say, whenever you all are ready to roll this out, please just contact us, because we've got kind of a built-in audience of folks that we've been sending other citizen science projects to, just to kind of keep them in the loop and give them things to do, in the absence of our own public programs, and I think this would be right up their alley. These are folks who would normally come to our like naturalist programs, a lot of retirees, a lot of students, and we would be happy to pass this along to them, and I think that they would be a great resource for you all, and they would really enjoy it.

MS. IBERLE: Thank you so much. That's awesome. Yes, we will definitely reach out.

MS. BYRD: I was going to say the exact same thing. If there are other kind of folks who kind of feel the same way as Erin, we would love to hear from you guys, and we're happy to kind of share

information, once we launch, with you guys, to kind of share this information with your kind of audiences.

MS. SANDOVAL: I think this is a great project. I think one way you could make a good demographic for this would be like fishing clubs, like high school fishing clubs, people who are just kind of learning how to fish and learning to identify fish. It makes me feel like -- You know, we get a lot of fishermen here sometimes that get a fish, and then everyone is trying to identify it, and it's almost like a contest to see who can identify it faster, and so I kind of feel like this would be a really good way to present that, almost, like not just educational to fishing clubs or classes or things like that, but also just like little contests, to see how many fish you can identify.

MS. BYRD: I think that's a great idea, to kind of make it a game, or a competition, and I know one thing we had talked about is doing that with maybe -- The American Fisheries Societies have student clubs, and we thought maybe getting a competition between some of those clubs may be a good way to approach this, but making it a game for other people certainly makes sense too, and so thanks for that comment, Cinthia.

MS. SANDOVAL: Yes, and I will forward this on to -- Like we know about three fishing clubs in the area, and so I will forward this to them, and then we also have like elementary and middle and high schools contacting us about tours and whatnot, and usually these schools, because they're coastal, they always have like a week or two that they spend on marine-related science and education, and I think this will be something great for them.

MS. BYRD: Awesome. Thank you.

MR. BAKER: I just wanted to say I thought this was a really great presentation, and I can tell there's been a ton of work going into this, and it looks really sharp. Just thinking about potential partners, at least in North Carolina, and I don't know how broad they are, but there's a network called SCIREN, and it works to get basically science -- Front-line science that's being done at universities into the hands of teachers, to help them develop programs for K through 12 type projects, and so just letting them know about an opportunity like this I think would be a good way to kind of reach some K through 12 audiences.

MS. IBERLE: That sounds awesome. Thank you so much for letting us know about that.

MS. BYRD: Scott, do you have contacts with SCIREN?

MR. BAKER: I personally don't, but it was founded in part through some Sea Grant support, and so I know other people on our staff are well connected with them.

MS. BYRD: All right. We may be following up with you on that. Thanks so much, Scott.

MR. BAKER: Yes.

MR. KELLY: Have you also checked with the International Gamefish Association on old photographs, because they have thousands and thousands of them?

MS. BYRD: We have not yet. Again, I think that's a great suggestion, and kind of a great next step, and we're still not soliciting new photos at this point, because we want to make sure that we get kind of the project up and running in Zooniverse and kind of pilot test it with these photos from Daytona Beach now, but, as the program grows, that's a really great suggestion, and it would be a good group to follow-up with, and do you have contacts there that you may be able to help kind of connect us with?

MR. KELLY: Sure.

MS. BYRD: Awesome. Thank you.

MS. LATANICH: Thanks for that, and I wanted to mention another group that might be interested in helping with this work, and so this is actually a Gulf-based group, but there's the Center for Fishery Electronic Monitoring at Mote Marine Lab in Florida, and this came up because I was at the two national electronic monitoring workshops earlier this year, and there was a presentation from people working at this lab who do kind of an electronic monitoring pilot project in the snapper grouper fishery, and, actually, most of the people who review their video footage are citizen science volunteers, most of who are retirees from the area, and so it's a pretty well-trained and dedicated group, and so just another group of people who might be interested and actually familiar with the species you're identifying.

MS. BYRD: Awesome. Thanks, Katie. I think that's great, and I think that would be a great user base for us to contact, and one other thing that we were remiss in not saying earlier is that the funding for FISHstory has come from NOAA Fisheries, from their Fisheries Information Systems Program, and so just a shout-out to them for supporting this project, and, Katie, thank you for that suggestion to reach out to folks at Mote.

MS. RHODES: Anybody else? I am not seeing any additional hands raised. It looks like we're going to go ahead and transition into our next topic. Thank you.

MS. IBERLE: Thank you, guys, so much for your time.

MS. RHODES: This is our opportunity to really reach out to you and get some ideas from you on what's going on in your neck of the woods, what's happening in your communities, with your agencies, and, as part of this conversation, please feel free to elaborate what's going on with COVID-19 and how you and those you know are being impacted, especially as it relates to fishery issues. This will be the opportunity to kind of flesh out those things, and we also wanted to give you the opportunity to really discuss how we can work for you better, so that we can come up with ways that we can all communicate with each other a bit better, and we did discuss this at our last advisory panel meeting. However, some of the things that we tried to employ didn't really seem to work out well.

When we go through this, I might bring up some things that we had tried initially, and it didn't seem to suit the AP, and so maybe we can come up with some other alternatives for how we can keep each other informed and kind of compile lots of different information coming from all different areas, and this does not have to be an agency-focused discussion.

I still want to hear from everybody on what are some things that we could do as an advisory panel and as council staff to benefit you all, so that we can share messaging and do lots of cross-posting and make sure that everybody is getting all the information and content that they might find useful down the road, because, at the end of the day, I think it's really helpful if we're all just sharing material, because we have many of the same stakeholders, and so, with that, we'll go ahead and jump right into our first discussion question.

This is the same question that we discussed last year, but I still think it's something that we should refresh each other on every year, and so what outreach/education campaigns/initiatives have you and your agency or organization or business been working? What I am going to do is I just ask that you all raise your hand when you want to say something, and we'll go ahead and have you guys weigh-in on these different things that are going on in your neck of the woods, and, again, feel free to chime in on COVID-19-related issues wherever it seems relevant.

MS. MARTINO: Good morning. Regarding this question about what we've been doing, I work for the Caribbean Fishery Management Council, and we were having a really good campaign on sustainable seafood, and we were having meetings with the fishermen, and we had been doing videos for people to understand and learn that there are more species that can be consumed and bought from the fishermen that people don't know about, and we did some videos with some recipes of how to cook these other species, like for people to see it, and like for instance lionfish, but, after this situation started -- Well, before that, when we had the situation with earthquakes here in Puerto Rico, and so then we had to like stop going places and meeting with fishermen, because there are more important things for people to deal with, but pretty much those are the things we've doing here in the Caribbean Council.

MS. RHODES: Thanks for that, Diana. I appreciate that update, and, again, we've all been thinking about you guys in Puerto Rico. It's been a rough couple of years over there, as far as --

MS. MARTINO: Oh, yes. It's been one thing after the other, but, hey, we will survive.

MS. RHODES: You're resilient. That's good. Thanks, Diana.

MS. MARTINO: Sure.

MS. RHODES: Does anybody else want to chime in on this?

MR. PRUEITT: Thank you, Cameron, for letting me give a brief update. Again, I work at the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, and a lot of our outreach products and initiatives have been more in-person events, and so we had -- Actually, we had planned, at the end of May, to have a larger Gray's Reef expo on River Street in Savannah, and that, of course, had to be cancelled, and we're saying postponed, but we're not sure when we're going to be able to fit in with the schedules of hotels and other organizations, and so we're shifting a lot of our outreach and education campaigns to more of a digital sense.

It's given me time to look at more digital products that we need, and we've got a couple of researchers giving a talk to some educators on a group called Exploring by the Seat of Your Pants, and so they're going to be talking about some of the ongoing projects at Gray's Reef and what it's like to be a marine scientist, and the target audience there is between -- I think it's like grades four

through eight, and so kind of younger students, but it's just been a lot of moving things digital and trying to get people engaged with volunteers, through a digital sense, and without the opportunity of doing things in person. We hope to open it back up, to be able to do booths and other speaking events like that, but, for now, everything has been digitally affected by COVID-19.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Ben. Yes, I think a lot of us are experiencing that at the moment, trying to figure out how we can move things that were initially planned to be in person online, and I have never heard of that Exploring by the Seat of Your Pants program, but that sounds like another good fit, potentially, for FISHstory as well, and so we might reach out to you. The FISHstory folks, Allie and Julia, might be reaching out to you for some additional information on your partnership with them.

MR. PRUEITT: Yes, that would be awesome, and I think it would be a really good fit for students to learn fish sciences, learn about fish ID, see some old photos, and I think that would be a really good fit, and so I can put you in contact with the gentleman that we've been working with through that, to put together about a forty-minute presentation, including questions, about these sorts of things, and so awesome.

MS. RHODES: Great. Thank you.

MS. SMITH: We are like just about everyone else, where all our outreach efforts from March and April are cancelled, and we're just kind of waiting to see what's going to be happening in May. In the meantime, a couple of things we are doing is we have been trying to push out some of our interactive website tools and games onto social media, things like we have a jeopardy game for kids on fisheries, and our artificial reef guide is an interactive guide online, and we're just kind of trying to do social media posts every week on stuff like that, just to kind of -- One is people are bored, and they're sitting at home looking for stuff to do, and, also, parents are looking for educational-type games for their kids as well to do at home, and so we're trying to just use that.

The other thing is we are still going forward, and we do have our annual *Coastal Fishing Digest*, and that's still on track to be out in May, and that is focusing this year -- Our commission chairman has a focus on circle hooks, and so we're doing a focus on circle hooks and why to use them and how to use them and how they are beginning to be required in some fisheries, and it also promotes MyFishCount and the Fish Rules app as well, but just, for the most part, like everyone else, we're just kind of sitting with stuff cancelled and kind of looking for ways to outreach.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Patricia, and we really appreciate you spreading the word about MyFishCount and Fish Rules and the word about circle hooks, since that will be a requirement in federal waters of the South Atlantic, and it already is for some areas, but there's some additional stainless steel requirements that are going into effect, but thanks for that. I appreciate the update.

MS. KRUEGER: Florida Sea Grant has developed an overview of disaster assistance for fisheries and aquaculture, and I gave you all the link for that, if you want to share it, or people can Google it. Also, National Sea Grant has a larger list, but Virginia appears to be the only other state in the South Atlantic that has resources for fishermen that people may want to look at.

Thank you for mentioning the Florida Friendly Fishing Guides. We started that about six months ago, and we haven't been advertising it very strongly, because we are aware that a lot of guides

aren't fishing right now, and it is a program that is for them. We're just realizing that, even though it's great professional development, a lot of people may not have \$150 right now, but, if other Sea Grant people want to look at that, we can provide a log-in, if people are curious about -- It's a professional development for six-pack guides and charter boat captains, which is obviously a six-pack, and things like that.

Then one of the things that I've been working on that we can talk about separately, but I just wanted to bring up, was the issue of all the sargassum that's been coming up, and I'm working on a fact sheet of what homeowners can do with it legally, and so I am kind of looking for guidance from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council about what we can tell people to do with it when it's in their canal, in their marina, on the beach, and also when it's still floating, because there is a lot of confusion about what legally people can do with sargassum, because it is protected as essential fish habitat.

Maybe, in the future, we could work up a call with the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, so we can talk about that, and so those are the -- The other thing that I wanted to mention was the dolphin wahoo workshops that you're going to have in the Florida Keys, and I would really like to help with that, and, if you guys need help getting a venue or organizing it, please let me know.

MS. BYRD: Shelly, thank you so much. You were on our list of people to call about this, and so I'm glad that you're willing to help, and we would definitely love to work with you on those.

MS. RHODES: We had intended to talk about sargassum at this meeting, but it was taken off the agenda once we transitioned over to our webinar format, but we can definitely set up a call where we can exchange some information, and we can get Erika Burgess and Jessica and John Carmichael and get a group together, and maybe Roger, and we can sit down and talk about some of the things that you can direct people to do, as far as what they're legally allowed to do with sargassum, and so we can get that all straightened out, and that sounds like a good plan to me, Shelly.

MS. KRUEGER: Thank you so much, because it's a real emerging concern, and so I appreciate that.

MS. RHODES: Of course.

MS. WEEKS: There's just two things that I wanted to mention that might be of interest to you all, obviously with the caveat that everything that we do outreach-wise is on hold right now, and we're just using our social channels to get out essential information for the time being, and that will probably be the case for the foreseeable future, but, about two years ago, we started -- We were looking for a project to pilot that we could kind of follow community-based social marketing principles by the book, and so we settled on working with some of our biologists to increase the amount of oyster shell recycling happening in Charleston County.

We've been working on that project, sort of following it by the book, going through all the steps to see if this was going to be a strategy that we could use for other projects in the future, and we rolled out a survey about a year-and-a-half ago, and we got some really great response from folks, and, based on those responses, we developed some interventions to address the barriers that people were facing, in terms of what prevented them from recycling their oyster shells, which we use to

rebuild habitat here, and we have to purchase from out-of-state, typically, what we're not able to make up from members of the public.

That's been going on, and we rolled out all the signage and the outreach materials this past oyster season, and, coming up in May, we will be able to sit down and take a look at the numbers and actually see if we were able to measurably up -- To create an increase, basically, and push the need, and so we're kind of nervous about that, but, if anybody is interested in the results, we would be happy to share them, and then, kind of following some of the principles that we've learned from that project, we have been also working on flounder. Any of you all who work in state agencies, or really of our neighboring states, if you're familiar with the stock assessment that just came out this past January about the historic declines in flounder.

We, in South Carolina, work a little bit differently than most states, in that our legislature is who makes all the game regulations and rule changes, and so that's typically a pretty slow, lengthy process for us, and so we've been working on outreach to anglers and concerned citizens in South Carolina to, one, through December and January, kind of alert them to the problem, because I think it was news to a lot of folks, and then, two, gather information from those folks, which has been ongoing, but started with a survey early this year about how they would like to -- Their perceptions about the fishery and how they would like to see us manage it in the future, and so now we're in the stage where we've been given the go-ahead to develop some management options that we will be bringing to our marine advisory committee, and then hopefully, eventually, the Department of Natural Resources Board and the legislature, later this year and into next spring.

That has all involved a lot of outreach, and we're trying not to lose the momentum from that with the current shutdown of everything, but those are the two kind of big and interesting things that we've been working on recently.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Erin. I would definitely like to be clued-in on the results of that oyster project and the subsequent survey and the numbers, because that definitely, I think, based on what you're describing, could play a role in even how we shape some of these best practices efforts, and so definitely keep me in the loop on that, please, and, if others are interested, just let me know, and shoot me an email, and I can pass that over to Erin, and we can all get looped in.

MS. SANDOVAL: Something that my boss is working on actually was the shark fin bill in Florida, and actually the federal one too, and, right before COVID-19, they were able to go up to Tallahassee and make a case for not passing that bill, which was huge for us, and we're not big shark dealers, actually, but we just think it's so unfair, what was happening there, and so that was something we were working on extensively for the past few months. Luckily, they were able to go up there right before kind of COVID-19 took over everything.

Also, we are having -- A lot of our fishermen aren't fishing right now, for obvious reasons, and one is partially because a lot of the restaurant business is down, and, for our business anyway, we were able to buy a lot of fish in bulk, because we're distributing it, distributing to distributors and restaurants, and we were able to get a lot of variety because of that, and be able to sell it through our retail markets. Even though our retail markets right now are pretty busy and they are doing well, a lot of our business was over-the-dock product and restaurants, unfortunately, and so we can't buy as much as we normally would.

Another issue we're having with this COVID-19 pandemic is access to waterways, and so, because we do sell freshwater seafood, a lot of our -- Well, also saltwater, of course, and because some of the -- The beaches are open, but access to the beaches are closed, and so there's no parking allowed, and locally, for example, the St. John River, the ramps are closed, because people were lining up by the carload to go off them.

Our fishermen also use those ramps and also use those access points, and so, even though they are important and essential, because we're providing food, there's no access for them to actually provide that food, and so I think that's pretty much it. COVID-19 has basically taken over our lives right now.

MS. RHODES: Are any of those -- You and I can talk about this stuff offline too, and I planned to cover it a little bit later in this talk here, but are any of those fishermen operating as contract employees, or are they employed?

MS. SANDOVAL: No, they are all independent businesses, or they're independent contractors, essentially.

MS. RHODES: So one of the things that has come up that was kind of interesting from the Socioeconomic Panel call that we had, and this ties back into what I think Shelly was talking about, which is the available resources from Sea Grant on getting a general idea of what you can do, or what you can expect, from the CARES Act as a commercial fisherman or a for-hire fisherman, and it seems, based on the discussions that we had, that folks can -- Even if they are self-employed, they can file for unemployment in this situation, which is unusual.

If you would like, and you might already have access to these resources, but the council would like to serve a role, where we're at least continually sharing whatever information falls into our lap and disseminating it to others and other groups that might be able to then turn it over to stakeholders, and so, if you're interested, I can get you some additional material, if you don't already have it available.

MS. SANDOVAL: I think we have the basic thing that everyone has access to online, but please send it over. What we usually do is staple any information to the fishermen's checks. In this case, because not everyone is getting a check, I think we're going to get a lot of information to them.

MS. RHODES: Okay. I will get with Shelly and Brian Fluech with Georgia Sea Grant and some other folks out of our office, and we can compile some resources. We are planning to send out all of this in our upcoming newsletter as well, and so we're going to have like a quick bites section, which will have lots of different news articles and helpful resources available relative to this COVID situation.

The entire newsletter is going to focus on COVID-19, and we're interviewing fishermen, and Kim is leading this up, and we're really excited to see where it goes, because we're going to get interviews from different AP members and get their insights on what's going on in their communities and how they've been impacted. We're going to get some AP members who are commercial operators, folks who are recreational fishermen, some restaurant owners, and so we're going to cover a large group of people in that newsletter article.

Then, in addition to that, Kim is going to discuss some of the data concerns, are monitoring programs still ongoing, stuff like that, and so that newsletter I think will have lots of helpful information that can be passed along, but I'll get with you, following this meeting, and we can exchange info, and, if the whole AP is interested in getting that as well, I would be happy to send it to everybody, and that might be the best plan, is just loop everybody in on that, and so thanks for that, Cynthia. I appreciate the update, and please send our thoughts to all of your guys and everybody working there. We definitely share their concerns, and we're thinking about them, and, however we can be of help, please let us know.

MS. SANDOVAL: Thank you.

MR. PHELPS: This is just a quick follow-up to what you just were talking about with the CARES Act. I'm working with several for-hire charter captains that I work with in my area, and I think some of this is going to be different from state to state, from what I understand, depending on what the laws of the governor in your state has -- For us, we can run charters for one or two people, and we just have to show credentials, and so that might be something that you might propose in Florida there, that the commercial people are able to show their commercial permit and let them through, which is what we can do, but we don't have any business. I am currently going on four weeks without anything.

Several of us have tried to apply for several of the CARES Act items, and, to this day, and, I mean, we're talking three weeks of eight or ten guys like daily going online and filling out the forms and waiting to hear back, and I don't know of anyone that has gotten anything from them, other than some people have gotten the \$1,200 thing that was coming to most people, but, as far as the SBA or any of the CARES Act stuff, several of us have tried several different methods and ways to apply, and I think South Carolina was a little different in some cases for that, but I don't know anybody in South Carolina that has gotten actual money from that yet at all, and that's just a follow-up.

MS. RHODES: Thanks for that, Mark. I haven't heard of anybody who has been able to get that as well, and I'm sure it's going to be an ongoing process and figuring all that stuff out, but, as soon as information is provided to us, we'll be sure to share it with everybody, but, as far as we know, I haven't heard of anybody getting that assistance yet as well.

MS. CROUCH: (Ms. Crouch's comment is not audible on the recording.)

MS. RHODES: Melissa, your sound is a little crazy. Are you using a headset or a microphone or something like that?

MS. CROUCH: (Ms. Crouch's comment is not audible on the recording.)

MS. RHODES: In the meantime, let's go ahead and get Scott in the queue.

MR. BAKER: Thanks, Cameron. A couple of things to hit on. First, kind of following up to Mark's comment, one of the benefits of working from home is I get to watch part of the Today Show, and there was a story, I think this morning, talking about -- It's a company called Do Not Pay, and it's some kind of Robin Hood of the internet, and it's some kind of company in California. The point is they are basically -- They have a portal online for people to input a basic amount of

data to apply for unemployment through the CARES Act, and what this does is it compiles a paper form that gets mailed to the agency.

They were basically stating that, a lot of times, these systems are better set up to accept paper applications than online applications, and so I would just encourage people to look a little bit further into that, and I have no idea about it, other than what I saw, but that could be a loophole worth exploring, because I've heard similar things from other people here that have applied a long time ago and haven't heard anything. The systems are completely overwhelmed.

In addition, I will put in a plug for -- I have heard that the Sea Grant Legal Law Center has done some webinars on the CARES Act, specifically as it applies to fishermen and the aquaculture industry, and I think those are probably -- Links to those are probably on the National Sea Grant webpage, as Shelly talked about.

MS. RHODES: They're also on our Facebook page, and so we posted that I think yesterday, and so, if anybody wants to go take a look at that, it is up there, and it's a great webinar. It's super informative, and it provides lots of information on what fishermen can be actively doing to document what's going on, as far as business concerns are, and so definitely I recommend people take a look at that.

MR. BAKER: Just another quick update, and thanks, Cameron, for profiling our blog, Hook, Line, & Science, from North Carolina Sea Grant. That's been going now for a year-and-a-half, and we had a full year this last year, with one post every week, and so fifty-two posts, and, basically, those posts are layman's summaries of mostly peer-reviewed science of interest to anglers, and that's been going well.

We had our second class just recently wrap up of our introductory fisheries science for fishermen, and it's modeled somewhat after MREP for the national fisheries-type issues, but it's geared with more examples and speakers specific to North Carolina, and so it's a four-part night class that is two hours each night, with different speakers, and it's designed for the 10 percent of people in fishing that want to know more about fisheries science and how that impacts the bottom line.

We've had very good reviews from that, and, of course, that was also part -- There was a Zoom option for that, even before all this COVID stuff, and a follow-up to that is, this last January, my colleague, mainly, Sarah Mirabilio, has put together a program, and it's the second year of this, out of three years, called Fish Camp, and it's basically a networking, educational event for young and upcoming commercial fishermen, and it basically is a lot of skill-building activities over the course of two days, and networking. It's for all the things that are important to commercial fishermen other than catching fish, and so it's speaking to managers, being involved in the process, all that kind of stuff, business management, and so that was very successful.

We're trying to maintain that, and we don't know if that's going to happen again next year, but it's possible that it could be like maybe every other year, and it's kind of emulating the successful programs that have been happening with Alaska, Alaskan fishermen, and that's it. Thanks.

MS. RHODES: Scott, I've got a follow-up question. For the Fish Camp, is that strictly -- You may have mentioned this, and my apologies if I missed it, but is that strictly for North Carolina fishermen, or can folks from other states apply to be part of that program?

MR. BAKER: It's currently -- It's specific to North Carolina, and it was funded, in part -- The first year was funded by a research project, through North Carolina Sea Grant, and then there was -- It was held two years later, and so this past January, and that round of -- That program was funded by fishermen, commercial fishing license fees, and so I believe we had eighteen members of the industry, mostly in their twenties, and I would say age-forty was definitely the high end, but it was geared towards North Carolina fishermen, and what we did have is our new colleague from South Carolina came up and attended, Sea Grant colleague, and he attended.

Other people have talked about doing something similar, and I would certainly be happy to share all the details and the structure that we used. There was a lot of gains, and there was a lot of butt time, but it was a lot of networking time, a lot of -- It was a retreat-style format, and so very much like MREP, where you get a lot of benefit from just hanging around these people for two or three days, to get to have all these side conversations.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Scott. I appreciate that.

MS. SMITH: Scott, where on the website is the information for COVID-19 for the fishermen?

MR. BAKER: I believe it's on the National Sea Grant site. I can find it.

MS. RHODES: Shelly sent around some links, and I will be happy to distribute those after the meeting.

MS. SMITH: Thanks.

MS. RHODES: No problem. Does anybody else want to weigh-in? Otherwise, we're going to go ahead and move on to our next question.

MS. CROUCH: Again, I'm with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and I just wanted to really quickly mention that we're kind of going through the same things with this current situation, and outreach and education for marine fisheries, the in-person part, is on a standstill, but we were kind of moving towards working on some electronic options for a lot of programming anyway, and so this actually gives us some time to develop some of those tools, ways we can work with our partners to hold fish camps and fishing clinics for instance, where we don't have to travel to them to train them, and so lots of digital and online training resources are being developed right now, and we are looking into ways to kind of reach more anglers with messaging that doesn't require us to put more boots on the ground, and so this is kind of a good time for us to develop, in the background, some of those items.

One of the things that we just finished up, right before all of this happened, and so we were able to finish up a focus groups project in early March, and so we basically worked with Responsive Management and Mark Duda to find out, from our saltwater anglers on the recreational side, their preferences for communications and for outreach and education programming and materials to reach them with important information. We just got that report back, and I don't want to go too deep into it, because it's 160 pages, but I can tell you some of the high-level things that we are hearing back from the survey that was conducted and from the focus groups that were conducted in Florida.

A big thing that was interesting, especially in regard to best handling practices, is that the focus groups thought that an education component for anglers, before they get a fishing license, especially if they're new, and it would be kind of interesting on the ethical angling side, and so making them do some sort of education module on ethical angling, to kind of become an angler in Florida, and it was interesting to hear other anglers suggest that as an option.

Another thing that came out of that was that our survey, which it was sent to a random sample of 30,000 anglers from our licensing database, and we had about 1,500 answer the survey, and those folks definitely had a clear preference for receiving information through email from FWC, versus anything else. They basically just want to be bombarded with emails, and they'll just pay attention to the ones that they care about, is what they told us.

We talked about face-to-face interactions and in-person outreach events, and the people in the focus groups, although they thought that those are really important and could be useful, they also realized that you can't reach everyone that way, and they think it's great for the agency to really focus on using apps, emails, and the website, and social media to reach more anglers with messaging, and so it was nice to have that as well. A lot of times, if you give people the option for in-person, that's what they want, but it was good to hear from anglers that there's other options.

Finally, the last thing that we had them look at in the groups was some of our publications, and we have a fishing guide, which is a really nice fish identification and a really great book that also talks about how to tie fishing knots and what the different types of tackle are and what are the different habitats, and a lot of anglers thought that everything that we should put out in other brochures should just all go in that one book, and we'll just have one product, and that's all they need to get. Those were just some big take-aways from those groups, and we think they're really valuable to help us moving forward.

MS. RHODES: Thanks for that, Melissa, and that definitely sounds like you got some really interesting feedback relative to the communication strategies that people prefer, and, based on what we've heard from our advisory panel members on the fishery-focused APs, that all seems to resonate, and it appears that people are still using many of the printed copies and things like that, but then other demographics are relying really heavily on what's getting pumped out online, and so it doesn't appear that we're going to be doing any major shifts away from print.

I mean, we're still going to do some print materials as well, and those in-person things are going to be invaluable, but people seem to be adjusting to more of those online resources over time, and so we're definitely hearing lots of the same things. Of course, not in as formal of an approach as what you guys had recently received in your report, but definitely all of this resonates with our stakeholders as well and our AP members. I am not seeing any additional hands raised. Let's go ahead, and you can, of course, add to this discussion as we move forward.

It sounds like this is something that we definitely need to talk about, and I know we're getting close to our time, but I definitely think that this ought to be prioritized, just so we can talk about it for a little bit and see if anybody has any suggestions. How can we help each other out? How can we keep each other informed? This ties into much of what we were hoping to get out of our following question, which is how can we more regularly facilitate the exchange of information among advisory panel members?

In the past, we had tried a Google doc, where we shared hashtags, and it doesn't seem like folks were actively using that Google doc, or that it was really all that helpful to people. Google doc might just not be the right platform for us, and so I wanted to see if anybody had any other suggestions for how we can regularly exchange information.

It can be as simple as me sending everybody an email. If you have information that you want me to share with the entire AP, I can then funnel it out, and so we're just trying to come up with ways for us to all stay connected, and I know it's challenging, especially when we end up -- At least in our office, sometimes I feel like we're operating in silos, and we definitely don't want that to continue, and we want to make sure that we're sharing your information as well, and hopefully you will do the same for us and spread the word about programs that we have going on. Do you all have any suggestions for how we can work together or team up and how we can better facilitate the exchange of information among the AP?

MS. KOCHES: I guess I will be one of the old-school ones to maybe vote for like an email exchange, because we have recently changed our email platform to Microsoft Office, and we don't have access to Google docs, and so, if an email exchange works best, and say, for instance, there is something from Fish and Wildlife Service that I think is pertinent for you to share with the other advisory members, if I could just shoot you an email and have you share that with others, that would work for me, but there might be some others that have some better suggestions for sharing this too, and so that's just my two-cents.

MS. RHODES: Thanks for that, Jennifer. I still think that approach would certainly work in sharing information, and, if Google docs are too cumbersome for folks, that's definitely something that we can work around.

MR. JONES: One of the things that Georgia DNR has been using through this whole COVID thing -- Most of us are working from home, all of us around the state, and we've been using Microsoft Teams to kind of communicate. It's a lot like Slack, if you're familiar with that app, and you can download it on your computer, and you can create different channels for different kinds of discussions and things like that, and it's been something to learn how to use, but, now that I've learned it, it's been very helpful to stay in touch. You can share files, and you can kind of chat with people, and it's been pretty productive for us.

MS. RHODES: We use it as well. We just started using it once everything went into effect with COVID-19, and we're really enjoying it also, and it's become super easy to share information internally and to have some of these quick calls, where we can see each other and chat things out, and so, yes, we've really enjoyed using it as well, and I highly recommend it.

MR. BAKER: This is something that we certainly have struggled with since the last meeting, and it's going -- I think, to share, other than to verbally exchange things here, which is great, it's really tough, and it essentially takes work for people to do that. I guess one suggestion, and, to be honest, it could have been the last suggestion that we had last year, and I don't remember, but to create like a -- Each member, essentially, kind of compiles the outreach things that they're doing, because a lot of that stuff translates from year to year. Then perhaps, once that gets compiled, then maybe, when the briefing book comes out for the next meeting next year, that could get updated by those same members, and, of course, you could get updated throughout the year as well.

Another option might be -- This is certainly not my wheelhouse, but a lot of the social media posts and everything to kind of -- I don't know if it's compartmentalize or segment it out by like -- In other words, like a calendar or something, where everybody is kind of focusing on one thing, or it seems like everybody is doing a lot of different things all the time, which makes it great, but also cumbersome to try to coordinate, and so that's just a couple of thoughts.

MS. RHODES: Thanks for that, Scott. Yes, I think this is the challenge, and I think those ideas are helpful, and I think having you guys compile some things that could go into the briefing book ahead of time would be helpful, not only for timing-sake, but then people would have direct links to the very things that we're talking about, and so I think, next year, that would certainly be a good approach.

As far as keeping everybody updated, or keeping some kind of standing document updated on a yearly basis, I think we'll run into that not necessarily being as useful to you all, as it does become outdated, but I think we're going to have to come up with some solutions for how we can keep everybody in the loop on this stuff, and it might be as simple as what Jennifer suggested, that you guys send things to me, and I can distribute it to the AP. I don't want to bombard you with emails and have you guys rolling your eyes every time I send you something, but I definitely think that that might be an easy approach to just distributing information that you think might be relevant to your fellow AP members.

MS. SANDOVAL: I'm not sure if this is allowed or not, but I think one of the issues is that we just meet once a year, and like I'm not necessarily saying we should meet more, but maybe like have something similar to this, where we have a webinar, where we meet for thirty or forty-five minutes and then just talk about the programs we're working on or things like that, and then have that documented and sent out. That way, we're listening to it, and it's both in audio and written form, and it's reinforced, but I'm not sure if that requires you having that on the record, and I'm not sure what -- If that's even allowed.

MS. RHODES: I think it could certainly be allowed, and we would just need -- It would likely have to be held as a public meeting, and so we would have to do something like this, but some of our APs meet twice a year, and so it wouldn't be unheard of for an AP to meet twice a year, and it could be a condensed approach, where, like you said, it's only for a shorter amount of time.

We can also communicate with each other rather regularly without it having to be a formalized public meeting, but, if we were going to do something on webinar, my understanding is that it would have to be noticed, and we would have to have all the typical things that we have for this meeting, with the meeting memo and public comment form and things like that, but that can certainly be done, and, if that will help everybody stay up-to-date, and if people like this format, and you guys have done remarkably well, and I don't know if you realize that, but your participation has been truly incredible.

It's not often that we have this many folks chiming in via webinar, and so it seems like you guys do really well in this format. However, if it's not something that you really enjoy, and you don't necessarily want to see this happen once a year, where we have a webinar meeting, and then maybe another time of year we have an in-person meeting, but I'm open to whatever suggestions you have, and I think that's a good idea. I think that would be a simple way to keep everybody updated,

so we meet twice a year, and everything is a little more timely. I don't know if other folks want to weigh-in on that, and we can talk about that maybe after we get through this, about whether or not that's something the AP would like to see happen, and then we can bring that to the council for their review, to see if they would be eager to have the I&E AP meet twice a year.

MR. PHELPS: I was just going to agree with that. I think -- Well, especially given that, this time, we didn't actually get to meet in person, but I feel like maybe a once year two-day meeting, like in person, like if we were able to do like we should have, and then, once a year, like say in the fall, we do a one-day, couple-hours, just follow-up on how things are going. Otherwise, it seems like once a year, meeting like this, a lot of things can fall through the cracks, and there's not a lot of follow-up, and I think that would be more -- This is not too invasive on somebody's schedule, if it was in the afternoon, to do a webinar once a year and a meeting in person once a year.

MS. RHODES: Thanks for that, Mark. Then I definitely think that this could be something that moves in that direction. Does anybody else have anything they want to comment on about staying in touch with each other and sharing information? I am happy to serve as a source of information, where you guys can funnel things to me, and I will pass it off to you. That's essentially part of my role, and so, if that's something that you all would like to see happen, we can easily facilitate that without any issues. I am not seeing any other hands raised.

What we'll go ahead and do is we'll hop out of this, and thanks for that discussion, guys. I really appreciate it, and, again, I'll be sending around some COVID-19-related resources to everybody in the next couple of days, or early next week, and we'll compile some stuff for you and distribute it, and so, if anybody has resources that they would like us to share with the group, please don't hesitate to send them to me. We have yours, Shelly, and so thank you for that, and we'll just go ahead and distribute that to everybody, so we all can share the same information and get the things that people need into their hands and stuff like that.

With that, we'll go ahead and return to our agenda, and we're going to have to elect a Vice Chair, and I believe that's what is next on our agenda. Mr. Chair, I guess I will ask you to take the lead on that and to ask for nominations to elect a Vice Chair.

MR. BAKER: Sure. Do we have -- I'm assuming that we welcome self-nominations.

MS. RHODES: I think that would be all right. I don't foresee that being a problem.

MS. SANDOVAL: Can you just state exactly what the Vice Chair will be doing, I mean like any extra added duties?

MS. RHODES: Sure. There aren't really any extra added duties. The only real time that I would imagine that -- I mean, as Scott steps down from his chairmanship, when his turn is up, then the Vice Chair typically, but not always, and it doesn't have to go that way, but, typically, the Vice Chair rises to the Chair position, and, in that role -- Scott can, of course, weigh-in on this as well, but, in that role, I will send the agenda to Scott, to see if there's anything he thinks should be added, if he has any suggested edits, and then we discuss what might come up in the meeting.

He reads through the advisory panel report and provides that to the council at their next meeting, and so that's the role of the Chair, and so the Vice Chair is in a position where, if Scott is unable

to attend a meeting, or let's say Scott is unable to offer the advisory panel report to the council, it would be the Vice Chair's place to then take that on.

MR. BAKER: It's very low key, and there's basically no other duties than Cameron has explained, and it is nice to be able to bring forth the discussion from the advisory panel to the full council, or to the committee, and we always get very positive feedback from the work that we do and the discussions that we have at the council level. Cameron, can you refresh my memory how much longer I have in my position as Chair?

MS. RHODES: I think you have -- This might be your last year as Chair, Scott.

MR. BAKER: Okay.

MS. RHODES: You have been Chair for -- This is your third meeting as Chair, as I understand it, and so I think you would be -- This would be your last meeting as Chair, potentially, actually, unless we have another meeting in the fall, but I would have to confirm that with Kim. She's the keeper of all of that information, and so definitely whoever would be rising to this role would likely assume the chairmanship down the road, but, again, as Scott said, we're a pretty low-key group, and we don't do motions.

We keep it pretty simple, and, if we don't have an election of a Vice Chair today, I think that's okay. We can move on if we need to. If nobody is interested, we can come up with a solution to that, and I can get up with Kim about how we go about handling that, but, if anybody is interested in taking on that role, we would greatly appreciate having you step up.

MR. BAKER: Do we have any takers? I can't see any hands from my end.

MS. RHODES: I am not seeing any hands, and so we might not have any takers, which is okay. We can come up with other solutions down the road if we need to, and so it's all right. I think it's okay. I am looking to others who might be on the webinar. I see a hand raised from Shelly.

MS. KRUEGER: I would be willing to be Vice Chair, but not to -- I mean, I wouldn't expect then to be Chair, and I would definitely reserve that for later on, but, for the sake of having a Vice Chair, I would be happy to be the Vice Chair, if I'm elected or whatever.

MS. RHODES: Thank you, Shelly. I appreciate that, and so, just so you know, when there is an opportunity where we have to elect a Chair, then we would have to go to a vote for that as well, and so the Chair would have to be nominated and approved by the advisory panel.

MS. KRUEGER: Okay. Good. I'm willing to go up for Vice Chair.

MS. RHODES: Thank you, Shelly. I appreciate that. Scott, I guess you can seek direction on whether or not there's any opposition to Shelly assuming the role as Vice Chair.

MR. BAKER: Okay. I mean, we're accepting a self-nomination. Is there any opposition to Shelly serving as Vice Chair? If you do have opposition, please raise your hand. If we don't see any opposition --

MS. RHODES: I am seeing none.

MR. BAKER: Okay. Great. Then Shelly is our new vice chair.

MS. RHODES: Thank you, Shelly. Congrats. All right. With that, Scott, then we roll into Other Business.

MR. BAKER: Just before we end here, just a little bit past twelve, and does anybody have any other business that comes before the panel? Also, we did say that we could take any public comment, if there's any members of the public, after we do other business. I guess, if you do have other business, raise your hand.

MS. RHODES: I am not seeing any hands raised.

MR. BAKER: Okay. What about public comment? Do we have any public comment?

MS. RHODES: Is there anybody listening in on the webinar who would like to provide a public comment? If so, please raise your hand, using the hand-raise icon. I am not seeing any hands raised, Scott.

MR. BAKER: Okay. Well, I think, if there's no public comment and no other business, then I think I would accept a motion to adjourn, or we can adjourn without any other comments, I guess.

MS. RHODES: You can go ahead and adjourn. I don't think we need a motion.

MR. BAKER: Okay. I will call this meeting adjourned. Thanks, everybody.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on April 15, 2020.)

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May 6, 2020

Education Advisory

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Report Generated:

04/15/2020 12:42 PM EDT

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BROUWER	MYRA
Baker	Scott
Bruce	James
Burgess	Erika
Carmichael	John
Chaya	Cindy
Crimian	Robert
Crouch	Melissa
Dingle	Julie
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Harrison	BeBe
Iberle	Allie
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Jones	Tyler
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Kelly	Doug
Klasnick	Kelly
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Krueger	Shelly
Laks	Ira
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Education Advisory Panel Meeting -

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Report Generated:

04/15/2020 12:38 PM EDT

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Actual Start Date/Time

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Last Name	First Name
BROUWER	MYRA
Baker	Scott
Bianchi	Alan
Bruce	James
Burgess	Erika
Byrd	Julia
Carmichael	John
Chaya	Cindy
Crimian	Robert
Crouch	Melissa
Dingle	Julie
Hadley	John
Harrison	BeBe
Iberle	Allie
Jones	Tyler
Keener	Paula
Kelly	Doug
Klasnick	Kelly
Koches	Jennifer
Krueger	Shelly
Laks	Ira
Latanich	Katie
Martino	Diana
Meehan	Sean
Moss	david
Phelps	Mark
Poland	Stephen
Prueitt	Ben
Rhodes	Cameron
Sandoval	Cinthia
Smith	Patricia
Weeks	Erin
Whitaker	David
Wiegand	Christina

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