

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

JOINT HABITAT ECOSYSTEM, SHRIMP, AND GOLDEN CRAB COMMITTEE

**Town & Country Inn
Charleston, South Carolina**

September 19, 2019

Summary Minutes

Joint Habitat Ecosystem, Shrimp, and Golden Crab Committee Members

Chris Conklin, Chair
Dr. Roy Crabtree
David Whitaker

Jessica McCawley, Vice Chair
Tim Griner

Council Members

Mel Bell
Chester Brewer
Dr. Carolyn Belcher
Steve Poland
Spud Woodward

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John Carmichael
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Dr. Chip Collier
John Hadley
Kelly Klasnick
Cameron Rhodes
BeBe Harris

Other Observers and Participants

Pat O'Shaughnessy
Dr. Wilson Laney
Dewey Hemilright
Monica Smit-Brunello
Dr. Jack McGovern
Rick DeVictor
Dr. Marcel Reichert
Jocef Santiago

Duane Smith
Tony DiLernia
CLT James Bruce
Dr. Erik Williams
Shep Grimes
Frank Helies
Erika Burgess

Other observers and participants attached.

The Joint Habitat Ecosystem, Shrimp, and Golden Crab Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened at the Town & Country Inn, Charleston, South Carolina, on Thursday, September 19, 2019, and was called to order by Chairman Steve Poland.

MR. POLAND: I am going to call the Joint Habitat Ecosystem, Shrimp, and Golden Crab Committee session to order. I am going to run through who is all on the three committees, and I feel like it's everybody, but just so everyone is clear on what committee you're on and what we're doing, and the so entire Habitat Protection and Ecosystem-Based Management Committee is myself, Dave Whitaker, Bob Beal, Mel Bell, Chris Conklin, Tim Griner, Doug Haymans, who is not here and Carolyn Belcher is taking his place, Jessica McCawley, and Art.

The Golden Crab Committee is Chris Conklin as the Chair, Jessica McCawley as Vice Chair, Uncle Crabtree, Tim Griner, David Whitaker. Then, for the Shrimp, it's Mel Bell, myself, Chris Conklin, Roy Crabtree, Doug, who is not here and Carolyn is in his place, Jessica, Lieutenant Montes, Dave Whitaker, and Spud, and so I think we're all covered at least twice in this committee, and so welcome.

The first order of business is Approval of the Agenda. Are there any comments or any additions? Seeing none, the agenda stands approved. Next is Approval of the Minutes from the June 2018 Meeting, and I hope that everyone had a chance to go back and read these, because there were quite a few of us that weren't on the council at that time, and are there any questions or any changes or any suggestions? Any opposition to approval of the minutes? Seeing none, those minutes are approved. I am going to turn it over to Chip to walk us through the joint amendment. Take it away.

DR. COLLIER: All right. I'm going to go through the staff overview, real quick, and this is just a reminder of what we've done and where we are. The last time you guys talked about this was June of 2018, and we talked about an options paper, and you guys did recommend it for scoping. However, it was not put on the scoping schedule, and so we're bringing it back to you guys, to see if you want to take it out to scoping this fall.

We have done a little bit of revisions in the document since 2018, and we have revised the options paper to better reflect a scoping stage, and we also included an option to address recent discoveries of coral and coral habitat outside of the CHAPCs that we currently have, and I will go over that a little bit later, as we go through the document.

The options paper was presented to the Deepwater Shrimp and Golden Crab APs in the joint meeting, and they provided additional recommendations for consideration for the options paper, but, once again, that was getting down into the details, and we will go back and add those considerations into the document after we refine it a little bit more. We also presented it to the Coral AP, and they expressed concerns about modifying the access of the boundaries for the coral habitat areas of particular concern.

One thing that hasn't been discussed is we are having some information presented to the SSC in October of this year, and they're going to be looking at new habitat probability models for their use in management, and these models are a little bit different than the models that you're going to see in the paper. They are a different style of construction and how they predict the probability,

and so it's a much better model than before, and it's looking at both occurrences and presence and absence, as the previous model was just looking at occurrence.

This is the potential timing for the amendment, and we're talking about the draft options paper, and we would take it out for scoping in November. Then, in December, we would review the scoping comments and develop alternatives and actions. Then, in June of 2020, we would review the effects analysis, and I'm thinking, if it's going on this current path with all these actions and alternatives, it would take a lot of time to do all of the analysis. Then we would have public hearings in August, and, in September, we would bring back the public hearing comments for your approval, with final action in December of 2020.

What we need to do at this meeting is we need to review the options paper and provide guidance on the draft purpose and need statements and to provide guidance on issues to address during scoping and then review the timing of the amendment and approve it for scoping.

Going into the options paper, this is your only attachment for this committee, and so it's the only attachment in Tab 8. In the background, I go over the reasons why we're talking about these different issues, starting off with requests from the golden crab fishermen. They are the ones that are asking for these modifications to the access areas, and what we're talking about with the access area is looking at changes for the access area in the Northern Zone, and this fishery is divided into different zones.

For those of you that haven't seen the golden crab fishery before, or talked about it before, there is three different zones. The first zone is the Northern Zone, and that is from 28 degrees North, and we have a second zone called the Middle Zone, and that is 25 degrees to 28 degrees, and then below the Middle Zone is the Southern Zone, and, within these zones, fishermen are permitted to fish in these areas, and so, in the Northern Zone, there is, I believe, three permits that are allowed to fish in that area. In the Middle Zone, there's a few more, and, in the Southern Zone, I think there's two permits that are allowed to fish in there, and so these guys are pretty well aggregated out of there.

Another thing that you can see on this map is the limited area about where these fishermen can go in the Northern Zone, and that's one of the concerns that they had expressed during the AP meeting, is they wanted additional areas to fish. If you look on the left side of this graph, or on the inshore side, where it's peach, or pink or red, depending on how your computer interprets it, or salmon, if we keep it in the fisheries sense, but, on the left side, there is a depth profile where the golden crab pots are not allowed.

That is the closure on the left side, and then, on the deeper side, these are CHAPCs, and so you're not allowed to use traps, trawls, or pots in those zones. However, the council did provide access areas in these, and those are developed in black, and you can see the access area in the Northern Zone, the Middle Zone, and the Southern Zone.

DR. CRABTREE: Where can they fish?

DR. COLLIER: In the white area, they are allowed to fish, and then also in the black.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I guess, before this goes out to scoping, if you could put a legend on there, and that might help me, and so I didn't understand that. Then why is the other area salmon? So they fish in the white area and the black, and the salmon is the proposed area? I am confused.

DR. COLLIER: The salmon is closed areas.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Then which is the area that they are wanting to open? Can you point to that?

DR. COLLIER: It is in the Northern Zone, and there was a lot of different options that they had proposed, ranging from just a few depth profiles to pretty much the CHAPC, and so this area right in here. Actually, it will show up better here. It was basically, if you look at these coral habitat probability maps, which is Figure 1.2, they wanted a lot of these zones to be looked into as potential areas for the golden crab fishery to operate.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. I think I understand a little bit better. Thank you.

DR. COLLIER: Since this is a scoping stage, we didn't want to provide exact details on the options and alternatives, and we wanted to give broad ideas that the fishermen could propose to us on how to manage these fisheries. In Figure 1.2, just going over this a little bit, in the past, there was a model developed by Brian Kinlan, and what he looked at was the presence of coral and developed probability models based on depth profiles, temperature, and several different parameters, and so this includes the high probability, medium-low, medium, high, and very high probabilities of where coral would occur in our region. On the inshore side, that is looking more at the *Oculina* coral, and then, on the offshore side, you're looking at a variety of coral habitat areas.

This information only includes data through 2014, or actually data through 2012, and we have had observations of coral since then, especially the cruises that occurred in 2017, 2018, and 2019, and I encourage you guys to look at some of the work that the Okeanos did in 2018 and 2019. If you guys saw that viral video of a wreckfish eating a dogfish, that came from that cruise, and I believe they did over sixty dives in our region, and, on fifty-nine of those dives, they observed coral, and so we have a lot of deepwater coral in our area.

The information that was used to develop those habitat probability maps that I presented in Figure 1.2, you can see the presence of coral here, and each of these black dots represents an observed location of where coral was -- An actual location of where coral was observed. Once again, that information only goes through 2014 for that.

We also have a table of landings, and you can see how the landings have changed over time, and it peaked back in 2014, and then it's dropped a little bit since, and it appears to be a participation issue, where you can see, in addition to the landings peaking around 2012 to 2014, that is also when the number of trips reporting landings also peaked.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Chip, how many permit holders are there right now in golden crab?

DR. COLLIER: There are eleven permits and six permit holders.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Yes, there's like five or six permit holders, but remember you have to be permitted to fish in each zone, and you can only fish one permit at a time, and you cannot stack

permits on the vessel, and so you have to come to port, take the permit off the vessel, and put the other permit on, and so several of the vessels do own multiple permits.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Just one follow-up to that. That sounds about like the same number of permits it's been for a good many years, and so, when you talk about the, which is a good table -- The trips reported are down, and the landings are down, and it must be those individuals then choosing not to fish and not that some of them have left the fishery, so to speak, because it's the same number of permits, right?

DR. CHEUVRONT: Just from metadata that's known, at least one of the high-liners has been having some personal difficulties that has made it difficult for him to be participating in the fishery.

DR. COLLIER: All right, and so that was a brief history on the golden crab fishery, and the rock shrimp fishery -- That's why we have the shrimp included in this, the shrimp amendment. The rock shrimp fishermen had requested additional access, based on some of the expansion that would occur during Coral Amendment 8. They were concerned about the eastern edge of the line, and they provided additional coordinates to the council on where they would like to see that line, and so we're just bringing it back to you guys for consideration. The area was mapped in 2017, on a NOAA cruise, and so we do have mapping of the area, some high-resolution mapping, that could provide some additional information.

We do have landings data provided from 2008 to 2017, and you can see the landings for rock shrimp are extremely variable. From 2009, it starts at 3.8 million, and it drops down to 240,000 in 2012, and then it's back up in 2017. In Figure 1.6, I provide the full history of landings for the rock shrimp fishery, and this is all non-confidential, beginning in 1982 and then going through 2017.

MR. SAPP: What in the world happened in 1996 when it went bonkers? Do we know?

DR. COLLIER: I don't know. Another action in this is looking at the transit provision for the shallow-water shrimp guys, and this is looking at -- Currently, the shallow-water shrimp guys are required to stow their doors below deck if the ocean is closed, and so South Carolina and Georgia can close the ocean from three miles out to twenty-five miles if they deem a cold-water closure is necessary to protect the shrimp stock, and they protect the white shrimp stock through that, and they have a protocol to do that, and that was developed through the council process.

What they have said is they can no longer stow the -- Based on the design of the vessels today, they can no longer stow their doors below the deck of the boat, and they would like a modification to the transit provision. In addition to that, as many of you guys are aware, the waterway isn't always sufficient in order for shrimp boats to travel the waterway, and they can't go in the ocean, and so it really puts them in a bind, if they're going from Florida or to the Gulf of Mexico up to North Carolina, wherever they want to go shrimping. That is some background on why we developed these issues.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I wanted to understand a little bit more about this, and I guess it's a model that's going to go to the SSC at the next meeting, and then what we would know after approval of that model. One of the reasons I'm asking about it is it sounds like there's some new areas that we might want to consider, and, if we're going to consider adding new areas, maybe they need to

be in this amendment, and I am wondering if that needs to be added before it goes out for scoping, and so maybe it doesn't go out to scoping until say January, so that we can see it again or look at some of these new areas, and I think that that model is also going to help predict buffer zones, and is that also part of what it's doing, and I guess I'm just wanting to understand more about what the SSC is going to look at and what you think is going to come out of that.

DR. COLLIER: The model that they're going to be looking at is changing from a presence model to an occupancy model and predicting the coral habitat probability, and the goal for this was really -- We have not had that type of information used for management in the past, and so, in the past, when they looked at developing these CHAPCs, they were based on observations, and now we're looking at a potential probability model, and so the SSC should review that before it comes to the council for use in management.

My idea with scoping is to keep these things broad, at potential issues that fishermen are seeing in the fishery and not necessarily confining them down into actions and alternatives. We can keep it extremely broad and let them pick a suite of options, and then, when we develop the actions and alternatives and then go out for public hearing, they can look at those specific details and really comment on those different ones, but we can take a different tact if you would like.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I guess I'm just concerned, because I think it's one thing to talk about opening up new areas, and, in the same document, we're going to talk about possibly closing some additional areas, and I'm okay with that, but it's just, when you talk about closing areas, I think people start to get pretty concerned, and so I'm wondering what type of information we're going to be able to offer in the scoping stage, and I'm just worried about that, and I wish we had more information on that, and so I couldn't tell if that was tied to what the SSC was doing, before we see some maps or something of these additional areas, because it sounds like there's a lot.

MR. GRINER: Chip, these additional areas, aren't the majority of those additional areas already inside of the closed area right now, or is there a lot more than what it looks like could possibly be outside of the closed area?

DR. COLLIER: The additional fishery access areas they would want inside the closed area, and the additional coral habitat area of particular concern that could be added to those, those are outside, and so it is a little bit confusing, and here's a -- Figure 2.1 has a map of some of the sites where they observed coral, and this was from the 2019 dives, and you can see, under the "L" in Blake Plateau, they observed coral there, and, around the 30 degree North, 78 degree West, there is two sites in there, and that was area called Richardson Hill, and it got a lot of publicity this year, or last year, given these were new coral mounds, and these were huge coral mounds that they found. Some of them exceeded over a hundred feet tall.

MR. BELL: I will admit that, in all the time we've been dealing with these fisheries and these areas open and closed, it's pretty complex, and I have the same concerns I guess that Jessica would have, is it's sort of making decisions about where to open an additional space or close an additional space. Given the data, the picture seems to be, as we kind of get more survey-type data for some of this stuff, there's a lot more of this stuff, the coral, there's a lot more of it down there than we might realize.

Given the nature of these fisheries themselves being pretty small, and, I mean, we've got, like with golden crab, five or six guys or something, and it seems, to me, that this sort of begs for maybe something -- Maybe you go with an exempted fishing permit and you try to get actual data, boom, real time, and then you're not guessing, and it's a small group of folks, and you really don't know until you're kind of in there working with the people that really know the bottom, probably better than most of us, but then we get, maybe, surprised a little bit, but, what do you know, there actually is coral down there, and so that's just something we have kind of kicked around, that concept.

In the overall amendment itself, I think the transit part is the piece that is pretty straightforward and the piece that I was really wanting to kind of move along, but this other piece just seems so complex, and these maps we have and all are just -- It's something to think about and talk about, the concept of trying to do something like that to get better data, to actually get a sense of what's really there or not there and involve the few guys that are involved in the fishery in getting the data, and then, I mean, they've got a stake in it, and they're going to be affected by whichever way we draw lines, and so get them involved in the process, perhaps, and that's something worth thinking about.

DR. CHEUVRONT: To follow-up with what Mel was saying, he's speaking in the plural, and I think we're really talking singular here. Just to give you all a little bit of history, I believe there are four permits for the Northern Zone, and there are two high-liners, I believe, that have permits in all three zones, but they don't fish the Northern Zone. There were two participants, at one time, in the Northern Zone, and one of those permit holders in the Northern Zone passed away a few years ago, and the other permit holder bought out his operation and has both permits on other vessels up there, and so there is one operation in the Northern Zone, and so you're talking about really now one operation active in the Northern Zone.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I kind of agree with Mel. At least for the golden crab part, I'm wondering if that can be done, since it's just a couple of people, if there's a way to do that with an EFP. The shrimp area, we promised those guys -- They came to us at the last minute, when we were trying to finalize that, and so the rock shrimp people, and we said, can you just let us go on with this amendment, and they had plenty of data, and I don't feel like we need an EFP for that area, because I feel like they already came with track lines and a lot of other things, and I think that the question is about kind of the buffer for the coral in that particular area and can we move that particular line that was of concern a little bit, and so, to me, I don't even know if the golden crab part needs to go out for scoping, because I would rather that go through an EFP, but the rock shrimp, the shrimp transit, and then the discussion of new areas, I am good with all of those going out for scoping, and so that's kind of how I feel about it.

I feel like we definitely made a commitment to the rock shrimp folks that we would come back, and we asked them to let us finalize that amendment anyway, because we were right at the last minute, and we had been working on it for so long, but we promised that we would come back on that one line.

DR. COLLIER: Given your previous suggestion about waiting for January until we have the models better fleshed out and the SSC has really reviewed it and looked into it, would it be better to separate these out into a coral and a shrimp, two separate amendments, because the shrimp could go on by itself and then the coral could go on by itself.

MS. MCCAWLEY: You mean the rock shrimp and the shrimp transit go in one amendment and then you're talking about the new areas going in a different amendment, and is that what you're saying? I don't know if I understand.

DR. COLLIER: Yes, but, now that I think about it, changing the rock shrimp would still be a coral amendment at that time.

MS. MCCAWLEY: So are you changing your mind?

DR. COLLIER: Well, I mean, you could split them out if you like.

DR. CRABTREE: It would make sense to me to split them out, even if it has to be an amendment of two plans, because you're dealing with two separate constituencies, and the rock shrimp guys are penaeid shrimp guys, and they're going to care about the transit issues, and I agree with Jessica. I think the transit is pretty straightforward, and I think we have all the information that we really need on the rock shrimp side of it, and so that would be my recommendation there.

On the EFP side, if you wanted to do something on golden crab, it's not clear to me exactly what we would do with an EFP though, and I normally think of -- If it's we want to know if there's coral there, then you need some researcher to go out and actually survey and look if it's there, and I'm not sure how an EFP with the golden crab guys would exactly get you that.

MR. BELL: So it's one guy, one operation? The kind of data that I guess we would get from that is actual presence or absence, real-time data, but that may be a -- Related to the crabs, and then I guess the habitat itself.

DR. CRABTREE: You would get information if he saw coral on his traps when he hauled it, or I'm not -- That's what I am not sure exactly what, and I don't think we have any funding to put an observer onboard, and so it would just be self-reported, and I would be happy to -- We could look into that, if one of them wants to do it, but I'm just not sure how that would really get at the issue.

DR. COLLIER: Another way to look at the exempted fishing permit would be to consider ways to monitor this fishery, have them develop methods that would work for the golden crab fishery. Right now, we have -- VMS, they have indicated, will not work in the fishery, and pingers appear to be -- It's a fishery that operates a little bit too deep for pingers to be successful as mechanisms to figure out where they're operating, and so trying to figure out a way to monitor this fishery could be considered a way for an exempted fishing permit, I guess.

MR. POLAND: To that point, Roy?

DR. CRABTREE: Yes, and, if you could explore ways to monitor the fishery in the existing areas though, then you wouldn't need anything. It would only be if they had to go into the closed areas in order to, and that's where I am not seeing the connection, necessarily.

MS. MCCAWLEY: The current Gulf EFP for golden crab, what are they testing on that Gulf EFP? I thought that it was partly looking to see where the crabs were.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes, it's mostly to see if there are crabs there and if it would support a fishery.

MR. GRINER: That was my question, too. I mean, it seems like they would want to go look for crab instead of looking for coral. I mean, I think they can -- They don't want to go set their traps on the coral. They want it on the mud, but are they -- Is he wanting these new areas because there are no crabs where they're allowed to fish now? Is that why they are catching so low of the quota?

DR. COLLIER: One of the reasons for the request, in addition to competition with the other fishermen, was he felt that he had lost some of his historic fishing spots when they had developed these access areas, and he wants to have access to his historic fishing spots.

MR. GRINER: Okay, and so that would tell me that -- If, historically, he was fishing there and there were crab there, there is probably not coral there.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Also, there was some research that was done by South Carolina DNR in the 1980s that showed that there were crabs north of where he is currently fishing, but there has not been any golden crab fishing since the 1980s up by where he was fishing then, and there were areas -- The bottom was described, at that time, as not -- Some of the area was described as not having coral, and so it's not clear what the bottom type was for sure, because what was reported at that time was just what came up in the trap, and so presence/absence kinds of things, and so we don't know if there are still crab there or what the situation is.

MR. CONKLIN: I remember that he said that he was removing a ton of old ghost gear from that 1980s fishery when he came and talked to us a few years ago, and it seemed like there was competition and pressure, and they're all constrained to one small area, and he is doing like a service, as far as cleaning up the bottom of the gear of the fishermen that didn't know what they were doing. I think we were in Ponte Vedra when they told us that, a few years ago.

MR. POLAND: What does the committee want to do? What kind of guidance do we want to give to staff?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Just one more time, are we going to learn additional information from the SSC after they review that model, and is there additional information that we should wait to have before we go out to scoping? I guess that's one of my big issues. I definitely want to scope this, but it's just the timing of the scoping, say November versus January, that I'm trying to figure out which one would be best, and so I don't want to lose out on having some real great information and being able to take that to scoping if there's going to be something like that coming out of that October SSC meeting.

DR. COLLIER: You will have additional information that you do not currently have, and so you will have the information that's been collected. The mapping and the ROV dive information will be included in those probability models that aren't currently available, but that's different than the shrimp transit.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Maybe we can hear what others think, but I am wondering if maybe there is a possibility for the committee to see this in December, after the SSC meeting, that we can see some of that and then consider scoping for January. I also still come back to I don't know if golden crab needs to be scoped. I really just think, on some sort of EFP, that I would pull it out of

here, but the rest of the items go forward, and, whether that's in one document or two documents, I'm not sure.

MR. BELL: So two documents, just shrimp, and so let's say we take golden crab out of this and now we're just talking shrimp, and we're talking transit, and a separate document that just deals with transit and then one that deals with -- That's what you're --

MS. MCCAWLEY: I guess that's my confusion. Would you just put transit in a document by itself, and then you would put the rock shrimp areas plus the new areas in a different document by itself? I don't know.

MR. BELL: Part of my selfish desire, I guess, was to see the transit thing move pretty quickly, because all we need is another cold winter and, bam, there we are again, and I would rather not go through that again, and so I would like to see the transit stuff resolved as quickly as we can, but I appreciate the need to deal with the rock shrimp as well, but that was one -- I think taking the golden crab out simplifies it a little bit, but I don't know how long it's going to take to still work through with those together.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, there is a need to get the shrimp transit issue resolved, because that -- I had a lot of phone calls from shrimpers when we did the closures, because they wanted to go fish in open areas, but then they couldn't transit back in, and so there is the need to deal with that, and I think it's a pretty easy one to deal with. If you think the rock shrimp is going to get more involved, then maybe we should just deal with the transit.

MR. POLAND: All right. I think Jessica is going to attempt a motion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let me attempt a motion here. I am going to have four or five parts. **So remove the golden crab from this document, separate the shrimp transit into its own document, and then, just to clarify, there will be a document that has the rock shrimp and the new coral areas. Also, I was thinking that all this comes back to the committee in December, after the SSC looks at it, for possible scoping in January.** Mel, are you thinking that the transit doesn't need to be scoped, or it gets scoped sooner, since it's a separate document? Can you weigh-in on that?

MR. BELL: Well, the sooner the better, and it's pretty simple, I mean, relatively speaking, and I don't see a lot of issues with it, and so it ought to be able to move pretty quickly if we can give it the path to move forward.

MS. MCCAWLEY: **Okay, and so then maybe that part about bring back to committee in December for possible scoping in January is just the rock shrimp, coral habitat, the CHAPCs part, and the maybe the shrimp transit goes out for scoping between now and December.**

MR. BELL: Yes.

MR. POLAND: Was that a second, Mel?

MR. BELL: That is a second. Yes, sir.

MR. POLAND: Any further discussion on this? Is everybody clear what this is doing? It's just basically breaking everything out of this document and creating a couple of new scoping documents and then moving them forward at whatever pace works best for those documents.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Except for we're dumping golden crab.

MR. POLAND: And we're dumping golden crab. All right. **Any opposition to the motion? The motion stands approved.**

DR. COLLIER: That's it for us.

DR. CRABTREE: One other thing before we leave shrimp. We're all aware that there are plans by the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary to expand, and I believe we're going to have a presentation in December, Brian. On Monday of this week, the Gulf Council's Shrimp AP met and had a presentation to them by the sanctuary, and I got some communications by shrimpers after that meeting requesting that we provide our Shrimp AP an opportunity to comment on the expansion plans, and I had mentioned that to Gregg the other day, but can we do something with that, Brian?

DR. CHEUVRONT: Thanks, Roy, for bringing that up. I am actually actively working on setting up meetings with the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary to have meetings with several of our APs, and we already have it set up with our Habitat AP later, and we're working actively now for them to make presentations to our Snapper Grouper AP when they meet next month, but also with our Shrimp, Mackerel, and we have a few mackerel folks, Coral, and Dolphin Wahoo.

They're all going to be able to have an opportunity to have a presentation and then provide comments, which will all be brought back to the council in December, so that, once the council gets a presentation, they will get all the comments from these APs as well, and so you're going to get a lot of comments as well as your own discussion.

DR. CRABTREE: Thank you, Brian.

MR. CONKLIN: It's my recollection and experience that if you do an EFP that the fishermen are charged with funding it and writing it. If we're going to direct the golden crab guys to do that, we maybe need to send them a letter and tell them that that's what they need to do and shed a little light on how they need to go about it.

DR. CHEUVRONT: We can't tell them that they have to do an EFP. I mean, we can talk with them, and I've been involved with some EFPs before, and my experience was it's a closely-worked-out experience. If the fishermen want to do this, in my experience, and it was working with SERO, who helped guide the process, so that we had to make sure it was something that met the requirements, but it also was a worthwhile endeavor for the fishermen.

They collected the data that were needed and met the legal requirements, so that it would be approved, and it was sort of a three-way collaboration to make sure that it would happen, and it requires a commitment from everybody on their part on how it was going to happen. I mean, Roy had mentioned observers, and we'll have to figure all of that out, how that would work out, and it's going to -- The fishermen will have to make a commitment as to whether they really want to

do that, and it won't just be a matter of, okay, we get to go fishing and just tell me how it's going to be. They're going to have to make a commitment to be able to participate in that.

MR. CONKLIN: So somebody on council staff, probably you, would be like the liaison between the agency and the fishermen, and would we be using staff to write it up?

DR. CHEUVRONT: I'm sure we'll be involved in helping them figure all of this out. We're not going to dump this all on the fishermen and say, here, it's all on you. No, we won't do that. We will work with them in however it needs to be, and I'm sure -- I mean, SERO folks have done this as well, because it's all in our best interest, for all of us, to get the best possible EFP request in when it happens.

MR. CONKLIN: So do you need direction to draft a letter for us to tell you to contact them and to get the ball rolling?

DR. CHEUVRONT: I think pretty much we know the intent of what you all are saying, and so we know to follow-up with them, to talk to them about it.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Just to remind everybody that EFPs have a specific purpose. They are for limited testing, public display, data collection, exploratory fishing, and some other things like that, and so it's not just for anything. It has to be specific to these particular purposes.

MR. POLAND: All right. Does that cover your concerns, Chris?

MR. CONKLIN: It covers them completely.

MR. POLAND: All right. Is there any further discussion for the Joint Habitat Ecosystem, Shrimp, and Golden Crab Committee? All right. Seeing none, we stand adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on September 19, 2019.)

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Certified By: _____ Date: _____

Transcribed By:
Amanda Thomas
October 16, 2019

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