

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

INFORMATION & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Webinar

June 8, 2020

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Other observers and participants attached.

The Information & Education Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened via webinar on Monday, June 8, 2020, and was called to order by Chairman Spud Woodward.

MS. RHODES: Good morning, everybody. Thanks for joining us, and apologies for the delay, for those of you who were on the line waiting, but I think we're all set, and we're going to jump into the material. For starters, I just want to remind everybody on the committee that I'm just going to go ahead and call out your names, as you have your hands raised, and we'll go through the committee that way, and, again, I wanted to remind everybody who is on the Information & Education Committee, since we typically meet once a year, and so just a quick refresher.

We've got Spud Woodward is the Chair, Art Sapp is the Vice Chair, Anna Beckwith, Carolyn Belcher, Chester Brewer, Jeremy Montes, and David Whitaker. That's our committee for the Information & Education Committee, and we're going to go ahead and just dive in. As a quick reminder, I just want to let everybody know that the staff who are going to be playing the lead roles for today are myself, Cameron Rhodes, and Kim Iverson is standing by as staff support, and then our technical support staff is Kelly Klasnick, and so, as council members or members of the public have any questions or concerns, these are some helpful emails for you to reach out to. With that, I am going to go ahead and turn it over to our Committee Chair, Spud Woodward, to take care of the approval of the agenda and the approval of the minutes.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, Cam, and good morning, everybody. Before we get started, I assume we've got Scott hooked up and ready to go?

MS. RHODES: That's right. He is ready and all set.

MR. WOODWARD: Okay. Very good. You have an agenda before you, and the first item of business is Approval of the Agenda. Are there any modifications or additions to the agenda? If not, we will accept it, by consensus. Any hands raised?

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

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Very good. Thank you, everyone. Our next item is Approval of the 2019 Committee Minutes, which you also have in your briefing materials, and are there any modifications or edits? Seeing none, we will accept the minutes as presented, and our next item will be an Advisory Panel Report, and you have a written report in your briefing book, or have an overview, of the most recent advisory panel meeting by Scott Baker, who is with North Carolina Sea Grant, and he is our AP Chair. Scott, thank you, and take off.

MR. BAKER: Thank you, Spud, and thank you, Cameron. Good morning, everyone. As Spud said, this report is in your briefing book, and I'm just going to go through a few of the highlights from this report. This meeting took place via webinar on April 14 and 15, and Cameron stoically led that endeavor, and it worked out really well, and so the four bullet points that we're going to talk about are the best fishing practices campaign, the MyFishCount update, an update on citizen science, and a little conclusion on the AP member/agency outreach campaigns.

With regard to the first bullet, the best fishing practices campaign, we were kind of focused on looking at this effort and considering Regulatory Amendment 29, and that was approved in late

2019, and the council is interested in developing a campaign for awareness for best fishing practices, and so we heard an update about the FishSmart Program, specifically the activities being done in the South Atlantic, and they are basically mirroring some of the previous research efforts that were happening in Florida and on the Gulf coast, where anglers were presented with a descending device after having watched a tutorial, and some of the surveys coming back are showing that most anglers did not have a lot of knowledge about descenders prior to that activity, but, after receiving the activity, they were aware of it, and they were starting to use it.

We also heard about a very interesting project called Tuna Champions, based in Australia, and it's a program that encourages best fishing practices in the bluefin tuna fishery in Australia, and one of the key parts to that program is it relies on local, national, and international identities to help promote best practices for releasing bluefin, and so, in other words, they are using high-profile social media people to help broadcast their message.

We also reviewed a lot of different activities that the Sea Grant programs and the state agencies and the council staff have put together with regard to best fishing practices, and, basically, in a nutshell, it's using a highly-interactive media to engage stakeholders. Some of the AP feedback with regard to those three presentations was looking at potential partners might be the International Gamefish Association, Bass Pro Shops, Guy Harvey, Shimano, CCA, and also just run-of-the-mill tackle shops.

We also looked at the council's draft webpage focused on best fishing practices. Overall, it was very well done, and I think Cameron is going to talk about that later. Some of the specific feedback that we had was ensuring that the webpage was compatible with mobile devices and making some of the buttons more prominent, and possibly incorporating a call to action on the website, on the tutorial, so that, after people, having watched the video -- Encourage them to actually do something.

Generally, just very little other things, and it was very well done, and, considering the changing state of all the information, it would be best to include a link to a webpage that had all the other links. Moving on, we heard about an update on MyFishCount and about its eventual move over to the Angler Action Foundation, and we saw the really great communication and outreach initiatives that the council is doing in putting this endeavor in front of all kinds of people, and it's really impressive, the amount of work that they've done. We also talked about hashtags and commonalities among things.

With regard to the Citizen Science Program, the third bullet, we received an update on the Release and FISHstory project, including other projects under development, such as a rare species observation and the diver project for data-limited species, but, overall, that was very well received, and everybody was impressed with that program.

Some of the feedback that we were asked to provide was about audience, the appropriate audiences, and voluntary engagement associated with the citizen science projects, and, just specifically, some of the members suggested that the council reach out to natural certificate programs, such as with Cooperative Extension or other programs that have a certificate program and consider incorporating the Center for Fisheries Electronic Monitoring at Mote Marine Lab, and they do a lot of video analysis, and so they already have a suite of volunteers that are well versed in species ID and can do this for free.

We also encouraged staff to look out to local fishing clubs and schools, to try to incorporate this into local classrooms, and to also partner more broadly to students in grades K through 12, and there are some formal programs that move cutting-edge science into the classroom.

Moving on to the last discussion point, we talked about the AP members and the agency outreach projects, and, basically, we were tasked, before the meeting, with talking about how COVID had impacted our programs and what things we had been working on and how could we better facilitate exchanges among advisory panel members moving forward, and so everybody participated in this, and I don't want to go through the laundry list, and I will just pick out one item from each representative that attended.

The Caribbean Council was focusing on recipes and videos for lesser-known species, like lionfish, and Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary is looking at a more digital approach, and I should say that everyone here did say that COVID had greatly impacted their ability to have boots-on-the-ground education and outreach activities, and most things were switching to digital, but Gray's Reef was looking at Exploring by the Seat of Your Pants, which is a new program for fourth to eighth graders.

The Division of Marine Fisheries in North Carolina was looking at interactive games and tools via social media to help provide educational materials to parents. North Carolina Sea Grant has done a couple of things, and one thing related to the commercial industry was we developed Fish Camp, which is a networking opportunity for commercial fishermen interested in learning the ins and outs of running a commercial seafood business.

FWC did a great survey, state-wide survey, with the anglers to identify preferences for communication, and there's a lot of really good information in there, particularly the fact that anglers suggested that best fishing practices be a component for obtaining a state fishing license, which I found that interesting.

As far as Sea Grant, they're developing a sargassum fact sheet, which is under development, and it's discussing what homeowners can do to remove sargassum from their yards. Mark Phelps is a charter operator, and he basically echoed what all of us had been hearing from the industry, which is that very little business has been happening, and the process of receiving assistance through the CARES Act was pretty slow.

Georgia DNR was staying connected by using Microsoft Teams, and South Carolina DNR was piloting some new work on social marketing, with regard to why people don't recycle oyster shells. Wild Ocean Market was involved with some advocacy work with the shark fin bill, and, also, they were reconfiguring their business model, based on retail markets not being able to handle as much seafood as the wholesale business with restaurants.

Finally, just to wrap up, we were kind of tasked with what would make our job easier, and how would it be better to provide information to the council and to the AP, and quite a few people suggested that, if it was possible, that we move to having an AP meeting twice a year, once being in-person and maybe once via webinar, and perhaps maybe one of those could be shorter, but it seems like we never have enough time, of course, when we get together and a year has passed

since we've met. The final action of business is we did elect a Vice Chair, and that is Shelly Krueger with Florida Sea Grant, and, with that, Mr. Chairman, that concludes my report.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, Scott, and thank you for your leadership of the advisory panel, and thanks to all the folks that serve on the advisory panel. They were very engaged, and it was new for everyone to do this through a virtual format, but probably the most capable people to do that are folks who are in the communications and outreach world, because they've been doing it for a while, but we appreciate it. Are there any questions from the committee for Scott?

MS. RHODES: I am not seeing any hands raised at this time, Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. Thank you, Cam, and thank you, Scott, very much. We appreciate the presentation, and, again, we appreciate your leadership. We will move on to our next agenda item, which is the Best Fishing Practices Campaign Update, and I will turn it over to you, Cam.

MS. RHODES: Thank you. Good morning, again, everybody, and thanks for being here. I'm going to truncate this a little bit, for the sake of time, but I think we're still going to be able to cover quite a bit of material here today.

What we're going to do is talk about best fishing practices and some of the ongoing campaign-related efforts that have been happening out of the council office, but, first, I think it would be important to just review some things that you all discussed in the past, and Christina Wiegand from council staff had put together a helpful document for your December council meeting to really address some of the best practices materials and resources that are already available from state agencies and other partners, and even some folks in the private industry and magazines, and we wanted to highlight some of the great work that's already going on, to really pinpoint some of the tools that might be most useful to us as we engage in this best fishing practices conversation, following the approval of Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 29.

With that in mind, I'm just going to walk through, very briefly, some of the different items that we were able to find when Christina did her initial search on Google, and these were the types of items that were able to come up easily, and so, with that, Christina, I think, made the very smart call that, if this is what she was able to easily stumble upon, it's very likely that the information provided here in this presentation is the same kind of tools that folks in the industry and in our fisheries are actually able to access as well.

With that, I'm going to go ahead and hop in here, and all of you are quite familiar with FishSmart, and, again, I'm not going to click on these individual links. You have them in the briefing book, and you've seen them before in other conversations, but it's just key to keep in mind that FishSmart has tons of materials available, very widespread, and they're doing lots of work when it comes to best fishing practices that are based in best available science, and so it's definitely key to keep that in mind.

In addition, the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries has a number of brochures that are available to folks relative to best practices and ethical angling, and then they've also been very much involved with some of the research that's ongoing relative to different kinds of recompression techniques and what the public seems to most prefer.

North Carolina Sea Grant has a fantastic blog that has highlighted some of the council projects and other best-practices-related topics, including issues of release mortality and things of that nature, and so they're really covering lots of great information in that blog, and I highly encourage folks to go take a look at Hook, Line, and Science. There's lots of good info in there.

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources also some really great blogs available, and they highlight some best practices and recompression of fish experiencing barotrauma and some helpful videos as well that are hosted on their website, and so there's lots of good interactions taking place, both online and in public outreach opportunities.

The South Carolina Wildlife Federation has a tutorial that I know all council members are quite familiar with, and I'm certain that some folks on our call today are also familiar with that tutorial, and it was put together with NOAA Fisheries and some staff from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the tutorial has lots of really, really great information and videos and graphics and helpful content to help folks better understand why best fishing practices are important and what tools are available to them when they're fishing on the water and possibly encountering fish that are showing signs of barotrauma or other related injuries.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources also has blog posts and helpful videos available on their website, and they are actively involved in in-person engagements relative to best practices and handing out descending devices as part of that FishSmart project that has been ongoing, and they are also really hands-on when it comes to dockside surveys and interacting with folks in that way.

Georgia Sea Grant has been actively involved in the ongoing work with the Nature Conservancy and their forums to discuss best practices and other fishing-related topics with the Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, and so their discussion topics include best practices, along with some other items, and attendees who participate in those workshops are also walking away with a free descending device, and so there's lots of encouraging things happening in in-person interactions on behalf of Georgia Sea Grant and the Nature Conservancy.

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has a slew of available resources related to best fishing practices, in addition to the work that they do on the ground interacting with folks and discussing barotrauma mitigation devices and different tools that are already available to folks or the kinds of tools that they can make at home with the materials that they have available to them.

They are also really active on providing information online, and so there's a catch and release brochure that folks can access, and there's also a number of programs, like the Catch a Florida Memory, the Saltwater Angler Recognition Program, and all of that ties back in some way to best fishing practices, and it might not be the overall focus of that program, but they certainly reference some really key, important fish handling practices through these different communications that they have.

FWC also has other publications, including a dedicated webpage called Fish Handling, and that webpage is really great. There's lots of key information, amazing photographs, helpful videos, and there's lots of good stuff in there for folks to access, and they have a series of helpful videos on their YouTube Channel, and I strongly encourage folks to take a look. I have actually relied on these YouTube videos myself when trying to rig a descending device down in Key West, and so

they have definitely helped me, and I think they're also going to be quite helpful to lots of other users who might need to turn to them for additional information on how to go about rigging a descending device or using an eggcrate as a descending device.

In addition, FWC has been actively involved in a study to get a better feel for the barriers to descending device use in Florida, and that study has produced some really interesting results, and I strongly encourage folks to, again, take a look at those.

Florida Sea Grant, much like FWC, has lots of available resources and programs, and agents go out and interact with folks on the dock and in public spaces, trying to encourage them to use descending devices, and they also interact with outdoor writers, to also encourage them to promote the use of descending devices.

The catchandrelease.org website is super helpful, and it's full of really great information, and I strongly encourage folks to take a look at that one as well, if you haven't already, and all these resources that folks, our partners, have been putting together definitely go a long way in telling us the kinds of tools that seem to be the most preferred by the public, and we'll get into that in a little bit more detail in a few minutes.

Before we hop into some information about analytics and things of that nature and some of our ongoing best-practices-related campaign stuff, I also wanted to point out some other groups that have been actively involved in the promotion of best fishing practices, and it's exciting to see this grow even further.

ReleaSense is a great one, and they have a really beautiful website, and I definitely think it's going to be one of those websites that people gravitate towards, because there is such pretty imagery, and it definitely captures your attention when you first land on that webpage.

Sportfishing Magazine published an article written by Spud Woodward, which was talking about the importance of best fishing practices for maintaining the future fisheries, and it was a really great article, and it covers a lot of information, and Spud did a great job encapsulating much of the really key points that needed to be driven home, so that anglers are aware of the kinds of things that are coming, but also have a better idea of why these things are even valuable to them, moving forward.

Then we would be absolutely remiss if we didn't mention Brendan Runde and his ongoing work with his videos. What you see here on the screen is a video of a red grouper that they released with the North Carolina CMAST Lab, and this has been a super compelling video, and we've shown it to a number of folks, including many of you on the council, but also members of the public, and it seems to be one of the most compelling barotrauma-related videos that we've been able to share, and so it's super helpful, and it really does indicate that these best practices do lead to fish swimming away, and so lots of good work going on from all different areas of fisheries as a whole.

I am not going to spend a lot of time going through that video, but I do think it's something, if you haven't seen it, that you should definitely go check out, and go look at this presentation on the council's website. It's certainly a compelling video, and it has some really helpful information in the narrative that Brendan Runde provides.

Let's jump into this available analytics conversation. As you all are aware, there are analytics provided for some of the digital resources that are available, and we were very fortunate to have our partners be willing to share those analytics with us, and so a big thanks to all of them, and this includes our state agency partners and Sea Grant partners.

They shared analytics relative to the best practices resources that they have already put together, and those are quite helpful, especially with us moving forward and trying to figure out what we might like to do as a council for our best practices campaign. We can't thank them enough for their willingness to share that information with us, and it lets us know what kinds of tools tend to be preferred by the public, and that's really what we're after here, is making sure that, whatever we put together, whatever we highlight, is something that is engaging and really grabs the attention of folks, so that they keep coming back to it for additional information.

I just wanted to give you a little background on some of the analytics that folks provided to us, and I'm not going to go into every single thing that people shared with us, but one thing to keep in mind is that FWC's wreckfish handling webpage has had -- At the time that we asked for this analytic, which was, I believe, toward the end of last year, and so it's already been a while since this has been updated, but 15,880 page views had occurred on that page alone, and the average time spent on that page is three minutes, which is quite impressive. That means that people are actually digging through and reading material, and so that has reached 15,880 people, or at least it has had that many page views, and that's really encouraging, to see that that webpage is gaining that kind of a following.

In addition, FWC milkcrate descending device video has received 16,000 views on YouTube, and that's great. It's really impressive to see that. At the South Atlantic Council, admittedly, we have not had that kind of reach before, and so, when we see 16,000 views on a YouTube video, we get really excited about it, and it's encouraging to see that that many people are gravitating to those resources, and hopefully using what they are learning from them out on the water on their next trip.

In addition, the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources blog, which discussed mitigation of barotrauma, had 2,000 page views, and the average time spent in that blog was, again, three minutes, and that's very impressive, and it's good to see that people are actually reading through the material, and it's really helpful to know that that's in fact happening and that these engaging resources seem to be performing the best overall.

Just to give you kind of a grand, sweeping approach, we're not looking at brochures as they're handed out to folks at in-person outreach events, and we were focusing more on the digital component here and the different kinds of tools that people can access online. What we found was that blogs, videos, tutorials, and interactive webpages seem to perform the best overall, and so they have the highest engagement among users, which is, again, very encouraging to see. With that, I'm going to pause for a second, before we move on, and see if anybody has any questions that they might like to ask.

I do see that we have a comment here from Steve Gilbert relevant to the discussion, and so that's great news. Thanks for sharing that, Steve. For your reference, council members, he wants the committee to be aware that the NOAA BREP grant that funded offshore angler outreach in the

South Atlantic will shortly have a final report available, and so that will be really nice, to be able to access that information, and so stay tuned for that.

We're just going to go ahead and keep plugging along here. Before we hop into the webpage discussion, which is what I think much of our focus is going to be today, and I know we're running short on time here, but that's all right, and we're going to keep plugging away and hopefully not take up too much time of everybody's lunch, but one thing that I wanted to note is that we are trying to develop relationships with influential members of the sportfishing community.

This is something that I'm sure that many of you are familiar with, and we've discussed this before, but this is something that we addressed with the advisory panel in April, and we really thought it was important to drive this message home again, and an influencer is a person with the ability to influence potential buyers of a product or service by promoting or recommending the items on social media.

Many of you are aware of an influencer, whether it be in the fishing community or in your personal lives, and folks know what an influencer is and how they really do have an impact on the followership that they have, and so companies and campaigns are actively using influencers, in order to get their message across, and there's no reason that the council can't do that as well. We, course, as a quasi-federal agency, have to tread lightly with some of our relationships and things of that nature.

However, there is still ample opportunity for us to work with folks who are heavily involved in the fishing industry who are passionate about the use of best fishing practices and have a large following, so that they can reach people in a way that, frankly, the council will never really be able to, just based on the nature of what we do as a management body.

With that, as we've noted in the past, we do have a developing relationship with Fly Navarro, and Anna Beckwith is actually the one who suggested that we reach out to Fly, and that relationship is ongoing, and we were supposed to do a video series in May of this year, and we are really excited about it.

However, with COVID-19, we had to, unfortunately, cancel that, but it's just postponed for now, and we're hoping to get something going maybe later this fall, or hopefully sometime next year, but Fly is going to help us out with a video series highlighting some of the best fishing practices, the different tools that are available, and why they are important, and so we're really looking forward to this partnership, and we're looking forward to lots of others that might arise in the next couple of months, especially as the announcement of this amendment makes more attraction and things start to get implemented down the road. Just to give you a little bead on Fly, this is Fly's energy.

That gives you a little idea of the kind of personality that Fly has, and he brings a lot of energy to his videos, and he does have a large following, not only from the recreational community, but also from the commercial community and others who are just interested in fishing overall, and so he's definitely a good person for us to be working with, and we're excited about the future of that partnership.

With that, I think it's really important that we as a group discuss any others that we might think could be good folks for us to reach out to relative to these best fishing practices and any other issues that might arise on the council level that we might want to partner up with folks, to see if they're willing to spread the message for us, and some ideas that we've thrown around in the council office would be Deer Meet for Dinner or Nick Stanczyk, and, of course, council members like you, and so we already have some council members who are active on social media and are engaging with followers on a regular basis, highlighting videos and things of that nature, and so any kind of work that can be done relative to best fishing practices would be very much appreciated.

I am going to pause here and see if we have any raised hands. Does anybody want to make a suggestion relative to folks that we might consider reaching out to with these best fishing practices in mind? I am not seeing any hands at the moment. All right, and so we'll just go ahead and keep carrying on.

This is going to be the real meat-and-potatoes of our discussion today. As noted earlier by the I&E AP Chair, Scott Baker, we did work on a draft webpage to highlight best fishing practices, at your request, and so, at a previous meeting, we had discussed having a landing page, where folks can access information about best fishing practices, and we followed some of the inspiration from the Gulf Council. They put together a really great Fishing for Our Future webpage, and we took a look at that before we brought this webpage together and started pulling some ideas for how we might like to structure our own.

With their help and their support, we started to get to the root of the kinds of things that we wanted to highlight within our region, working with our state partners and Sea Grant and any other agency that might have a stake in this best fishing practices push, and that's definitely going to be highlighted from our office, and so I wanted to give you a quick look at Fishing for our Future.

This is the Gulf Council's webpage dedicated to best fishing practices, and it has imagery in here, which we found, from our advisory panel, was absolutely crucial, to make sure that we had lots of imagery and graphics, and they've got a science portal in here, to really discuss the problem with release mortality, and they have some key highlighted best practices for catching and releasing fish, and then they're got this really great map in here, and, if you click on this map, it takes you to the resources that are relevant to your state, or your region.

We modeled much of what we put together on this platform, and so we're really grateful that they went ahead and did this first, and we were able to follow suit, and so thanks to all the folks at the Gulf Council for their hard work on this, and now we will take a look at ours, and I think it would be helpful to have this really be discussion-based, if anybody wants to weigh-in on things they like, things they don't like, and whether or not you have any suggestions for a different kind of look, and any kind of discussion here will be very helpful, because, ideally, we would like to be able to have this available to the public for their use ahead of the implementation of Amendment 29, if it is approved.

Just to give you a brief overview, we start with this graphic, which was designed by our own Allie Iberle, and she's really, really great with graphic design, and she put together this really nice, engaging tool for folks, and this is going to be a sticker that we're going to hand out at events highlighting best fishing practices.

Then we've got this articulate storyline in here, and this is the same kind of program that was used to develop that tutorial that we talked about earlier, and that tutorial is actually in here, and so, if you click that, that takes you to the tutorial, and you can go through it, as you normally would, and you can go back to the main menu, and you can click on state resources, and, again, we're highlighting that same kind of format that the Gulf had.

Let's say you wanted to take a look at Florida. It would take you to a webpage on our site that highlights many of the popular videos from Florida, their webpages and blogs and other resources that we think are really important to constantly highlight for folks, like FishSmart and their ongoing work and brochures, and that's in there for each of the states, and so, for example, for North Carolina, we go here, and you can see all the North Carolina resources, and we felt that it was really important for folks to have access to everybody's resources, but, if they wanted to just look at North Carolina, they could do that.

If we go back to previous here, we have included FishSmart, and so you get lots of information on what's in FishSmart and the really key science-based best practices that we want people to take away. Then, of course, we have a get involved section here, so folks know that they can download the Fish Rules app and keep up-to-date with fishing regulations, and they can become an advisory panel member, and they can participate in some of our pilot projects that are ongoing, both recreational reporting and citizen science.

Then, as you scroll down past this video and the articulate storyline up here, Allie, again, made these really nice graphics, to indicate the different kinds of best practices, and we highlight releasing fish, deepwater release, how to recognize the signs of barotrauma, the different kinds of descending devices that are available, and this is straight from the amendment, and we thought that this was really key information, and we also discussed venting, just so folks know that venting is not prohibited, and, if you feel comfortable doing so, you may still vent, but you must have a descending device onboard, and that's where we hop into the upcoming regulations and what folks can expect down the road.

With that, I would like to turn it over, to see if anybody has any questions, any feedback that you might like to offer relevant to this page, and please feel free to share whatever your initial feelings are about it with us, so that we can further hone it and make it available to the public as soon as possible. I am not seeing any hands raised, and I know we're cutting into lunch a little bit here, but I am going to still hold out, to see if anybody chimes in on this discussion.

MR. SAPP: I think you've got a great website there. The biggest hurdle is going to be getting it in front of the right people's eyes, or anybody and everybody's eyes, and, again, you've got the right idea, is reaching out through social media, and Fly being a great avenue, but he does a lot of video, and it's going to be, I would imagine, timing or whatever to get the right people to see it, and that's a great challenge for you.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Art. I appreciate that. I think we're definitely -- We definitely have a challenge ahead, with getting this in front of people, but the AP did offer us some suggestions for making sure that it's very prominent on our own website, and what's nice about this articulate storyline is that anybody can take this and embed it onto their own page, and so that's something that folks can take, and we're hoping that, when we move forward with this relationship with Fly,

we'll really be able to get some of this out in front of folks and hopefully drive them to this page, so that they can get all the information in one spot.

We have a comment from Mel, and thanks, Mel. Mel says very nice work, and we appreciate it. Does anybody else want to weigh-in? All right. Then we will carry on with the rest of our discussion then.

Before we move on from this best practices, I wanted to address upcoming outreach events, and it's no surprise to anybody that our schedule has, obviously, changed quite a bit, as a result of COVID-19, but council staff is still busy working on plans for the future, and we were intending to participate in the ICAST. However, that was sent over to a virtual platform, and now we're deciding whether or not we plan to move forward with it, and we'll have more answers on that in the next couple of days. We'll be discussing that as a team and seeing the direction we might want to go with that.

Like I mentioned earlier, the plan with Fly Navarro had to be postponed, but, again, we're going to bring that back when everything is up and running and we're able to get him to Charleston, so we can plan out our fishing trip and get some really great video footage and work with him on how we can reach out to folks and make sure that they have this information available at their fingertips.

Then there was a plan for the Nature Conservancy and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources to host a best fishing practices trip, and, unfortunately, that was a cancelled as a result of COVID-19, but I shouldn't say cancelled, and hopefully everything will come back online and everything has just been postponed for now, and so this work is still ongoing, and we have a number of events that are still on the calendar, and so, again, we're discussing virtual ICAST, and we're planning to be in Georgia for Georgia CoastFest later this fall, and we're planning to be at the open house for South Carolina, and we're also considering heading up to North Carolina for the North Carolina Fishing Summit.

We're still going to be active on the ground, but we are, as staff, trying to come up with other ways that we can engage folks in more of a virtual capacity, and so, with that, we will hop on out of this presentation, and, again, I'm going to pause for a second and see if anybody has questions. I am not seeing any hands raised at the moment. Spud, we're going to go ahead, if we're all set to turn it over to our next discussion, which is focusing on the I&E AP structure, and are you good for us to move on to that topic?

MR. WOODWARD: That's fine, but I do want to thank you and everybody else for the work you all have done. I think the one theme that has come out of the AP discussions, and I think discussions amongst council members, is a lot of folks are telling the best practice message, and that's great, but the one key thing was to have that message be consistent across all the messengers, so that the public is not confused when they hear it from one source and maybe hear something different, and the good thing is we're seeing consistent messaging, and we're seeing it come from a variety of sources.

A lot of folks value a message depending on the source and not the content of the message, and so, the more credible sources there are for this message, the better off everybody is going to be, and I think the website does a great job of giving people the chance to go back to their home state, or a state where they may fish at on a regular basis, and look and see what that state has to say,

and hopefully what they see at that state echoes what they hear from their fellow fishermen, and so I appreciate the good work you all have done. With that, carry on.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Spud, and, if anybody wants to take some time reviewing that webpage this week, I'm going to leave it up for the rest of the week, so that folks can get in there and take a look at it, and so, if there's something you would like to address, please feel free to shoot me an email about it, and I'm happy to chat with you about any modifications or ideas for how we might present the information.

With that, we'll hop into the discussion on the I&E AP structure, and I'm just going to breeze through this, as you guys had this attachment in your briefing book, but the staff have been talking about ways that we could possibly restructure the advisory panel, and these are just some suggested ideas for how the committee might consider doing that, and what we're really trying to accomplish here is making sure that we're engaging all of our partners that we work with very closely, especially some of our partners up north, as we're having fisheries shift that way, and it's really key for us to increase our dialogue with them and hopefully invite them into some of these discussions, so that we're communicating effectively and spreading the same kinds of messages.

What I am going to point out here is I'm just going to walk through some of the suggested changes, and, again, these are just possible considerations for you all moving forward, and we currently have one designated Sea Grant seat. However, we do have two folks from Sea Grant on the AP, but we do think that it would be beneficial to have all four Sea Grants represented. Since they do so much work that crosses over with us, it would be really helpful to have all four Sea Grant folks there at the meeting and participating in the discussion.

We would like to maintain the four state agency seats, of course, and we work with them a great deal, and having them participate on the AP is hugely helpful, and it would be really nice to facilitate four peer seats. Right now, we have the Gulf Council and the Caribbean Council on the AP, but it would also be nice to have the Mid-Atlantic Council, if they are interested, and have the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission as well, if they're interested. Again, because we do work with them so often, it would be really nice to be able to have them with us during those AP discussions highlighting outreach and communications relative to the fisheries that we manage.

We would like to maintain that Coast Guard seat, and that's very valuable, and it was particularly valuable when we were discussing this best practices amendment. It would be nice to also maintain that SERO seat, and they are able to provide lots of good input from that point of view and from the SERO way of operating, and so it's definitely helpful to have them there with us and participating in those discussions.

Then we have a media seat right now, and that has also proven to be quite helpful, to get that media perspective and how we can share information more effectively, and it's constantly evolving, of course, but having that media seat there really does help ground that discussion, and then it would be really great if we could facilitate having four fishermen seats.

Right now, we have one commercial seat, and we have one recreational seat, and we find that having the fishermen input -- In particular, it was Mark Phelps first meeting in April, and he was absolutely fantastic, and he spoke up a lot during the meeting, and he offered really great guidance and advice, and he provided some realism to some of our approaches for how we thought we might

want to accomplish reaching out to folks, and so he was really helpful for that discussion, and it would be great if we could have more representatives from the different fisheries at the table, so that we can continue this kind of high-level dialogue that we were able to have at this last meeting.

Then, in addition, we, at the moment, have a United States Fish and Wildlife Service seat and a Marine Sanctuaries seat, and those two individuals who hold those seats do a fantastic job, and they're very much engaged, and they offer lots of feedback. However, we thought it would be helpful to have a little more flexibility in those seats, as our needs change over time, and, as we were approaching this, we were thinking about ways that we could do this now and then hopefully not have to readdress this for some time, but it's been a while since the I&E AP was evaluated and since we've had a discussion relevant to how we could structure the AP so we get the most bang for our buck.

Lastly, it was discussed, between myself and Spud, about possibly considering renaming the Information & Education Advisory Panel as well as the Information & Education Committee, and so, with that, I am going to turn it back over to Spud to lead the discussion and see if we have any direction that we might want to take relevant to this.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Cameron, for this great summary, and quick summary, of all these different materials. You guys have done a lot of work, and I'm really excited about it. I just had a couple of points to offer. First, I noticed, in the AP report, that it was suggested that you guys meet twice a year, and maybe one of those could be in-person and one via webinar, and I think that's a great idea, especially since we have so many projects going on right now, and I think it would be great, in order to keep the coordination across all these entities, if you met a couple of times a year, and so I'm definitely supportive of that.

I am supportive of the name change, if you guys want to change the name. I have a little bit of concern about adding so many additional seats, and I'm just not sure where to pick and choose if I was going to cut it back. I mean, maybe not having all of the Sea Grant seats, and I would hope that Sea Grant could possibly coordinate across the different states for their interests, but that's really the only input that I have, is just a little concern about going to so many additional seats, and there are some on the list here that I think are really important, and so I'm having trouble figuring out where to kind of cut back, and that's all I have. Thank you, and I'm not on your committee.

MS. RHODES: Thanks, Jessica. I do have a follow-up question for that, and is your concern mostly based in the cost of having additional seats, or is your concern just over having a larger group, which might be more difficult to have effective discussions?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks for that follow-up question, and I would say it's both.

MS. RHODES: Okay, and so we had discussed that very issue internally as well, and one of the things that came up was that some of these seats, like the Sea Grant seats, wouldn't be on our bill, and so we have some leeway there, where, if we were to add those individuals, we wouldn't have to cover their cost of travel and things like that, whereas, for those additional fishermen seats, that would definitely be something that we would have to take on as an additional cost.

Right now, I believe there are sixteen members on the AP, and this would raise it to twenty-one, and so it would be a difference, and I definitely hear your concerns on that, but I think it's possible that we wouldn't incur too much of a cost, especially since quite a few of the people who are the AP now are local, and that doesn't mean that that won't change, but that's just some food for thought.

As far as discussion goes, this group has been really, really great with participating in discussion, and I think we could handle the addition of a few other folks, but, yes, we definitely don't want it to become such a large group that it's a little unwieldy and we can't ever get some real clear direction on what to do moving forward, but, because we don't do motions under this advisory panel, it's a little bit more free flowing, and the discussion doesn't feel as tied to eventually coming to some consensus. Everybody can offer their input, and we'll just provide all of that input to you for your consideration with management measures moving forward.

MR. BREWER: Thank you very much for this presentation. It's wonderful to see this thing taking shape. It's been a while coming, but it's going to be a very, very good thing. I had two concerns or questions. Number one is the same as Jessica, and I'm a little concerned about the expense of going to twenty-one folks, and I don't know what the magnitude would be. I'm not concerned about there being a lot of folks on there, and I think that's a good thing, but I am a little concerned about the money, and maybe John or Kelly or somebody could speak to that.

The other question I had is, and maybe it's in the materials and I missed it, but what are you thinking about changing the name to? I agree that calling it I&E is probably not terribly descriptive of what this group is doing, and so I'll sign-off on that, but I am curious to know what name you're thinking about.

MS. RHODES: We had discussed the possibility with Spud, and that's in our potential draft motions, but we had talked about changing it to the Outreach & Communications Advisory Panel, as well as the Outreach & Communications Committee.

MR. WOODWARD: Do you have a follow-up on that, Chester?

MR. BREWER: It sounds good to me.

MR. WOODWARD: Okay.

MR. POLAND: Great presentation, and I just wanted to say that I kind of share some similar concerns that Chester and Jessica have already raised, not necessarily as far as it getting too large and unwieldy and folks not being able to get their input in, because, I mean, this is a public outreach group, and those are usually Type A people, and so I think anyone that would volunteer for this wouldn't have a problem interjecting themselves and getting their point heard, but, as far as cost, I don't want to say I have a concern with it, but it's just I would kind of like to look at it.

Kind of going down the list, if the four state Sea Grants are willing to pay to come, that's great. Looking at the peer seats, would that be -- I mean, right now, I know the Gulf and Caribbean have representatives on it, and do they pay currently, or do we foot the bill for that, because, I mean, I could see us asking those other councils to pay their way, and that might be a little cost savings

there, but, really, I feel like this cost discussion, if we decide to do this, we can really flesh it out at Executive Finance.

MS. RHODES: I believe -- My understanding, Steve, is that the two councils that are currently participating pay for their folks to attend, and, in recent years, Emily Muehlstein hasn't been able to come in person, just because of other conflicts, and there's always something going on in the Gulf at the same time as the South Atlantic, but she's been able to participate via webinar, and so we've had some folks do that, rather than come to the meeting, and I think the idea would be for the Mid-Atlantic and for ASMFC -- It would be for us to approach them with the idea in mind that they would be footing the bill for their staff to attend.

What I can do, and maybe, Spud -- We do have another question or comment from Kyle, and so I'll turn it over to Kyle in a second, but, before that, it might be helpful for us to wait to do this until Full Council, and I can get with Kelly, and we can crunch some rough numbers and get a rough estimate of what we expect the difference in cost might be, and maybe that will help folks feel a little bit more comfortable about this moving forward, but I will go ahead and turn it over to Kyle.

DR. CHRISTIANSEN: Great presentation, Cameron, and you just answered my question, and that is that multiple people have, I guess, expressed concerns about the cost, but I haven't heard a dollar figure yet. I mean, how can we be concerned unless -- Is it \$10 a seat, or are we looking at \$10,000 a seat, and so, until you ask to put a number to it, our concerns are based in myth, and so, the quicker you can do that, the more you can at least get us onboard to say this is a good or not good thing. I mean, is there anybody who can put an idea of what is an average cost per seat?

MS. RHODES: I certainly can't, and I don't know if Kelly is prepared to weigh-in on that. It might be better for us to table this discussion for Full Council, and I would turn to Spud on that and see how you might like us to handle that, Spud, or John Carmichael, for direction on how we might like to handle that, but I think that might be the best way for us to move forward, is if Kelly and I do some number-crunching and consider what this might look like, and then you can reevaluate this come Full Council. Is that satisfactory to you, Spud?

MR. WOODWARD: That's fine. I do think, though, that the intent of this was to not disproportionately increase the financial burden on the council by doing this, but the expectation, as Cameron has described, is that some of these additional seats would be self-supporting, and so we can pin that down and analyze what the council-supported seats would cost, and we can come back at Full Council and discuss this, if everybody's comfort level would be better with that, and I'm certainly fine with that.

DR. CHRISTIANSEN: That answers my question, and, like I said, we can have all the concerns we want until we actually have a number.

MR. WOODWARD: Right. Let me carry on with the discussion about the name change, and perhaps we can dispense with that while we're convened as a committee. Cam and I discussed it, and I really started it by saying the Information & Education sounds a little bit of a mismatch with the current functions and priorities of the entity that we call the Information & Education Committee, and so, given that we're looking at doing some restructuring, and we're certainly changing our focus, I thought it would be a good time for the committee to consider a name change

that better matches that title with our function, and so I will just throw that out to the committee, and, if folks are like-minded, I certainly would welcome someone to make the required motions to effect such a change.

MR. BREWER: **I would like to move the approval of Draft Motion Number 3.**

MR. WOODWARD: Do we have a second? Any hands?

MS. RHODES: Steve Poland seconds.

MR. WOODWARD: All right. **We have a motion for consideration by the committee to change the name of the Information & Education Committee to the Outreach & Communications Committee.** Any discussion on this motion? **Any opposition to the motion? Then we'll consider that motion accepted by consensus.**

Now that we have changed the name of the committee, obviously now we have a mismatch between the name of our advisory panel and our committee, and so, with that, I would certainly invite anyone on the committee to address that.

MR. POLAND: **I move to change the name of the Information & Education Advisory Panel to the Outreach & Communications Advisory Panel.**

MR. WOODWARD: All right. We have a motion by Steve. Do I have a second?

MS. BECKWITH: I will second that.

MR. WOODWARD: Thank you, Anna. All right, and so we have a motion for consideration by the committee. Any discussion on the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? Then we'll consider the motion accepted by consensus.**

Thank you all very much for taking care of that, and we will do our diligence on addressing the question of cost for the advisory panel structure, and we'll bring that back when we convene at Full Council. Any other business to come before the now Outreach & Communications Committee? Then thank you, everyone, for your participation in our committee meeting, and thank you, Cam, and thanks to everyone at the council for all your good work. We will be back in discussion about this later in the week. We will stand adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on June 8, 2020.)

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Amanda Tomas
July 22, 2020

SAFMC June Council Meeting

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