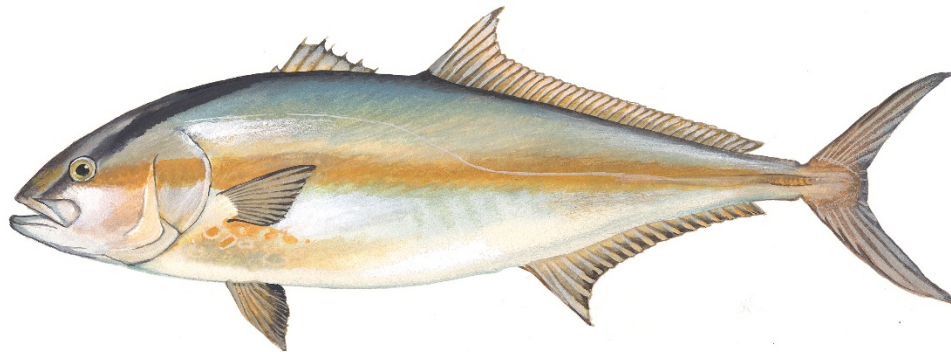




Scoping Overview

Snapper Grouper Amendment 49 (Greater Amberjack and Recreational Annual Catch Targets)

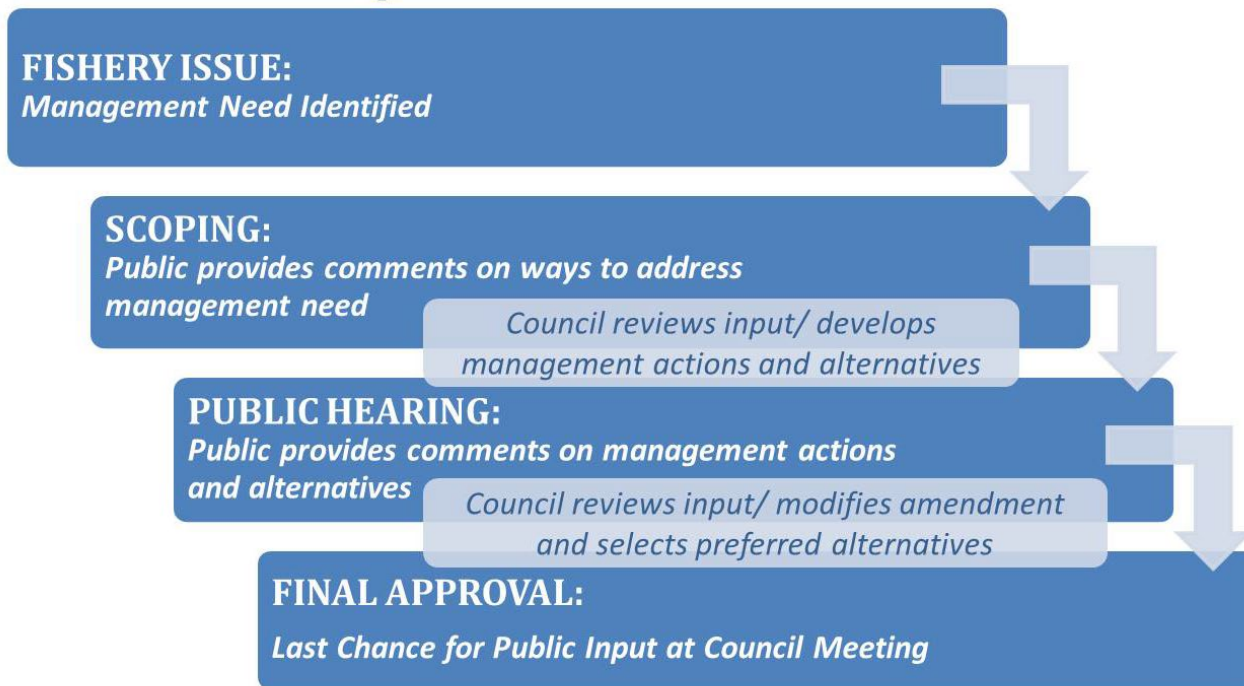


April 2021



What is scoping?

Council Process – *FMP/Plan Amendment*



Scoping is the first and best opportunity to make suggestions for the Councils to consider *before* an amendment is developed.

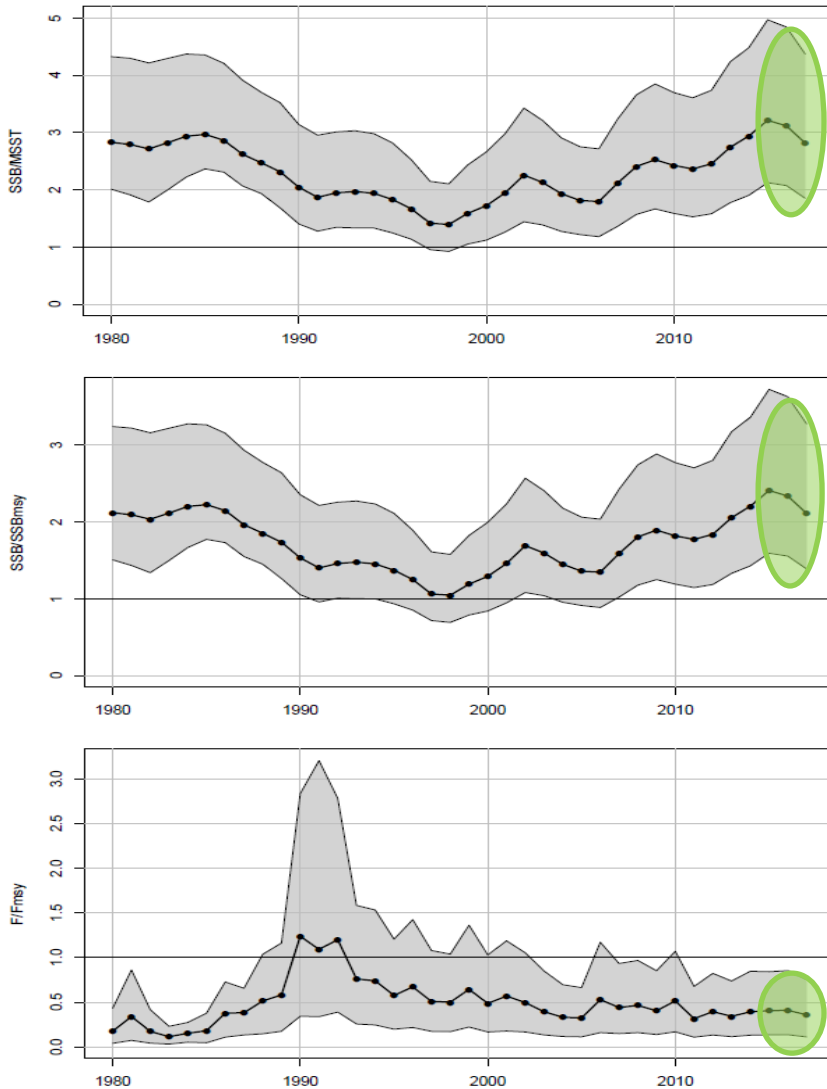


Outline

- **Background – Stock Status for Greater Amberjack**
- **Overview of Greater Amberjack Commercial Fishery**
- **Overview of Greater Amberjack Recreational Fishery**
- **Proposed Actions**
- **How to Provide Comment**



SEDAR 59 (2020) Stock Assessment



Spawning Stock Biomass (SSB) was greater than the minimum stock size threshold (below which, the stock would be considered overfished) and the SSB needed to produce maximum sustainable yield.

S Atlantic Greater Amberjack are not overfished.

Current fishing mortality (F) was less than the F that would result in maximum sustainable yield.

S Atlantic Greater Amberjack are not experiencing overfishing.

(Figure 1 extracted from SEDAR 59)



Commercial Overview - Regulations

- Annual Catch Limit (ACL): 769,388 lbs gw
- Minimum Size Limit: 36 inches fork length
- Fishing Year: March 1-end of February
- April Spawning Closure:
 - No sale or purchase of GAJ from the EEZ;
 - Harvest and possession limit is 1 fish/person/day or trip, whichever is more restrictive



Commercial Overview - Regulations

- Split Season (began in 2020-21 fishing year):
 - 60% of commercial ACL allocated to Season 1 (March 1-August 31)
 - 40% of commercial ACL allocated to Season 2 (September 1-end of February)
 - Different trip limits for each season (below)
 - Remaining quota from Season 1 is carried to Season 2; remaining quota from Season 2 is not carried forward
- Trip Limits:
 - 1,200 lbs (ww or gw) during Season 1 (except April)
 - 1,000 lbs (ww or gw) during Season 2



Commercial Overview – Recent Landings

Year	Season*	Landings (lbs gw)	ACL (lbs gw)	% ACL
2019-2020**	Mar 1 – Feb 29	411,066	769,388	53.4
2018-2019	Mar 1 – Feb 28	661,392	769,388	86.0
2017-2018	Mar 1 – Oct 18 (closure)	806,175	769,388	104.8
2016-2017	Mar 1 – Oct 4 (closure)	757,171	769,388	98.4
2015-2016	Mar 1 – Jan 21 (closure)	733,838	769,388	95.4

Table 2.

*Commercial closure in April for all years

**2020 landings are preliminary



Commercial Overview – Predicted Landings

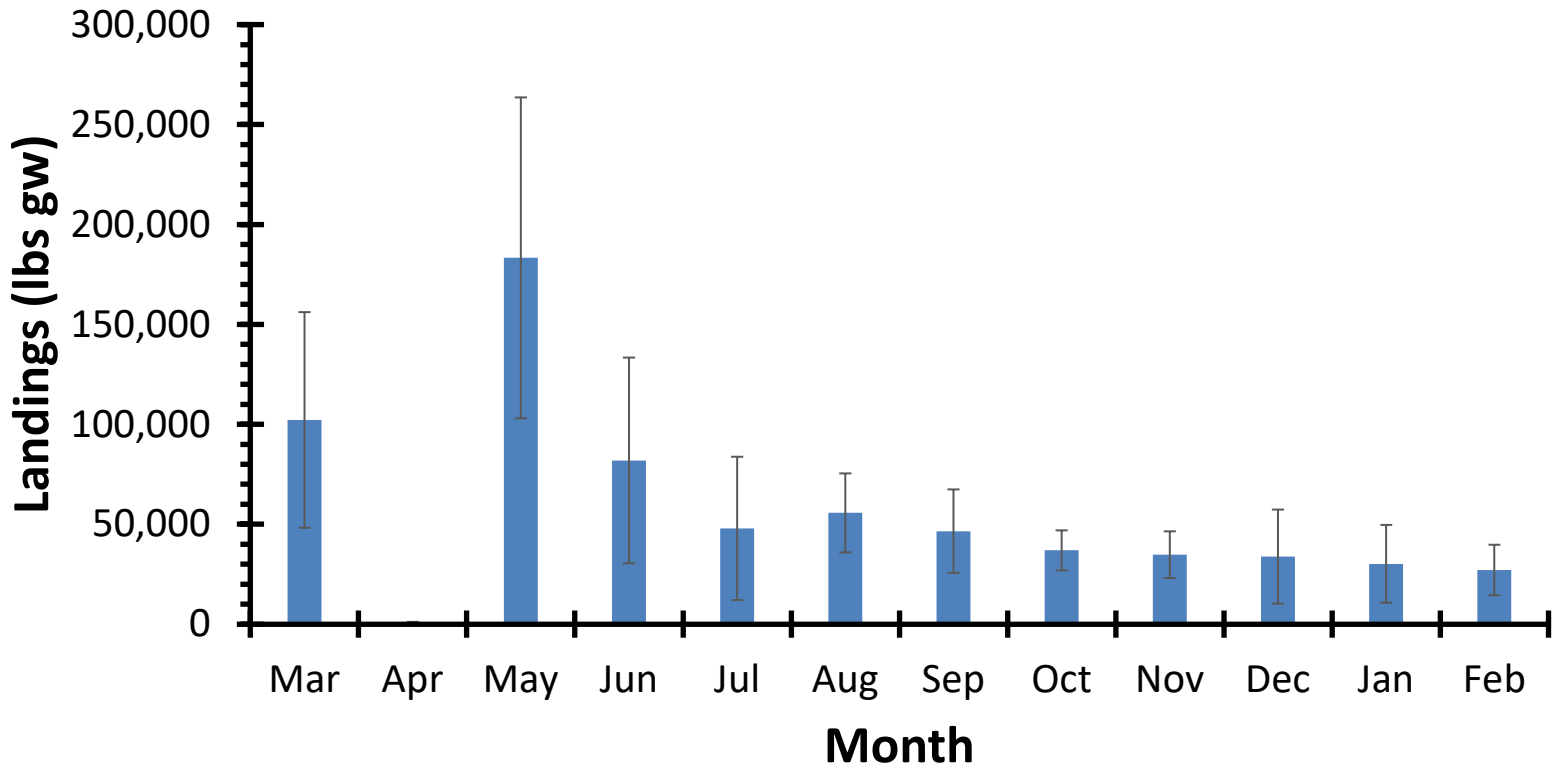


Figure 2.

NOTE: Predicted landings were based on previous landings as recent as the 2019-20 fishing year. The commercial split season first went into effect in the 2020-21 fishing year and may impact future trends in monthly landings.



Recreational Overview - Regulations

- Annual Catch Limit (ACL): 1,167,837 lbs ww
- Minimum Size Limit: 28 inches fork length
- Fishing Year: March 1-end of February
- Bag Limit: 1 fish/person/day
 - In April, for-hire/charter limit is 1 fish/person/day or trip, whichever is more restrictive



Recreational Overview – Recent Landings

- Landings used in SEDAR 59, projections, ABC and OFL recommendations, and in the Scoping Document include recreational catch estimates from MRIP FES (**Table 3**)
 - Recreational landings data not directly comparable to current/previous recreational ACLs

Year	Landings (lbs ww)
2019	1,614,804
2018	880,253
2017	1,986,261
2016	3,306,042
2015	2,200,275



Recreational Overview – Predicted Landings

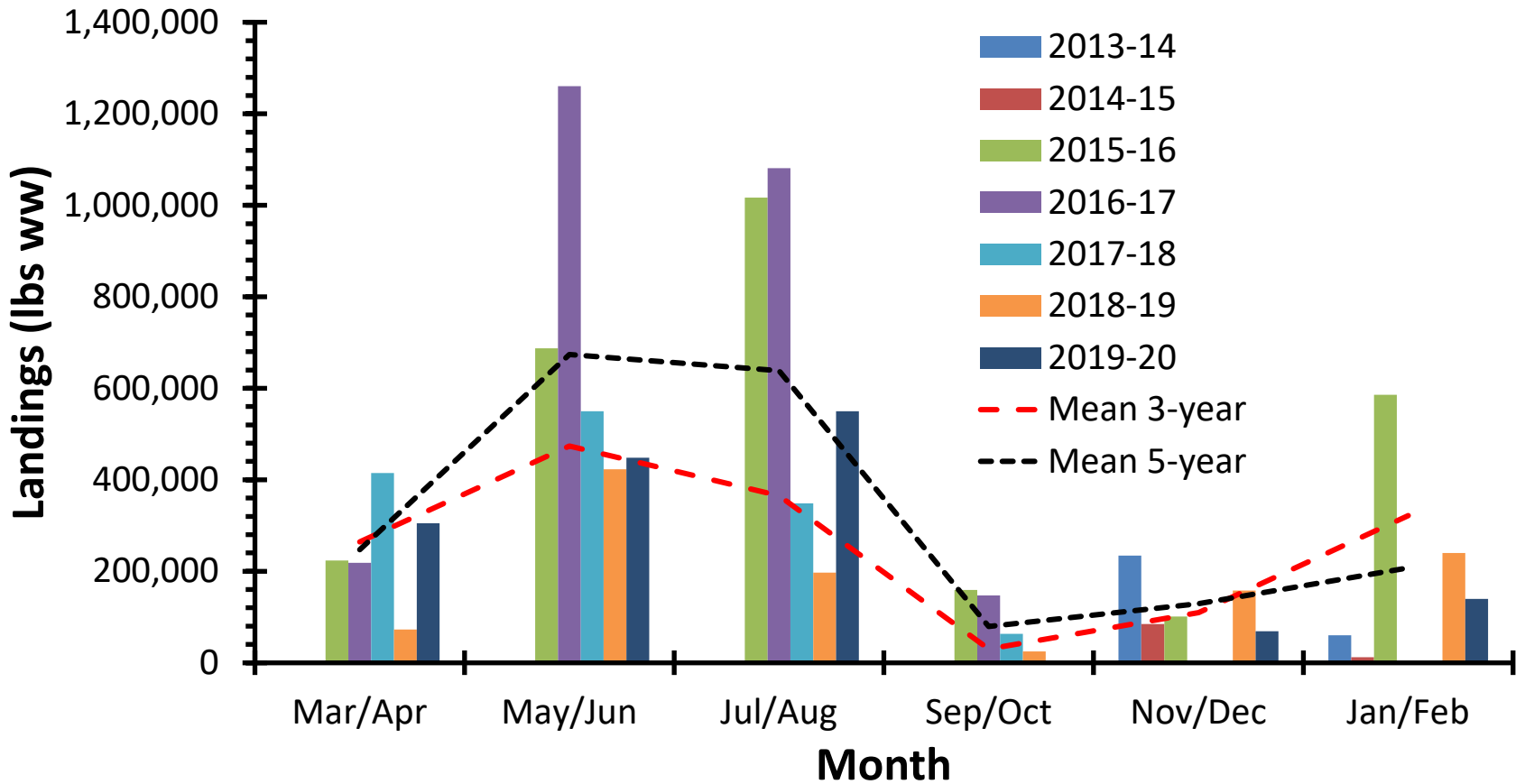


Figure 3.



SSC Recommendations

- Science and Statistical Committee reviewed SEDAR 59 in April 2020
 - Recommended overfishing limits (OFL) and acceptable biological catches (ABC) based on projections (**Table 1**)
 - Current ABC = 1,968,000 lbs ww
 - Due to recreational data change, current total and recreational ACLs not directly comparable to previous values

Year	OFL (lbs ww)	ABC (lbs ww)
2022	4,615,000	4,380,000
2023	3,283,000	3,233,000
2024	2,839,000	2,818,000
2025	2,719,000	2,699,000
2026	2,691,000	2,669,000

An **OFL** is the highest amount of annual harvest that the stock can sustain without overfishing occurring.

An **ABC** is an equal or lower amount that accounts for assessment uncertainty and how much risk of overfishing the Council is willing to accept.



What is the Council Considering?

1. Revision of catch levels for Greater Amberjack to reflect the most recent stock assessment, SEDAR 59
 - Includes considering revisions to the total annual catch limit (ACL) and annual optimum yield (OY) (**Action 1**), as well as sector allocations (**Action 2**)
2. Removal of recreational annual catch targets (ACT) from the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan (FMP) (**Action 3**)
 - Recreational ACTs are values set below the ACL that account for uncertainty of recreational estimates
 - ACTs are not codified nor used to develop any current management measures

NOTE: Actions and alternatives presented are those discussed to this point; additional actions or alternatives may be added following scoping



Action 1 – Total Annual Catch Limit

- Current: ABC = Total ACL = 1,968,000 lbs ww

Alternative	1. No Change	2. (Preferred) ACL=ABC	3. ACL=90%ABC	4. ACL=80%ABC
Year	Total ACL (lbs ww)	Total ACL (lbs ww)	Total ACL (lbs ww)	Total ACL (lbs ww)
2022-23	1,968,000	4,380,000	3,942,000	3,504,000
2023-2024	1,968,000	3,233,000	2,909,700	2,586,400
2024-2025	1,968,000	2,818,000	2,536,200	2,254,400
2025-2026	1,968,000	2,699,000	2,429,100	2,159,200
2026-2027+	1,968,000	2,669,000	2,402,100	2,135,200



Action 2 – Sector Allocations

- Current allocations
 - weighted average of com/rec landings over total landings
 - 50% 1986-2008, 50% 2006-2008
 - MRFSS recreational data
- Commercial: 40.66% (800,163 lbs ww)
- Recreational: 59.34% (1,167,837 lbs ww)



Action 2 – Sector Allocations

Alternative	Year	Total ACL (lbs ww)	Commercial ACL (lbs gw)	Recreational ACL (lbs ww)
1. (No Action) C: 40.66% R: 59.34%	2022-23	4,380,000	1,712,412	2,599,092
	2026-27+	2,669,000	1,043,476	1,583,785
2. Reapply current allocation formula with MRIP FES data C: 29.85% R: 70.15%	2022-23	4,380,000	1,257,144	3,072,570
	2026-27+	2,669,000	766,054	1,872,304
3. Approximate midpoint C: 35% R: 65%	2022-23	4,380,000	1,474,038	2,847,000
	2026-27+	2,669,000	898,221	1,734,850

- ACLs shown in the Scoping Doc and above assume the Total ACLs from **Action 1- Preferred Alternative 2**.
- ACLs shown above are for the initial (2022-23) and long-term ACL (2026-2027+); ACLs for 2023-2026 fishing years would be between these values



Action 2 – Sector Allocations

- Projections of commercial landings (**Table 4**) predict that none of the Action 2 Alternatives would result in closures of the commercial fishery
 - These projections do not include data for the recently implemented split season, which was put in place to help prevent commercial closures

Fishing Year	Commercial Allocation	ACL (lbs gw)	Closure Date	Season Length (95% CI)
2022-23	40.66%	1,712,412	No Closure	No Closure
2026-27	40.66%	1,043,476	No Closure	No Closure
2022-23	29.85%	1,257,144	No Closure	No Closure
2026-27	29.85%	766,054	No Closure	Dec 27 - No Closure



Action 2 – Sector Allocations

- Projections using the 3 most recent years of recreational landings data (**Table 5**) predict that none of the Action 2 Alternatives would result in closures of the recreational fishery
- Projections using the 5 most recent years of recreational landings data (**Table 5**) predict recreational closures as early as September (**Alt 1**) and as late as January (**Alt 2**) by the end of the projection period

Fishing Year	Recreational Allocation	ACL (lbs ww)	Projection Method	Closure Date	Season Length (95% CI)
2022-23	59.34%	2,599,092	3-year	No Closure	No Closure
2026-27	59.34%	1,583,785	3-year	No Closure	Sep 7 - No Closure
2022-23	70.15%	3,072,570	3-year	No Closure	No Closure
2026-27	70.15%	1,872,304	3-year	No Closure	Jan 8 - No Closure
2022-23	59.34%	2,599,092	5-year	No Closure	Dec 16 - No Closure
2026-27	59.34%	1,583,785	5-year	September 20	Jul 16 - No Closure
2022-23	70.15%	3,072,570	5-year	No Closure	No Closure
2026-27	70.15%	1,872,304	5-year	January 30	Aug 4 - No Closure



Action 3 – Recreational ACT

Alternative 1 (No Action). Retain current recreational annual catch targets for species managed under the Snapper Grouper FMP.

Alternative 2. Remove current recreational annual catch targets for species managed under the Snapper Grouper FMP.

- ACTs not codified or used for management purposes



Amendment Timing

December 2020	Review options paper and provide guidance to staff
March 2021	Review draft actions and alternatives and approve for scoping
Apr 14 & 15, 2021	Conduct scoping hearings
June 2021	Review scoping comments, review preliminary analyses, and provide guidance to staff
September 2021	Review modifications to the amendment, select preferred alternatives, and approve for public hearings
Oct-Nov 2021	Conduct public hearings
December 2021	Review public comment and approve all actions
March 2022	Review final draft amendment and consider approval for formal review
Late 2022	Regulations effective



Please provide your input

Allocation

- Are there additional sector allocation options that should be considered for Greater Amberjack?

Management Measures

- Are there additional changes in management that should be considered for the commercial or recreational Greater Amberjack fisheries?



How do I Comment?

- Comments taken **on tonight's webinar** after questions
- **Written comments:** Use the online form available from the Public Hearings and Scoping Meetings page on the Council's website (www.safmc.net). **Submit by 5:00 PM on April 16, 2021**
- **Comments by mail:** Send comments to John Carmichael, Executive Director, SAFMC, 4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201, N. Charleston, SC 29405
- **Comments by fax:** 843/769-4520



An underwater scene featuring a school of blue-green fish swimming in a dark, deep blue environment. In the bottom right corner, there is a piece of light-colored, branching coral and a single, bright orange, tube-like coral structure. The overall lighting is dim, creating a sense of depth and mystery.

Questions?

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(843) 302-8433

