

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SNAPPER GROUPER COMMITTEE

Webinar

December 7-8, 2020

TRANSCRIPT

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Kelly Klasnick
Roger Pugliese
Dr. Michael Schmidtke
Christina Wiegand

Observers and Participants

Rick DeVactor
Shep Grimes
Dr. Jack McGovern
Pat O'Shaugnessy

Erika Burgess
Martha Guyas
Dr. Genny Nesslage
Dr. Clay Porch

Other observers and participants attached.

The Snapper Grouper Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened via webinar on Monday, December 7, 2020, and was called to order by Chairman Jessica McCawley.

MS. MCCAWLEY: The first order of business for the Snapper Grouper Committee is Approval of the Agenda. Are there any additions or changes to the agenda? I don't see any hands. Any objection to approval of the agenda? All right, and so we will consider the agenda approved. The next order of business is Approval of the September 2020 Minutes. Any changes or modifications to the September 2020 minutes? Any objection to approval of those minutes? All right. I don't see any hands, and we'll consider the minutes approved. Next up is our Status of Amendments Under Formal Review, and is that going to be Rick that's going to do that?

MR DEVICTOR: Sure. We have one amendment, and that's Regulatory Amendment 34, and that would create thirty-four special management zones around artificial reefs off of North Carolina and South Carolina. Of course, those were requested by North Carolina DMF and South Carolina DNR, and so the proposed rule published November 16, and that comment period is open right now, and that comment period ends December 16. Then, after that comment period ends, of course, we'll start working on the final rule package.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thank you for that. Any questions for Rick? All right. I don't see any hands, and I am going to, I guess, turn it over to you, Myra, and it looks like we're going to get into yellowtail snapper, and it looks like the first presentation is from FWC, from Shanae and Chris, but I didn't know if you had anything else before we went right to their presentation, Myra.

MS. BROUWER: I don't, Jessica. I was just going to make Chris the presenter, and he's going to deliver that presentation, and so give me just a second here to do a mic check with Chris. It looks like there he is.

MR. SWANSON: Thanks, Myra. I will just go ahead and get into it. Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for the opportunity to present to you today. As Myra said, my name is Chris Swanson, and I'm an assessment scientist with FWRI here in St. Petersburg, Florida. I am one of the co-lead analysts for the SEDAR 64 Southeastern U.S. Yellowtail Snapper Assessment, together with my wonderful colleague and co-lead analyst, Shanae Allen. Today, I will be briefly presenting to you some of the major results from the SEDAR 64 base model and projections.

We'll start by placing this assessment in the context of past yellowtail snapper assessments and compare a few results, stock status, and modeling bridging exercises. Next, we'll look at various SEDAR 64 base model results, such as landings, discards, indices, and numbers or biomass at-age, recruitment, fishing mortality rates and spawning stock biomass, as well as model uncertainty, through the MCMC analysis. Finally, we'll examine the different projection scenarios and results, as defined by the TORs or requested by the joint SSCs.

The first yellowtail snapper assessment was done by Muller et al. in 2003, as part of the SEDAR 3 process, and they used an integrated catch-at-age model, or ICA, for data for the years 1981 to 2001, and the stock was not found to be overfished nor undergoing overfishing, using the terminal year benchmark reference point ratios below, which is 0.57 for F and 1.43 for the spawning stock biomass.

In 2012, Joe O'Hop et al. did SEDAR 27A, where they used a statistical catch-at-age model, which was the ASAP2 model framework, and they extended the data from 1981 to 2010. During this assessment and time period, the F at MSY was changed to an F 30 percent SPR proxy, and MSST was identified as one minus M times the spawning stock biomass associated with that proxy, F 30 percent SPR, and the terminal year of the stock was not overfished nor undergoing overfishing, and it was found to have less fishing pressure going on and greater spawning stock biomass, as listed by those values there.

For SEDAR 64, we used Stock Synthesis, which is an age and size-structured assessment model in the integrated analysis class of models, and we used it for data for the years 1992 to 2017. We continued to use the FMSY proxy of F 30 percent SPR, but there was another change to the definition of MSST, which now became 75 percent of the spawning stock biomass associated of F 30 percent SPR.

As in the previous assessments, the stock was found to be currently not overfished nor undergoing overfishing, but it was found to have higher fishing mortality rate values associated with it, and lower spawning stock biomass, than the previous assessment, SEDAR 27A.

There were some similar configurations to the SEDAR 27A model, in that we used three fleets, a commercial, an MRIP, and a headboat fleet, and the MRIP data used was the fully calibrated estimates, whereas, in SEDAR 27A, it used the original MRFSS values. There were two fishery-independent indices, coming from the reef fish visual census program, and two fishery-dependent indices were developed from the commercial fleet and the MRIP fleet, and so total catch index, were used.

For SEDAR 64, we had an inclusion of a fishery-independent juvenile index from the RVC data, which was not used in the previous assessment, though an RVC index was used for that assessment, but this assessment, SEDAR 64, excluded the headboat index, where it was used in SEDAR 27A. The available length-at-age composition data for this assessment was found to be more than double than the last assessment, and, because we used Stock Synthesis, we were able to include the length composition data from the various fleets and indices used in the model.

These are graphs which compare the annual spawning stock biomass and fishing mortality reference point ratios from the current and past yellowtail snapper assessments, and these graphs also serve to help track how well we've been able to assess the yellowtail snapper population over the years, and the yellow line that you see is the SEDAR 3 ICA model, and the gray line is the SEDAR 27A ASAP 2 model, and the orange line is the SEDAR 64 Stock Synthesis model.

For both the SSB and F ratios, you can see how the SEDAR 27A ASAP2 model deviates in magnitude from the others. Through a series of model-bridging exercises, our team investigated this and concluded that it was due primarily to a limitation imposed by the ASAP2 model framework, which did not allow for multiple weight-at-age matrices to be constructed for each fleet's landings and discards.

By inputting the same SEDAR 27A data into an updated ASAP3 model framework, and giving each fleet its own weight-at-age matrix, the results produced were the green line above, and here we have called it an alternative SEDAR 27A model. Overall, the yellowtail snapper model seemed

to be tracking similar levels and trends of fishing mortality rates and spawning stock biomass over the years.

These are the commercial and recreational landings for yellowtail snapper, and the commercial landings are on the left, in thousands of pounds, and the MRIP and headboat landings are on the right, in thousands of fish, and the open shapes are the observed inputs, and the solid lines are the model-estimated values, and so you can see that the headboat fishery, which is the orange on the right, constitutes about 10 percent or less of the recreational landings. For commercial landings, there is an increasing trend beginning around 2008, and the highest landings for the fishery were done in 2017.

For discards, you have commercial discards up at the top, MRIP discards on the bottom-left, and headboat discards on the bottom-right. The open circles are the observed values with the confidence intervals, and the blue dashes are the model-estimated values. Discards were low for both the commercial and headboat fleets, and, overall, the model fits were close to the observed values. The CVs were incredibly high for commercial, which is why you see the lines taking up the entire graph, but discard mortality rates were fixed at 10 percent for each fleet.

These are the indices of abundances and biomass that were used in the assessment. The commercial is an index of biomass, and that's on the upper-left-hand corner. The MRIP total catch CPUEs is on the bottom left, and then the two fishery-independent surveys, indices of abundance, are on the right-hand column. There was an increasing trend that was reported for all of the observed indices, and the model fits were pretty close. For the fishery-independent indices, the model fits were a bit flat for most of the time period, with an increase in the recruitment values in 2012 and 2014.

Increasing commercial CPUE from 2007 to 2017 was thought to be attributed to the improved fishing efficiency in the commercial fleet, rather than an increase in the underlying population, and so input from several commercial fishermen during the data and the assessment workshops indicated that the power chumming technique, which had already been somewhat in use for a few decades, had become increasingly prolific, starting around 2005, and was considered standard practice by 2009, and so, therefore, a catchability time block was constructed for the commercial index for the years 2009 to 2017, to go with this evidence.

These are the overall fits to the length composition data. On the left-hand column, we have commercial discards and commercial retained, and then we have the headboat discards, and then, beginning in the middle column, we have headboat retained, and then we have MRIP discards and MRIP retained, and then, in the right-hand column, we have the fits for the RVC adult index and the RVC juveniles and then the MRIP total catch CPUE. Selectivities for these fleets were flat-topped for the commercial and dome-shaped for the recreational and fishery-independent, and then the MRIP CPUE was mirrored to the MRIP fleet.

These are the results of the age composition data. A quick look, these are the observed mean ages, with 95 percent confidence intervals, based on effective sample sizes and their fit to the mean age by year. In the upper-left-hand corner is the commercial. In the lower-left-hand is the MRIP. Upper-right-hand is headboat, and the bottom-right is the fishery-independent age data that we had access to.

For the commercial fleet, you can see that the ages were mostly or between four and five, on average, but some going up to six. For headboat and the recreational fleets, it was a little younger, maybe around ages-four and three, and the same thing for the fishery-independent age data, and it was around age-three, is the average. For the observations where you see with the very wide bars, those were due to very low effective sample sizes.

These are the numbers and biomass estimates at age. On the left-hand is the numbers of fish in thousands, and these are -- Primarily, you can see ages-zero to four, which is the blue to the yellow bars. On the right-hand side is the total biomass, in thousands of pounds, which constitutes primarily ages-one to six, which is the orange to the purple.

These are model-estimated recruitment values. On the left-hand side, you can see it's a generally increasing trend, and then are the right-hand side are the recruitment deviations. You can see that 2012 was a high-recruitment year, and then the recruitment begins to decline a little bit. These are the model-estimated fishing mortality rates and spawning stock biomass. On the left graph, it's the age-four fishing mortality rates, and the solid line that goes across is the MFMT reference point, which is the F value associated with F 30 percent SPR, and the dashed line is the FOY value, optimum yield, which is F at 40 percent SPR, and you can see that the fishing mortality rates for yellowtail have been below the MFMT for the majority of the time series, except for a few years in the early 1990s, and the red solid line that you see in the terminal three years is the geometric mean.

In a similar setup on the right-hand side, we have the spawning stock biomass estimates, where the solid line is the minimum stock size threshold, which is the 75 percent of the SSB associated with F 30 percent SPR, and then the dashed line is the spawning stock biomass at 30 percent SPR, and, again, the red line at the end, in the terminal three years, is the geometric mean, and so you can see that the spawning stock has been above the MSST for the entire time series, except for around 1996, and it's like just above it.

To evaluate uncertainty in the model, we use the Markov Chain Monte Carlo analysis, which generates posterior distributions of the model parameters and the derived quantities, and we used two chains to get 2,500 iterations each, based off of iterations between five-million and ten-million, and then the convergence was assessed using Gelman and Rubin's potential reduction scale factor.

This gave us model uncertainty, as pictured here, with fishing mortality on the left and spawning stock biomass on the right. The black line and the solid-gray band represent the median and 95 percent credible intervals from the MCMC analysis, while the dashed lines indicate the base run estimates and approximate 95 percent confidence intervals, and so, as you can see, they are pretty closely aligned. Then there is reference points on the graph as well. On the left-hand side, the FMSY is supposed to be F 30 percent SPR, and then the FOY target down at the bottom.

These are distributions for the ratio, and so, on the left-hand side, it's the spawning stock biomass that is the geometric mean from 2015 to 2017 over the MSST, and so you can see the distribution is above one entirely, and the black line is the base model results, and then the blue-dashed lines are the results from the MC analysis, the median and first and third quartiles. Similarly, on the right, we have the geometric mean F from 2015 to 2017 over the MFMT, and that ratio distribution is under one, and the MCMC analysis results align very closely with the base model.

Several projection scenarios were used to explore the effect of various fishing mortality conditions, and they are ordered here by decreasing fishing mortality rate, when moving from Scenario 1 to Scenario 5. The first scenario held fishing mortality rates at the FMSY proxy of F 30 percent SPR. The second scenario used the derived P* value of 0.375, which is the ABC value associated with the 75th quantile of the equilibrium OFL distribution, and so the normal distribution, which is pictured on the right, has a mean of 1,600 metric tons, or 3.5 million pounds, a standard deviation of 125 metric tons, and a coefficient of variation of 0.09, and so the corresponding ABC is 1,568 metric tons, or 3.46 million pounds, which is 97.5 percent of the OFL.

The third fishing mortality scenario explored if fishing mortality rates were 75 percent of the F at 30 percent SPR value, and the fourth scenario held fishing mortality rates at F current, which is the geometric mean rate for 2015 to 2017, and the fifth scenario used the fishing mortality rate at F 40 percent SPR, which was defined as the FOY in the previous assessment.

Deterministic projections were conducted to estimate -- They were run for the years 2021 to 2037, under several fishing mortality rate scenarios. The selectivity for each fleet was taken from the terminal year of the assessment, and relative harvest rates for the directed fisheries were assumed to stay in proportion to the terminal three-year geometric mean values, and so this results in an allocation of 56 percent commercial and 44 percent recreational.

Recruitment for the first year of projection is equal to the terminal three-year average, and stock-recruit parameters are equal to the base model estimates, and there is no recruitment deviations from the stock-recruit curve. For the interim years, 2018 and 2019, retained landings, in numbers, for the recreational fleets, and metric tons for the commercial fleet were incorporated. At the request of both the councils SSCs, landings for 2020 were assumed to be equal to the 2017 to 2019 average and input.

An iterative method was provided by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, which specifies fishing mortality rates for each fleet per year, so that the fleet allocations are able to keep constant for each year, and the use of this method required us to switch versions of SS, because of a bug in the forecast file, and this bug prevented the ability to specify landings in numbers in 2018 and 2019 and fishing mortality rates for the following years, and so we transferred it from Version 3.30.14 to 3.30.13. The differences in the base model output between the two versions were observed to be negligible, and so we continued with it.

Next, I am going to be showing you the different graphic results for these different scenarios. Here is fishing mortality rates, and so, in the black, it's the model-estimated fishing mortality rates, then followed by the interim years in the yellow, 2018 to 2020, and then the first five years of the projection are in green, which is 2021 to 2025. All scenarios, except for F at 40 percent SPR, led to increased fishing mortality rates, as compared to the recent average, or the F current values, and F at 40 percent SPR is about equal to the fishing mortality rates estimated in 2019, and so you can see the F 30 percent SPR is the highest, and then the P* is pretty close to it, and then there's a separation that you will see between the other three more conservative fishing mortality rates.

Age-zero recruits, in millions, as estimated by the base model, are shown here in black, followed by the recruitment in each projection scenario. As shown, recruitment has been trending upward slightly, but has remained at the long-term average in recent years, and recruitment in the first year of the projections, which is 2018, was set to equal the average of 2015 to 2017 recruitment, and

that happens to be very close to the long-term average of the recruitment, and the highest fishing mortality rate scenarios, and so basically F 30 percent SPR and the P* scenario, lead to a slight decrease in recruitment levels.

Spawning stock biomass, in millions of pounds, is shown here, for the base model in black, and then the 2018 to 2019 is highlighted in yellow, followed by the projection scenarios. Spawning stock biomass in 2018 and 2019 is estimated to be lower than in 2017, primarily due to the late effects of lower recruitment. Since F at 40 percent SPR is about equal to the fishing mortality rates estimated in 2019, spawning stock biomass remains close to that level for the projection years, and all of the other F scenarios, which lead to higher Fs, and therefore decline in spawning stock biomass, and so, for the F 30 percent SPR and the P* scenarios, spawning stock biomass declines quickly to the spawning stock biomass management target, which is the dotted line at SSB 30 percent SPR.

Shown here is the retained yield, in millions of pounds, for the base model in black, followed by the interim years in yellow, and each projection scenario is in the green, and so just as before. Retained yield remains elevated from 2013 to 2017, mostly over four million pounds, and then declines in 2018 and 2019. Retained yield increases from 2019 levels in all but one projection scenario, as the fishing mortality rate increases. The initial increases in yields wane as the biomass declines to the equilibrium levels, which range from about 3.5 million pounds to 3.3 million pounds for the fishing scenarios.

In the October joint SSC meeting report, it was stated that the SSCs recommended using the calculated P* value of 37.5 percent to produce the ABCs for 2021 to 2025, and so the retained yield, in millions of pounds, associated with this scenario is tabulated here in the right-hand column, along with the corresponding spawning stock biomass, fishing mortality rates, and recruitment values. It's basically ranging from 4.6 million pounds, in 2021, to 3.7 million pounds.

The joint SSCs, in that report, also recommended that the council consider adjusting the ACL or the ACT for management uncertainty, for example using the 75 percent at F 30 percent SPR values, and so each of those projection scenarios are tabulated here, for comparison, and so this is just the tabulated version of the graphs that you have just seen. This is what I have to present for you today, and so I will take any questions.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Chris. Any questions for Chris?

MS. WIEGAND: I am not seeing any hands up right now, Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. If we don't have any questions for Chris, then, Myra, should we go on to Genny's presentation, and then there might be more questions following Genny's presentation?

MS. BROUWER: Sure, and I can pull up the recommendations.

DR. NESSLAGE: Are you ready?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Sure.

DR. NESSLAGE: Excellent. Thank you. Some of this has already been covered by Chris, and so I'll just briefly touch on it. The SSCs ultimately, after extensive discussion, decided to use the South Atlantic's ABC control rule and settled on a P^* value of 37.5 percent to produce the ABCs that Chris showed you across the time span from 2021 to 2025, and, as he mentioned, we recommended that, instead of using the projected landings for 2020, which, given all the craziness that's gone on in 2020, seemed a bit too high, we asked them to replace that with specified average landings from 2017 to 2019 until we get those final 2020 landings information, because we won't have the final 2020 landings information in time.

We also recommended that the council consider adjusting the ACL or ACT for management uncertainty, and, if you go to the next slide, this will look familiar. This is in our joint report, but it's basically just a small version of the table that Chris just showed, and what I have focused in on here are just the ABC years, the 2021 to 2025, and the highlighted area is the ABC recommendations, based on the P^* of 0.375, and then, as you notice, and as Chris showed with the projections, if the council decided to set the ACL or ACT at 75 percent of F 30 percent, that would give a bit of a buffer for uncertainty.

We did have extensive discussions about that uncertainty in this assessment, and across assessments in general, but, with regard to yellowtail snapper, the SSCs emphasized that there are several areas of uncertainty in this assessment, such that the uncertainty of the assessment estimates is likely underestimated, and we expressed concern with that regarding several potential biases, including the unit stock assumption, given there are noted mixing rates between the sub-units and notable differences in fishing capacities between the sub-units.

We also noted that, as Chris described so well, there had been a change in the estimated magnitude of the stock biomass with this assessment, and we agreed that this was definitely the best available science, best scientific information available, and that that was due to the incorporation of weights-at-age across multiple fleets and that this assessment now incorporates that variability in those catch weights-at-age, and we thought that was an improvement, but it did result in a change in stock biomass, which is always something that gives us pause.

We also noted there is uncertainty, as there always is, in projected recruitment, such that the terminal year is always the least informed, but we also noted that there was an apparent declining trend in recruitment, despite this increasing trend in spawning stock biomass, which is heartening, and so that left us wondering what was -- There is a bit of uncertainty as to what is going on there as well, and, while none of these issues are -- Many of these issues are not particular to yellowtail snapper, and they are shared across other species, but we had an extensive discussion about the estimation of uncertainties across platforms.

Our ABC control rule in the South Atlantic is largely set up to respond to estimates of uncertainty in our management benchmarks coming out of the Beaufort Lab using the Beaufort Assessment Model and their MCB approach to estimating uncertainty in the OFL, and so, when Stock Synthesis in particular is used, whether it's out of the Miami Lab or FWRI, when folks are doing these assessments, they are wonderful, but they also are -- They tend to produce much narrower estimates of uncertainty, and that leads to a bit of a hiccup in our ABC control rule process.

So both of the SSCs felt that it would behoove us all to maybe get together the folks in both the Gulf and the South Atlantic regions and talk a little bit about how these different modeling

platforms characterize uncertainties in our estimated benchmarks and how those uncertainties should be carried forward into the projections, because that's what we're used to see in the South Atlantic SSC with the Beaufort modeling approach, and, when we get Stock Synthesis assessments, we don't always know how to account for that lack of uncertainty in the benchmarks appropriately within our decision tree, and so it's a topic that might be worthwhile bringing up across the regions. I think that's my last slide, and so I would be happy to take any questions.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Genny. I feel like I have so many questions, but let me see if other folks have hands raised, before I ask some questions. I don't see other hands right this second, and so, Genny, I agree that there was this declining recruitment with this increasing spawning biomass, and I guess I'm just kind of a little bit perplexed why it seems like you guys are suggesting that ABC should be so precautionary, and can you help me understand that?

DR. NESSLAGE: I think -- Well, let me see. I'm speaking for both SSCs, which is difficult for me, and folks on the Gulf SSC were, I think, perhaps more used to the 75 percent of F 30 percent as a more appropriate buffer for uncertainty, given this is an assessment coming out of Stock Synthesis, which has a very low estimated uncertainty in the management benchmarks, and so I think there was a bit of concern there that the South Atlantic control rule was a bit too aggressive and not accounting for that lack of appropriate estimation of the uncertainty, that very likely underestimation of uncertainty, and so there was definitely a lot of concern about using the P* approach, as we typically do in the South Atlantic.

That being said, there was the counterargument that there didn't seem to be anything in this assessment that was unusual or unique compared to other South Atlantic species that we deal with all the time. There is mixing rate issues and unit stock assumption issues, and there is changes in biomass, and there is problems with estimating recruitment across-the-board, and so we didn't feel that this particular assessment stood out as being necessary of having an additionally large buffer, and so there were kind of two camps, if you will.

Ultimately, the group decided, consensus-wise, that, no, this didn't warrant extra consideration of an extra-large buffer with regard to the scientific uncertainty. However, perhaps the council, given the fact that this does span two councils and two biological regions, if you will, and very different fisheries, that perhaps having that buffer would help account for some of the management uncertainty. Does that answer your question at all, Jessica?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think so. I am trying to understand these two camps and then how you guys came to a resolution, and I felt like you kind of started down that path, and it just -- I see what you're saying about suggesting this additional management buffer, but I just am not sure that I agree with it, because you all are saying there is nothing really unique about this assessment, or unusual from other South Atlantic assessments, and that's why I'm just a little perplexed.

DR. NESSLAGE: I think what's unusual is that we're having to come to consensus with a whole other SSC that operates differently, and it was a real challenge to get this group to come to consensus, and so there were a lot of differing opinions, and I think different opinions on how ABC control rules should work in general, and the fact that we really all -- We did all agree that uncertainty was underestimated for our benchmarks here, and that was a concern across-the-board, and so, if you want a biological explanation, then I think everyone agreed with it was that -- That

there is definitely underestimation of uncertainty in this assessment, because of the platform, and does that help at all?

MS. MCCAWLEY: It does. I guess I would come back to this question, and so one of your -- I can't see the last slide, or the next-to-last slide, but you brought up this point about partly talking about Stock Synthesis, which is different than the Beaufort Assessment, but I'm also kind of wondering if FWC doing these stock assessments and then bringing it forward -- Is that posing some additional challenges, because I guess that we've always been excited that FWC can step forward and has the analysts to conduct these different stock assessments that are important to the State of Florida, but it seems like, when they're coming to the SSC, at least recently, that it's causing some questions, and is that an accurate characterization?

DR. NESSLAGE: Yes, and it's not through any fault of the analysts at all. These are excellent assessments, and the SSC appreciated all of the recent ones we've had out of both FWRI and the Miami Lab, and I think it's really a difference in philosophy about when and where you consider that scientific uncertainty, and so the Beaufort Lab takes uncertainty in the estimates from the model, the stock assessment model, and projects that forward, to come up with a broader -- That bell curve is much wider around our benchmarks.

If you take the Stock Synthesis approach, the uncertainty in the assessment model parameters is not necessarily all projected forward, and you don't get a big, wide bell curve around your benchmarks, and the assumption there is that, in many other regions, then you would add an ad hoc buffer around those, to account for additional scientific uncertainty, and we don't do that, per se, in the South Atlantic, because we're used to, I think -- My explanation is that it's because we're used to more of the Beaufort method, and so this is why we're recommending that we perhaps get together and figure out a way forward.

Either we change the ABC control rule approach, so that we add a separate track, if it's Stock-Synthesis-based versus Beaufort-based, but that would slow down the ABC control rule amendment, which I am loath to suggest, or perhaps the assessment teams from the different groups, the FWRI and the Miami Lab and the Beaufort Lab, can get together and come up with a new approach, and I'm not sure how folks want to proceed.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That's a great point, and that's kind of what I was thinking about this, I guess, and I guess like I almost feel like this has been, here at the very end, like rushed, and it's like, okay, we need to get this to the council, and it seems like, when the two SSCs got together, that there were a lot of questions, and almost forcing a resolution, and I kind of agree with you that I feel like maybe some more work needs to be done in thinking about -- Whether it's how to look at the ABC control rule, which I do think is one option, and I don't want to just discount that, just because that document is already moving, and it's cumbersome, and it might slow it down, or is there something that can be done differently when using these Stock Synthesis models?

I guess I would throw all that out there, to say I feel like yellowtail is kind of the guinea pig here, but do we need to send this back to the SSC, so that you guys can have some of these more generic discussions first, and then say, okay, well, now that we've had these discussions, and if we change the ABC control rule, then we would probably do X or Y with yellowtail, because I just would hate to push this down the road and start moving with something on the management side for

yellowtail here when I feel like you guys still had some things to work out and questions that you wanted to noodle on. What are your thoughts here?

DR. NESSLAGE: My thoughts are that opening up the proverbial can of worms on if we were to add another -- Do we want to call it a limb in our decision tree? I don't know, and I can't speak to the council process, but it would definitely slow it down. It's a major discussion, and I would want folks from each of the assessment analyst groups to weigh-in as well, but -- So that's really a council decision and prioritization, as to how quickly you want to move forward on the amendment, but it's definitely something that has come up, and it came up with the last assessment, and was it king mackerel, I believe, that we had that discussion, albeit it much more limited, within our South Atlantic SSC, but it's going to keep coming up, and so that's really your decision, if you want us to tackle the broader issue first, which will delay decisions on yellowtail, and that's really your purview. I don't mean to punt it back to you, but I feel like we serve at your pleasure, and so what the council wants us to deal with, and in what order, is up to you, but it's definitely an issue, and it's something that will return, and so it's not going to go away.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, and thanks for your candor, Genny. I see more hands going up. Mel.

MR. BELL: I am struggling with the same thing you are, a desire to keep things on track, but I don't want to push a schedule, and then we end up with a product or something that we're not totally satisfied with, just because we're trying to stay on schedule, and so, I mean, I think we could benefit from maybe doing something that's going to cost us a little bit of time, and I'm also sensitive to -- Particularly with this fishery, it's definitely a fishery in your backyard, frontyard and backyard, but I don't want us to just stick to a schedule, whether it's the ABC control rule amendment or this, just for the sake of sticking to the schedule.

I mean, I would like us to do the right thing and end up with an outcome that we're satisfied with, so we won't have a sense of regretting that maybe we pushed forward and ended up with something that's not exactly optimal, and so I think I share your concerns there, and, again, I would go to what are the imperatives that are driving us forward, in terms of the scheduling.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Thank you, Mel. Clay.

DR. PORCH: Thank you, Chair. I just want to point out, and Genny was alluding to it, that it is kind of a can of worms, in that there's a lot of subtle differences between Stock Synthesis and the BAM model. However, generally speaking, you get just about the same average advice, and so we've done studies where we've run those models side-by-side, and the point estimates, in other words the OFL estimates that come out of it, tend to be pretty similar. I think BAM does generally give wider confidence intervals, but that just has to do with how many parameters you were willing to estimate in Stock Synthesis, and there's a lot of technical details to it that you could make Stock Synthesis have just as wide confidence intervals as BAM would give you, but I think you don't really have to go back to the drawing board, and it seems like the assessment is sound.

I think all that the SSC has to deliberate is whether they might want to impose some minimum level of variance, and it could be borrow the variance from typical BAM assessments, in terms of setting that P* value, or you just look at something like the Ralston approach that I mentioned earlier, where you look at the performance of past assessments and compute a variance parameter

there and then use that to generate your ABC advice, but you don't really need to re-look at the entire assessment, and it's just thinking about what the minimum level of uncertainty is likely to be.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Clay. I wasn't suggesting going back to the drawing board by any means, but I do think that what Genny has laid out here in some of these discussions that happen between the two SSCs are bringing up kind of some overarching philosophical problems, and I just don't see any type of issue with yellowtail, no stock risk or anything, right at this second, and there seems to be some type of risk tolerance tied up in this, as you were indicating, Clay, and so I guess I kind of want to kick this back to the SSC and let them have more discussions about this, just because I don't see any kind of risk in us waiting to get this information on yellowtail, but let me go back to Mel.

MR. BELL: I was kind of following along those lines, especially after Clay weighed-in, and, if we can kind of go back to the SSC with it, and not avoid the giant can of worms that we don't want to open, but, if we can get a result that is maybe not a lot different, it sounded like from what Clay saying, and I think maybe a little bit more time spent in that might give us more confidence in what we're dealing with when it comes out of the SSC, if they've had a chance to kind of handle it again a little bit, and, again, not taking a whole lot of time, but maybe a little bit more time, and, like you said, if you don't see a necessity to move quickly with something that we're perhaps not totally comfortable with, then maybe that's the best approach, is to -- We'll call it kick it back to the SSC, but just kind of hand it back to them for some additional consideration and working through some of the things that we've mentioned.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Mel clarified my question, and I was still kind of uncertain about if we were recommending the SSC look into this and reconcile the concerns between the two different assessment shops or just the yellowtail snapper, and it's obvious to me that it's just this assessment, and so I'm good.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Well, I guess that, if you want to -- I guess I don't want to just avoid this can of worms, and I feel like, if they need discussions about opening that can of worms, and use yellowtail as the example, just because it would be the first example here in this discussion, I'm okay with that, because I don't think, as Genny mentioned, that this is just a yellowtail problem. I mean, I think mutton is the next assessment that FWC is going to do, and you would have the same situation with mutton, and so I guess I'm wanting to have some more discussions between the SSCs right now about this. Steve, anything else on that, before I go to the other folks with their hands up?

MR. POLAND: I was just going to suggest -- I don't know if now is the best time, or when we get later on, in probably the Executive Committee, where we start discussing FMP workload and that kind of stuff, because I was going to bring some other concerns that were communicated to me by the SSC, as far as timing and tasks and workload and that kind of stuff, and, if we as a council feel like that this is something that we want to go ahead and task the SSC with, we need to consider that with our previous direction to them in the last committee for this workgroup and the rest of their workload, and so, I mean, I'm good either way. I mean, you make a good point,

Jessica, that this issue isn't going away, and I just think we need to consider everything else that's on the SSC's plate, as well as our plate.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Thank you, Steve. Chip.

DR. COLLIER: I think Steve made a few of the points that I was going to make, is the SSC has a lot of stuff going on, especially in April, and they have three assessments that are coming to them, and they're also going to be working on that ABC control rule. If you guys want to have it by March, that's an extremely aggressive deadline, and they're going to be -- They're going to have to work hard in order to achieve that, and, therefore, the next likely time that they could bring this up is in October, and SEDAR has recognized the fact that mutton snapper has kind of been on hold while yellowtail has been finishing up, and we didn't want to necessarily impact that assessment, because of yellowtail, and we wanted to make sure that yellowtail got done, and this is something that's been coming up.

This uncertainty from the Stock Synthesis model has been in the king mackerel assessment, and it's also been in yellowtail, and, in conversations that they had discussing this assessment, the Gulf indicated that they were having these issues with very limited uncertainty bounds with many of the SS3 models that they've been looking at.

What I think could potentially work is a workgroup to address this in the future, and then they could use yellowtail as an example to work from in the future, not necessarily having results associated with it, and I think that could take some time, in order to develop it, and it could potentially be a year before you guys are looking at some of the results.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Thanks for that. Dale.

MR. DIAZ: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to let your council know that our council is scheduled to receive the results of SEDAR 64 for yellowtail snapper during our January meeting of next year, and I just wanted to let you know that, in case it's relevant to your discussion now of any timing issues. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Dale. John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I just wanted to comment a little bit on the workload. We plan to start this once we get an ABC. If we're still having some questions there, then -- We really haven't started working on it, and I think we can -- We can certainly deal with that, and then I want to kind of go back to kind of what Chip said about the SSC's workload, and Steve raised that, too.

I think we just need to make sure that the council can clarify, for the SSC, what it's looking for here. It seems like one of the concerns is how you're dealing with the council setting its risk tolerance between the Gulf and the South Atlantic and maybe the Gulf, due to concerns with Stock Synthesis and uncertainty, taking a more precautionary approach on the risk tolerance, and we talked a little bit about that in the ABC control rule discussion. I thought Clay made a good case for making sure that the two things are separated out, and so I think that needs to come up in the discussion, and that might be something that is difficult for the SSC itself to resolve.

The way I see it is the South Atlantic is using the P* approach, and the Gulf is using the 75 percent of F 30, I guess as a proxy for MFMT, and so you're really getting two different reference point situations, and that part just kind of needs to be resolved, and I'm not sure, at this point, how to do that, and I hate to talk about councils having to talk together, but, at some point, there might have to be some discussion between the two councils about the risk tolerance decision here on this stock.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Those are great points. Carolyn.

DR. BELCHER: I had a question, and I don't know if Clay can answer it or not, but I thought, a while back, but not too long ago, that the Science Centers were supposed to be doing some of the evaluations between the differences with Stock Synthesis and the BAM model, or some of the other more classically-used models in our region, and I don't know that there has ever been a report-out on that. I mean, does anybody else have any comments on that, because it would be interesting to know at least what Kyle and them have found in running those models side-by-side and to see what they're running into for issues.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Clay.

DR. PORCH: That was one of the studies that I was mentioning before, where the point estimates of things like OFL are really, really close, but how they deal with uncertainty is quite different, and the range of values for uncertainty are therefore different, but we can probably arrange, shortly, maybe by the next council meeting, to make a presentation on that particular study, and I have seen some of the results, but it just hasn't been published yet, but I think it's pretty close to being ready.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Clay. Any other questions here? I guess I'm just a little unsure how to move forward here, because it's definitely going to have to be done both councils together, because it's all one stock, and so back to what John was saying, and does this -- Before either council moves forward with an amendment, do we need to have some kind of joint council discussion, maybe via webinar, about this, because it's going to be an issue with yellowtail, but it's going to be an issue with mutton also, which is next in line. Mel.

MR. BELL: I can see some logic in that, Jessica. I mean, like you said, this isn't just about yellowtail, but, if we've got two different councils with sort of two different approaches, or philosophies, in risk, and it seems like -- It's only one stock, and we're trying to do it together, and so it seems like we have to kind of come back together and talk a little bit and work through some of that, to end up with an approach that actually works for the one stock, so that we're not kind of getting yanked in two different directions as we try to manage this one stock, and so I could certainly see the need to try to get back together somehow on that before we move too far forward, and, like you said, this won't be the only stock we're dealing with that kind of falls into that collection of stocks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I guess I don't know how to give direction to staff here, whether we say we're going to start something and we're just going to bring the Gulf along, or whether we get together and have some kind of Reef Fish Committee/Snapper Grouper Committee discussion between the two councils, but I see that Monica has her hand up.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I was just thinking that it might be helpful to go back into history a little bit and see what the two councils did when they were doing their ACL amendments and divided up between the councils, because it was all one stock and one stock assessment. It was black grouper, mutton, and yellowtail, and it might be useful -- The SSCs agreed on the apportionment, which the councils agreed on, and I think it's 75 percent, for yellowtail, to the South Atlantic and 25 to the Gulf. It might be useful to kind of go back and see how that was tackled, because maybe we could use that as a template for how to go forward with this.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. That sounds good. Dale.

MR. DIAZ: I was just going to mention that our Reef Fish Committee is a committee of the whole, and so it's all seventeen members of the Gulf Council are on Reef Fish, and I don't know that I have a good path forward for you, but, if we did decide to get the committees together -- I mean, we will already be meeting in late January, if that's an opportune time, just to let you know, and I can give you the exact meeting dates in a few minutes, if you want them.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Dale, and, like you guys, when we're in Snapper Grouper, we're in the committee of the whole as well, because everybody on the council is on the Snapper Grouper Committee. I don't know exactly what to do here, or if John or Myra have an idea, or if we just need to come back to this discussion. I see that John has his hand up, and then Mel.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Jessica, I'm sort of thinking about that, and I think the best thing to do here is to try to get a statement, perhaps, coming from the committee that expresses the concerns and what they would like the SSC to do additionally. It may include some questions, and then I think that would help us know how much it will take of the SSCs and make sure that the time is directed in the right place and the right questions are addressed, and I think, as mentioned, that's something that we could perhaps work on and bring back either at Full Council, when you give the Snapper Grouper report, or if we talk about it some more in Executive Finance, and I think that would be fine as well. I just feel like we need to sort of get -- Now that people have seen this, and we've had this discussion, it's to get something down, in writing, to really to see what the concerns are.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree, and, in order to not slow things down here, I can try to write something and then pass it back, and then we could look at it either later in this committee tomorrow or later in the week. Mel, do you have some ideas?

MR. BELL: No, and I was just -- When Dale was mentioning their Reef Fish Committee and ours -- We would basically -- What I was imagining was kind of both Full Councils back together, and then we're all just kind of -- We're all trying to scratch our heads and get through this again, and I think maybe trying to identify, at this point, what are the key issues with perhaps just moving forward right now, and that would be a good use of time, and, if that's something we can do before Full Council, great, but I was just kind of trying to imagine the utility of bring both Full Councils, effectively, back together to kind of hash this through without doing something beforehand, and so maybe, like we were just discussing, trying to get something on paper before we get to Full Council again, on down the line, on Thursday, would be a good idea. I see that Roy has his hands up, and he probably has a lot of wisdom in this to offer.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, I don't know about that, but I think what John was getting at -- If we're going to go back to the SSC, we need to be pretty specific about what it is we want them to do,

and then, of course, if we have a joint -- If you guys have a joint council meeting or something like that, you need to have some pretty clear things that you're trying to hash out.

The other thing that would be a little concerning about slowing down too much with this is I think the terminal year in this assessment is 2017, and so we're coming up on 2021, and so you're already getting four years out, and, depending on how long it takes to implement some of the outcomes from this, you end up in a situation where the assessment is pretty out-of-date before you've even made any changes, and so just some things to think about.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That's a good point. I am wondering though if we should move on to another discussion, and I will try to type up something that we could consider, either in the Snapper Grouper Committee tomorrow, but, if we start getting behind now, we might not have time for that tomorrow, and so then possibly at a different committee, or when we get to Full Council, and so maybe I can try to write that up. Myra, do you have any thoughts on that?

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Jessica. I was going to say that sounds fine. I think staff can also chip in and come up -- We can get the ball rolling and maybe get a list started that then you can build on, and we can have that ready as guidance for the council to consider on Thursday.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Myra. Then, the way I read this agenda, I don't know that we need to do anything else right now on yellowtail, and then we would move on to the need for conservation and management of the nine species, or am I missing something? I see Mel's hand up. Sorry.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Jessica. No, I was just going to agree with you. I think the approach that you described -- Let's get something down. I didn't really hear anybody jump in and say, hey, let's move with this right now, and I think I've heard some reluctance to just kind of take it and run with it, and so I think maybe being a little more precautionary and describing exactly what our issues are -- That's a good approach, and, if we can come back later, and, in terms of the schedule itself, yes, the next thing on the agenda would be to deal with the nine species.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Mel. Then I'm going to turn it back to Myra and Mike to move us into the overview of the next discussion.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Jessica. What I would like to do is I'm going to give you -- I am going to blaze through this initial presentation, and it's something that you guys have already seen the various factors for the need of conservation and management, and then Mike Schmidtke is going to do a quick demo of the online tool that we have put together to help with that evaluation, and then Jimmy is in the audience, but he has asked that I go over the recommendations from the Snapper Grouper AP that they had for this, when they discussed it at their recent meeting, and so, with that, I will jump right in.

As I said, this is something that you guys are already familiar with, and we have talked about the various -- The guidance that NOAA Fisheries or that Magnuson has, in terms of what needs to be considered when a species is in need of federal management under an FMP or whether they need to be removed from that FMP, and so there are several factors, and, as you know, the species that have to have federal management are those that are overfishing or overfished or under danger of becoming overfished or overfishing, and those are the ones that absolutely require that

management, and, beyond that, the councils have to determine, based on their evaluation of these ten factors that I'm quickly going to go over with you.

First off, there is this little flow chart here that kind of breaks down for you the process, and so, if this stock is overfished or subject to overfishing or likely to be, and the answer is yes, then you move over here to the left of the chart, and that stock eventually requires conservation and management. If the answer is no, then you have to go through this evaluation. One of the main factors here in the middle is if the stock is predominantly caught in federal waters or state waters, and so that's one of the main things that help with that determination. If you go through the evaluation and the stock does not require conservation and management, then there are some other options that we'll talk about here in a minute.

The council has not added a stock to its existing FMPs in recent years, at least not since I've been on the council. They have, however, removed some species from the FMP, and that was done initially in the Comprehensive ACL Amendment. You removed, also, blue runner in Amendment 27, and you went on to remove dog snapper, mahogany snapper, black snapper, and schoolmaster, most recently, in Amendment 35.

Here is the list of the evaluation factors, and there is ten of them, and, basically, I will just go over them quickly and kind of just go over things that you may want to consider when doing this evaluation, in terms of the data that are available. For Number 1, it's kind of hard to say if the stock is an important component of the marine environment, and so, here, you might look at things like life history and predator-prey interactions, and maybe diet. As far as whether the stock is caught in a fishery, you can look at landings composition of species relative to the rest of the fishery, and landings composition by sector, whether it's in state or federal waters.

Factors 4 and 5 could maybe be evaluated based on the percentage of directed trips, trips with landings, value, and revenue for the particular species that you are considering. Continuing along with the list, is the stock important to the nation or to the regional economy? Here, you might consider the percentage of directed trips, again, trips with landings of that species, and the economic value and revenue factors that are available.

For Number 7, are there any known issues or conflicts among users? That's an important one that we would most likely determine by going to advisory panels, for example, and looking at fishery performance reports and whether there are competing interests there that could cause issues. Factor Number 8, this would be more of a qualitative evaluation of the extent of utilization of the species, based on landings, and then, finally, Factors 9 and 10 are considering the needs and the developing fishery and whether an FMP could foster orderly growth, could be determined based on landings and value for each species, and then, finally, as I said, a summary of regulations in federal and state and what is in place, in terms of management for the particular species, would be definitely something to consider.

If the council determines that a stock does not require conservation and management, but they would continue to want to list that species, include that species, in an FMP to help achieve ecosystem management objectives, then that species could be designated as an ecosystem component.

Going back to our little flow chart here, if you get down to the bottom, you could then remove the species from the FMP, which you have done in the past, or you could designate that species as an ecosystem component under the FMP, and there are -- Currently, I believe there's five of them in the Snapper Grouper FMP, and we have rock bass, bank sea bass, ocean triggerfish, cottonwick, and a porgy, and I can't remember which one right now.

If you do want to designate a species as an ecosystem component, then you also have to consider four additional factors, and that is if the species is a non-target species or stock, and, obviously, if it's not overfishing or overfished or approaching overfishing or overfished condition, if it's not likely to become overfished or overfishing, in the absence of conservation and management, and this is where it's important to know if there's management in place at the state level, and if the species is not generally retained for sale or personal use.

I should mention that, in the Comp ACL Amendment, when you last designated ecosystem component species, that designation was based on meeting three out of the four criteria, but there is no guidance, as far as I know, that says you have to meet a certain number of them.

Why we're talking about this now is because the SSC, back in October of 2019, recommended that the council consider possibly designating nine snapper grouper species as ecosystem component species, and those were blackfin snapper, coney, cubera snapper, margate, misty grouper, saucereye porgy, silk snapper, yellowedge grouper, and yellowfin grouper.

What I am going to do, quickly, is show you the data that the SSC was discussing at the time they made this recommendation and the rationale for their recommendation, and so this discussion took place when they were looking, I believe, at ABCs for unassessed species, and so they were talking about changes between potential catch levels due to MRIP revisions, and so I'm just going to show you the graphs that they were discussing when they made these recommendations, and the rationale, you can see, is included in each of the graphs, and so here's the one for blackfin snapper. There is almost no change in the trend or magnitude of landings, and the lines -- The blue refers to the total ABC under pre-FES and the ABC, I believe, based on FES revisions, and then what the new ABC or ACL would potentially be.

This is a graph for coney, and I will just pause for a little bit there, to let you read the SSC's recommendation on your own on the screen. For cubera snapper, this is what that graph looks like, and margate, and here's misty grouper and saucereye porgy, and, here, they talked about, potentially, some species ID issues. Here is silk snapper and yellowedge grouper and yellowfin. What I would like to do now is turn it over to Mike, to let him show you this tool that I mentioned, and, before we go there though, here are the questions that we would like the committee to consider.

What we're looking for is guidance on whether you would like to initiate a plan amendment to conduct this evaluation on these nine species and whether they need to be retained in the FMP or potentially be designated as ecosystem components, and you could potentially include an action in the amendment that would revise the ABCs for unassessed species, and that's an option, and then, also, be thinking about are there any species that should be excluded, or included, besides these nine? With that, let me get out of here and let Mike take control of the screen.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Thanks, Myra. As we're going into this tool, I just wanted to note, for the council and the public, on where you can access this, if the council decides to move forward with this process and folks want to kind of look through it after this meeting, but, right now, I'm in the overview, and it's Attachment 2b, and that would open up a link to this page right here, and this is the page for the tool, and so, on the welcome page, we have the species that are included listed here to the side, and it's kind of an introduction to the process, with some similar material that Myra just went over.

The ten factors are listed out, as she discussed, and, as she showed in her presentation, those have been -- These ten factors were adapted to a question form, and that's something that we are using in this tool, to kind of make it a bit more interactive, so that users can go through this evaluation process for these species.

Clicking over to the next tab, there are three tabs up here, and there's that welcome page, and the next one we'll go to is life history, and then, finally, we'll look at the factors themselves. I am not going to be going through each individual species that's being considered here. If the council would like to do that, would like to move forward with an amendment of this sort, then that's something that would need to be done, but that can happen at a later time. This is more giving an introduction to how to use this tool and how it can be helpful as this process moves forward, if it does so.

Under the life history tab, you see a picture of the species that is selected, and this drops down, and you can select any of the nine species that are being looked at, and, for each one that's selected, there is some life history information listed below, things like distribution and spawning season and reproductive information and age information, and then it notes stock status, but, as a spoiler, for all of these species, the stock status for all of them would be unknown, and there is not a whole lot of information that would support a stock assessment for any of these species.

Next, we're looking at the factors tab, and you'll see there's a similar drop-down, where you can select a species for the purpose of showing what the tool does, and I'm going to be going through it with cubera, and there are these buttons here on the side that kind of guide through the different types of information that are shown. As we go through these different buttons, questions for the factors, those ten factors, will come up on the screen, and there are buttons that you can click for answering those questions, and so is this stock an important component of the marine environment?

Here, the pertinent information that is shown has to do with diet information, whether they are prey of certain species or whether they are prey of these predators or what species they prey on, listed here, and there's no obligation to use only this information, but it's simply this is what is some of the most pertinent information, but you can certainly click from one button to the other and possibly tie some things together as you go through using it, but I'm going to be clicking through the buttons, just to show the responses and the utility of it, and this is purely hypothetical, but is this stock an important component? I will click no, just for the sake of that.

The responses to each of these questions, as you click through them, are shown here, and it records how many out of ten responses are clicked as no, and, as I click through, you will see these accumulate to a certain number out of ten.

Myra talked about this a little bit in her presentation, and that number doesn't necessarily mean anything, and there is no threshold number of criteria that need to be checked off for a species to be removed from a plan or designated as an ecosystem component species or anything of that sort, but it's simply meant to kind of track the responses, and I can give you a relative gauge. If there is a species that fits all ten of these criteria, and you have ten no responses, then that can give you an indicator of how you all may choose to act.

Next, it's looking at whether the stock is caught by the fishery, and the information that's shown here -- I apologize that there's a bit of a misnomer here, and I probably will change this in a future version, but it's -- The species are being considered for more than as ecosystem components, and they're being considered fully for the need for conservation and management, but what this graph is showing is those nine species are included within this bar. Each color shown in this figure is one of the species that is a part of the snapper grouper fishery management unit, and, as you can see, they vary in size, and they're all contributing a different percentage of the total landings within that management unit.

For the nine species being considered for evaluation here, they cumulatively comprise 1.4 percent of the total landings within the three years considered here of 2016 through 2018, and that's when the SSC -- When they were looking at their information. That's the sum of all of them, and that's a pretty small portion of the landings in total.

As you scroll down to the second figure of this page, you see the individual species, with its commercial landings from the last -- Its average commercial landings from the last three years shown in blue, and its average recreational landings from the last three years -- I keep saying last three years, but it's 2016 through 2018, through that three-year time period, but that's shown in orange for the recreational, and that is compared to the rest of its complex.

Each one of the species being considered here is not managed individually, and each one is managed within a complex, and so, for example, cubera snapper is managed within the snappers complex, and, as you change the species, the caption changes as well, and so you'll see the other species within that complex. In this case, cubera is grouped in with gray snapper and lane snapper, and gray snapper really dominates a lot of the landings within that complex, and so you can see this large disparity between the rest of the complex and what cubera has shown within that three-year time period.

Just as a relative metric, on each one of these, regardless of what species is selected, it's showing 1 percent of the management unit total landings, and so 1 percent, somewhere in this range of this figure, how it translates when you look at that individual species itself, along with looking at it in the context of its complex.

I forgot to do a hypothetical selection, and so could an FMP improve or maintain the condition of the stock, and the piece of information that is primarily used here is where the landings are coming from, federal waters or state waters, indicating whether that federal FMP is having a strong impact. Landings from federal waters, in our three-year evaluation time period, are shown in red, while those from state waters are shown in navy.

One thing to note here, and you probably -- You may have noticed it from the previous figures, with that large recreational component, but, when you look at a lot of these species, they would

fall into the category of those that are rarely intercepted by MRIP, and so, if they are intercepted, and that intercept happens to occur within that 2016 to 2018 time period, they may be subject to quite a bit of imprecision in an annual estimate, and so you could see those large spikes that we see with some species in the recreational data, and that's something that can come into play here with this component.

When you look at the commercial side, you see that it's about a 60/40 split, federal to state, where the landings are coming from, but then, when you look over to the recreational side, it's about 95 percent state waters, and, when you combine the sectors here, it's 94 percent state waters, and that shows that there is that kind of overwhelming recreational portion that is eliminating any type of trend that you would see from the commercial side, and that's just something to keep in mind as you would be going through this evaluation process and considering what this information is actually saying to you.

Next, it's looking at targeting and fishery importance. These questions about targeting and importance and different aspects, they overlap quite a bit in what you would use to evaluate these types of things. If a stock is important to a certain group of users, they would tend to target it. Similarly, if a stock is economically important, then there would probably be a tendency for targeting of that fish, and so we kind of lumped those questions together and grouped some of the targeting and economic information together into this table here, using our same three-year time period and averages over that time period.

We look first at within the fishery management unit and all of the snapper grouper recreational trips and how many of those that were directed towards snapper grouper species and were targeting cubera snapper, and that ends up being a quarter of a percent as the average from that three-year time period. Then we look at the number of recreational trips that had landings, and not necessarily targeting, but just those that have reported landings of cubera snapper, and then, after that, we see the percent of fish that were landed on recreational trips with at least one cubera snapper landed, and so, if it was landed on a recreational trip, how many of the fish did it constitute, as a percentage there?

The bottom three rows are looking at the commercial sector, and first we look at the ex-vessel value compared to the rest of the fishery management unit, and so, when you compare cubera snapper to the rest of the snapper grouper species, commercially, it constituted about eight-one-hundredths of a percent of the commercial value generated from the total management unit. Commercial trips that had landings of cubera snapper, averaged over that timeframe, and then the percent of revenue for commercial trips that had at least one pound of cubera snapper, and so, again, when a trip landed -- When a commercial trip landed cubera snapper, how much of the revenue from that trip was accounted for by cubera, and that ends up being about 4 percent, on average.

We have the responses to all of these questions, and, next, moving into competing interests and conflicts, as well as the economic condition, the answers to these questions -- Not the answers, but the information related to these questions is pretty similar across all of the species that are included in this app, and the only one that is an exception is cubera snapper, and there is some information of competing interests between recreational rod-and-reel fishermen and the diver fishery on the recreational side, but, other than that, we have not been made aware of any competing interests or significant conflicts among user groups for these fisheries.

Then considering the economic condition of the fishery and how efficiently it's utilized, and none of these fisheries have extremely efficient economic utilization, and so it -- They're all under an FMP currently, and none of them are really high economic value species at this time, and so there is -- There doesn't seem to be much of an effect of the FMP on how they are used economically.

The one exception to that could potentially be yellowedge grouper, as that has more of a commercial component, and I believe Jimmy is going to touch on that in the AP comments, and, if we need to bring up anything about any of these species, as the discussion goes on, I can navigate to that.

Next, we have the needs of a developing fishery, and kind of the question that we asked in response to this was is the fishery showing any form of growth, and Myra touched on some of this in her presentation, and quite a few of these species are showing some variability, some random spikes, mostly on the recreational side, but, as you can see for cubera, other than some of these recreational spikes that may be data related, it seems to be fairly flat, and it's certainly not showing any significantly directional trend, in terms of the landings, but we see here the recreational harvest, commercial harvest, and commercial value.

For quite a few of these species, because of that recreational variability, the commercial harvest does end up getting dwarfed quite a bit by the recreational, but you can see a little bit more of the commercial trends through the value that is shown on this separate scale on the right.

Then, finally, considering existing management, and the question of whether other entities, states particularly, are managing this species and whether, if they were removed or had some other status within the federal FMP, if there are already mechanisms in place to manage those species. One thing to keep in mind, if evaluating for the ecosystem component species, is that kind of a big distinguishing factor from that species being fully fledged within an FMP, versus that status, is the need for an ACL. Ecosystem component species can be kind of informationally incorporated, as needed, for the management of others, but they don't have the requirement of having to have an ACL.

As this question is evaluated, the information we have here, we have the regulations in federal waters, and those are summarized here, with a link to the council's regulations page, and we also have the state agencies linked here and some brief summaries of the state regulations, and there is a disclaimer right here that I do want to make sure that I note verbally, that these are not comprehensive regulations, and they are more to -- They are for the purposes of evaluating, in this type of context, is there something in place to manage these species, or what is in place to manage these species, and so things like gear requirements and permit requirements are not shown here, and that's just something to keep in mind. I would not recommend that anybody look at this and go fishing specifically only off of this information. That's for any public users that may be looking at it.

After answering all of the questions, you will note that this is filled with your responses of no out of ten, and it goes bold, and that's kind of the indicator that you have answered all of the questions for that species, and you don't need to go in a directional fashion. You can click back and forth, as long as you keep the same species, and you can even go over to the life history information and

then come back, and, as long as you keep the same species right here, it will retain your responses. Once you change over to something else, and say you change over to coney, then it resets.

That is the tool, and it's kind of an intro of how to use it, and I can pass back to you, Myra, if you need me to show the AP report, and I have it up here, and I don't know if there's a separate presentation that you need for that or not.

MS. BROUWER: Thanks, Mike. Let me take control back over here, and I'm going to bring up the Snapper Grouper AP report. I just wanted to quickly go over what the Snapper Grouper AP recommended for this particular topic, and this is included in their full report, and, like I said, Jimmy Hull is in the audience, and so, if there's any specific questions, or anything else you would like to add, Jimmy, as I go through these, but, basically -- There's not that much, and so I will just go one-by-one.

There was some concern among the AP members over removing cubera snapper and yellowedge grouper from federal management, and they said that, off of North Carolina, commercial fishermen also do interact with margate and that yellow grouper is a high value fish in the commercial fishery as well, and it fetches six to seven-dollars per pound. It is also important in the dive industry in Florida and in North Carolina.

They talked about there being potentially some identification issues between gray, or mangrove, snapper and cubera snapper, and they also pointed out that cubera snapper is not included as a species in the commercial logbook. They talked about increased interest among recreational anglers for cubera snapper, and that was one of the reasons they are recommending that it be retained under the federal plan.

They talked about some identification issues, maybe, with silk snapper, and there is apparently maybe different species off of North Carolina and Florida, and they expressed concern about a potentially growing commercial fishery in some areas for this species, and so, in the end, they recommended adjusting the recreational possession limit for cubera, and, in addition, consider evaluating whether barrelfish might need to be included in a management plan, and I know this is something that the council has touched upon in recent years.

They recommended that, if cubera snapper is retained in the FMP, that it should be added to the logbook, and they approved a motion summarizing all these recommendations, and they recommend that margate, yellowedge grouper, yellowfin grouper, silk snapper, and cubera snapper be retained in the Snapper Grouper FMP. With that, I will turn it back to you, Jessica, and let Jimmy fill in where I might have missed something.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Myra. Jimmy, did you have something else that you wanted to add here?

MR. HULL: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted to state that the AP -- We all, pretty much, individually, went through this tool, evaluation tool, and it kind of depends on geographically where you are in the council's range as to your answers and how much you might possibly interact with some of these species. Overall, the landings are very small, in the overall picture, but, for certain communities and certain sectors, whether you're a diver, perhaps, cubera could be very, very important to you, and you may answer the questions differently than someone that never

interacts with them, and so that was one of the things that I wanted to express, that you get different answers depending on who you talk to.

Also, the idea of some of these, obviously, are already managed under complexes or in daily bag limit aggregates, and so taking them out of that -- There were some obvious ones that we think could be taken out, but then the ones that we recommended in the motion were ones that we thought that needed to be retained in either the complex or the aggregate bag limits, and so that was pretty much it.

You know, yellowedge grouper, speaking commercially, I mean, it really is a fine animal for us to have in a fishery. The landings are very low, and I do question how those landings are obtained, because, at the federal level, and I'm thinking of cubera, and, on cubera, at the federal level, cubera is not even in our logbook, but there was some concern, and I think it's well spoken in the report, and, by the way, we had several new AP members, and they are very good. We have some really good AP members, and that's why you're getting such good feedback from these guys, and so that's pretty much all I have to say.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Jimmy. Mel.

MR. BELL: Thanks, Jessica. Thanks, Jimmy, for being here and for providing that input, and I think it is interesting. You know, we had the input from the SSC and all, and, in kind of looking at it from just a purely numbers standpoint, stepping back for the whole fishery, they have one conclusion, but what Jimmy was talking about is the regional representation there, where you can see that it may not -- A fishery might not be a big deal overall, but, locally, it can be important, and so you had a lot of those discussions, and they did spend a good bit of time getting down into the weeds on this.

I honestly have never heard the term "fireback" before, and that was confusing, when they were talking about that, but what you see is the kind of -- We got some good feedback from our fishermen who -- It's a different context whether you're off of North Carolina or whether you're off of south Florida, and so that's why you see the desire in their recommendation to keep some of these in, because they are sort of locally important, and that's a good perspective to have from them, and I appreciate that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Mel. I guess, Myra, now we need to kind of start this discussion about the questions that you have there on the screen.

MS. BROUWER: That would be the idea, Jessica, and, you know, of course, this depends -- It's tied to workload issues and whether an unassessed species, an ABC amendment, is going to move forward and the timeline of that, but this is the input that we would need to move forward, and I understand if -- We have thrown a lot of information at you all at once, and so I don't know how you would like to proceed, and I'm ready to type up some motions, if that's the route you want to take, or if you want to mull it over and we can include maybe direction under timing and tasks, and we can do that as well.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Myra. I would be looking for some hands here about this discussion, and so I can tell you that -- Both Jimmy and Mel brought this up, but I would say that there are some species, in addition to the ones that the AP recommended, that are definitely

important in the Keys, and appear to be marketable bycatch in the Keys, including margate and all the groupers, but also saucereye porgy, and so I would bring that up.

Also, let me ask a question here. If we remove a species from the fishery management plan, or designate it as ecosystem component, then you can't require the federal permit anymore for commercial harvest, and is that right?

MS. BROUWER: I believe you can, and I believe they would not be exempt from permitting requirements, and I see Shep is there to clarify that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Shep.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. Well, it depends on what it is. If it's a limited-access fishery, then I would say that certainly, no, you couldn't require the permit, and that's too active management, but, assuming that you could develop some rationale for having the permit, or some benefit associated with the permit, yet not actually have other management measures for it, then it's probably something you could do, but I would say it is something you could do, but, as we discussed in the context of the ecosystem component species in dolphin wahoo, what's the benefit of having a permit, and is there not other management measures associated with it, because data collection and other things can occur without the permit itself. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Shep. I guess I would suggest that, if you didn't have the permit requirement for these particular species, then, in theory, someone could just go out and, without their snapper grouper federal permit, just start a fishery for these, and so I'm wondering if the hurdle of the federal permit requirement now might be contributing to the fact that they are at low levels, at least some of them, and I don't know. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: That fact makes me very nervous, not only -- So you can't go out and catch a commercially-profitable trip of cubera snapper, but think about the bycatch you're going to have with like yellowedge grouper, or even cubera, and it just makes me very nervous to remove especially these long-lived, sort of deeper-water species from the management unit, especially given -- I paid a lot of attention during the Snapper Grouper AP, and I felt like there was a compelling argument to be made that the dive sector is really moving in and catching -- That it could expand with at least cubera, and I also think there might be some species misidentification, and I forget if that came up, with yelloweye and silk, and I know we talked about it with I think margate, but it would make me very uncomfortable to remove it completely.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, me too. Shep.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was at the SSC meeting when they reviewed these, or I guess I was listening to it, and it seemed to me that they were focused on landings, and everything was just about where harvest was, and they provided you this recommendation and this guidance, and it seems to me that, before you get in -- Maybe you do want to do it now, and go species-by-species, but it seems like directing staff to put together this list and coming back with an options paper or the next iteration of this process, whatever you want to call it, and then look at the species and maybe get into more specific discussion and give guidance on which ones you might want to remove, if you want to move forward at all. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Shep. I guess I would ask -- Well, let me go to Chester, and then Mel, and then I will ask Myra a question. Go ahead, Chester.

MR. BREWER: In taking a look at the motion that we got from the AP, I agree with it 100 percent, and I'm wondering if we can't just go ahead and approve the motion that was made by the AP, and I know we can't -- Well, this is a committee, and so we could recommend to Full Council that that be done, by way of a motion, and, if you want me to, I will make such a motion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Go ahead.

MR. BREWER: **Madam Chair, I move that we approve the motion made by the Snapper Grouper AP regarding removing certain species from management.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: Just to be clear, while Myra is typing that, just to be clear, by approving this motion, if you will, then these particular species, and we should probably list them out at some point for discussion, but these species would be retained in the fishery management plan, as opposed to being removed. Is that --

MR. BREWER: Yes, ma'am. That's exactly what I was trying to get at.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. All right. While Myra is working on this, do we have a second for this motion? Mel, are you wanting to second? I thought you had a question.

MR. BELL: Well, I did, and so you might want to check with John, if he had something procedurally or something he wanted to bring up.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Let's go to John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I did, Mel, and I guess I was just asking, Roberts-Rules-wise, about the committee making a motion to approve a motion of an AP, and I think it would be clearer to maybe make a committee motion that is consistent with the position of the AP, and part of the record would be like you're making this on -- You're going along with the request of the AP, but make it clear that you are making a motion and not approving an AP motion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I thought the same thing, and so, now that Myra has the species pasted there, I'm wondering if the motion is retain those lists of species you see on the board in the Snapper Grouper FMP. Chester, would that --

MR. BREWER: **Madam Chair, I have no objection to that whatsoever.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. All right. Do we have a second?

MR. SAPP: I will second it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. It's seconded by Art. Let's go to Mel.

MR. BELL: Well, I was just kind of going back to what Myra had said they were looking for from us, and I guess we could still do this, and we're moving in the right direction, but you had

mentioned perhaps including discussion of other species, and they have asked us specifically about excluding or including other species, and so I guess just agreeing with the AP here doesn't preclude that happening as well, and so I guess we're okay if we do this.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and I think that we could have an additional motion or add to this list, because I would add some items to this particular list, some species that seem to be important, at least in south Florida and the Keys, that I would want to retain that federal permit, so that we wouldn't be moving them into the ecosystem component and not requiring the permit, because I am just concerned that maybe a fishery would start for some of these, or you could have bycatch of other species that we're intending to protect and watching those ACLs closely, but I would just throw that out there. Mel, are you wanting to look at other species, or are you just asking questions right now?

MR. BELL: I brought that up, and I think, by simply agreeing with them to remove those four or five from the discussion, that's fine, and that can be an action in itself, and then we can talk later about if you want to add some things, but I guess what I would ask right now is are there any others that we might consider striking from the list, as they did, and I guess not, perhaps, and so that may be it, and that's fine. We'll just adopt what they recommended.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I guess I would throw out there that I would basically add all of the groupers, and I would add saucereye porgy, and I would add margate, which might only leave coney, but I haven't done the math here on everything in this list. I am going to go to Shep.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would just say this seems somewhat premature to me. I mean, the motion is to retain these things in the Snapper Grouper FMP, and they're in the Snapper Grouper FMP, and you have no motion on the table to start anything to remove them from the FMP, and so, as I was trying to suggest before, it seems to me that maybe the motion is to move forward with the development of the amendment, or whatever we want to do, and that would have species, and you could give them guidance, here at this meeting, not to include some of those species, based on input from the AP and whatever else you want to provide here. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Shep. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. Shep raised his hand before I could, and I was going to make the same point, and I don't really see a need for this motion, since we haven't started an action to remove anything yet from the complex.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. I guess the other option is are there any species in this list of -- I think there's ten, or there's nine, maybe, and any of the species that we want to consider in an amendment to remove from the fishery management plan, and so maybe that's a shorter list. Tim and then Anna.

MR. GRINER: I was just going to echo the same thing that Steve and Shep said. I am pretty adamant that these, at least, need to stay as they are, and I really didn't see any need for the motion at all, because we really haven't done anything that we would need to retain them, and we haven't taken them out or anything, and so, yes, I would like to have some discussion on the remaining ones and kind of get an idea of what people's thoughts are on those.

MS. BECKWITH: My position was the same, and I was all confused why we had this motion on the table, and Shep was much more eloquent than I would have been, and so --

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. So, Chester, I think we've captured what you intended there in the second little paragraph of do not consider these species, and so, ultimately, I think that, if we made a motion, it would be the list of species that we want to remove. Does that make sense, Chester?

MR. BREWER: It does, and I think the instruction to staff to take these species off the to-be-considered list is sufficient as well, because everybody is right. I mean, we haven't moved in any way to remove these from management, and so saying that it's premature is probably also correct, but my real idea was to not have staff go spinning their wheels over fisheries that we pretty well are all in agreement should remain under management, and so the second one is fine, and I think that can just be a direction to staff.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That sounds good. Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Jessica. Chester said exactly what I was going to say, that this could be just direction to staff, and that would help us a great deal. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Mel.

MR. BELL: You just did what I was going to -- Procedurally, do we need to vote it down and clear the deck, or did we just delete it and it never happened?

MS. MCCAWLEY: **I think we just deleted it.** I talked to the maker of the motion, and I felt like it just went away, if that's okay.

MR. CARMICHAEL: I'm not sure you even got a second.

MR. BELL: We did from Art.

MR. BREWER: **I got a second, but, as so many things in my life, you really do appreciate the opportunity to do a do-over, and this was one of them, and, as the maker, I went ahead and said let's just do this as direction to staff, and I think that is the better way.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Let's --

MS. BROUWER: I am going to put the list back up, just so you have it in front of you, so you can see what the other species were that are on the list.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. I guess I would be looking for discussion on these other species, and so the ones that we've already included were silk snapper, cubera snapper, margate, yellowedge, and yellowfin grouper and silk snapper. Are there other thoughts about whether we should start an amendment to remove any four of those species from the plan? Mel.

MR. BELL: Well, I was going to say that the AP discussed those others as well, and I have nothing else to add about any of those, but, yes, my question was do we just need an amendment to describe moving the process forward, which would also include adding -- You have mentioned adding some

other things, and do we need an amendment here to just kind of get the train moving, or identify a train that we want to move, because, I think, kind of like what Shep was saying, just an amendment to move forward with something to delete and perhaps add some things, for discussion purposes.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I am good with that, but I would suggest not removing misty grouper, and I don't know if I would remove saucereye porgy either, and so then that only leaves blackfin snapper and coney, but I don't know what others think, but, at least in south Florida, people are definitely taking misty and saucereye porgy. Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. I think you've got to leave blackfin snapper as well. I mean, we do catch blackfin snapper, and we can catch quite a few of them, if you're at the right place at the right time, and so, kind of looking back through here, I don't really see what good we do by taking anything out. By the time you add the misty grouper and the saucereye porgy and the blackfin back in, I think you might as well just leave everything like it is. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Thank you, Jessica, and I was going to say that the purpose of the amendment, as it's been talked about, would be to evaluate these stocks for those ten criteria, and it sounds like, on at least the ones scratched out, you don't feel you need that to determine that you wish to keep them in. If it gets down to like one species or something, I do think the council should consider if it is worth -- If it's worth going through that to remove that one species, and it doesn't seem like there's a lot of support for this, at this time, to maybe remove anything but perhaps coney, and so it could end up being a lot of work to remove one species from the FMP.

MS. MCCAWLEY: You just said everything that I was thinking, that coney might be the only species, but let's see if there is other comments here. Kerry, do you have some thoughts here?

MS. MARHEFKA: I was kind of thinking the same thing, except for I was kind of hoping there would be something left in there, only for it to be a vehicle to perhaps add a species to the FMP, or discuss, and I don't know if Chris is about to say this, because I believe Chris was the one who might have originally brought it up at the Snapper Grouper AP meeting, but I do believe we need to have some discussion about barrelfish being added. That shouldn't mean we should take something else out just for that reason, but I was hoping there might be a vehicle to have that discussion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Sounds good. Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: The reason why we would remove them is basically so they're not showing on the SEDAR schedule, pursuant to Magnuson, and is that what -- That's my understanding, and, I mean, FWC or something is going to monitor, or whoever has got to do it, to look after the species that the AP recommended or whatnot, and, as long as somebody is keeping tabs on them, I think that's fine, if it's going to free up the assessment schedule some or something, for way down the road, and I know things get pushed back and back, but sometimes we get put up against the law or whatever, and we have to do whatever needs to be done, and, if that's going to be the case, then those are some pretty insignificant numbers that might not need to be dealt with through that, but I could be wrong. I will speak to Kerry's point after I hear some rebuttal, or more conversation. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Jessica. I think that the main thing that would happen, Chris, is the requirement for an ACL would be removed, and my feeling is the SSC has a lot of species that they're tasked with providing ABC recommendations, and they are very data-poor species, and so I think their recommendation, as was stated earlier, was based on landings trends, and I think they find themselves a little frustrated when they're asked to provide ABCs and ACLs for some of these species that don't seem to have a whole lot of information or be as important to the fishery as others, and so I think that's a little bit of what's going on here.

MR. CONKLIN: Duly noted, and I would consider it somewhat of an insult to have to be tasked to make some sort of decision with even less data than the ones that we think we have enough data for, and so, with that in mind, I would fully support a motion to begin an amendment to remove and also include, or add, new species to the FMP. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thanks, Madam Chair. Myra covered it, but I was just going to reiterate that the only reason the SSC recommended this was their issues with recommending ABCs for these species, just given that, looking at the landings history, they seem to primarily be kind of bycatch fisheries, or infrequently-targeted fisheries, and so we just need to keep that in mind in our future discussions about adding species to the complex. I know we've got the ten factors that we can go through, but, anything we add, the SSC has to provide those ABC recommendations, and so we just need to be mindful of landings for species like barrelfish and that kind of stuff, and just available data in general.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Steve. Mel.

MR. BELL: I follow all of that, and I understand how we got to where we were going, and this seemed like a good idea, and I understand the SSC's perspective of being required to do something they really just don't have the data to do, but then, when we brought the AP in, with some real-world considerations and concerns about the fisheries and the stocks, maybe, you got a different approach, but I get the sense that we're not really in a good position to make a motion to do anything right now related to initiation of an amendment or something, but maybe we continue the dialogue and the discussion about the general sense of where we were going with this, but we have included now, of course, that maybe we bring in some other species, but I just don't think we're ready -- I don't feel like we're ready right now to make a motion to do something, and maybe it's just some direction to staff to kind of keep this dialogue going, or keep the discussion going, with the SSC's stated desired needs and what we're bringing in from the fishermen and other things of species we might want to discuss, but I just don't feel like we're ready to say, yes, let's do something right this second.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Clay.

DR. PORCH: Thank you. I agree with most of the comments that have been made, and it's really hard to see how some of these could reasonably be designated as an ecosystem component species or pulled out of the FMP altogether, but, on the other hand, it's obviously difficult to assess and

monitor and manage most of these species, and so I think that the most viable alternative is probably not to try and specify separate ACLs for them individually, but to combine them as part of a complex with an indicator species that can be assessed.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. Shep.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. For those of you who support removing these, or removing any of the species from the FMP, I just want to add a note of caution that getting us out of the requirement to do ACLs is not a good rationale, and we need to avoid that, and I will hearken back to what John Carmichael was saying. The question is are the species in need of conservation and management, and, if they aren't, then they should be removed from the FMP. If they are, then they should be left, and it's not that they should be removed. If you can meet the criteria for ecosystem component species and be left in the FMP, but not be subject to management. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks. I am going to try to summarize this discussion, because I feel like we're all over the place. Go ahead, Clay. Clay, did you put your hand up again?

DR. PORCH: Yes, and I wasn't sure you could hear me. Somehow it seems like it cut out. I don't know if you got my comment.

MS. MCCAWLEY: It did seem like it cut out, and I couldn't tell if you were done or not.

DR. PORCH: Basically, all I was going to say is it may not be worth specifying individual ACLs for all those species, for the reasons that were mentioned, but many of them could legitimately be included as part of a complex, where you have an indicator species that can be assessed, and that may be the most appropriate way to avoid trying to specify individual ACLs.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thanks for that, Clay. We definitely didn't hear all that the first time. Let me see if I can summarize where we are, and then maybe somebody can jump in. I guess I'm having trouble interpreting what Mel said, where he's kind of leaving this discussion open, because I don't know the mechanism, or the procedure, to do that. It is seeming like we don't want to remove these species from the fishery management unit, and I heard a variety of reasons listed, in addition to the reasons that the AP was listing, and there really only seemed like maybe one, which would have been coney, and it would have been a fair amount of work to start an amendment to just remove that one species.

I heard some people wanting to have a discussion about adding species to the fishery management unit, which is the opposite of what we intended to start here, but I just don't know, procedurally, how to do what Mel was suggesting, and so I'm not sure -- There is one of the questions here on this slide about are there other species that should be included or excluded, and I'm not sure. Chester.

MR. BREWER: It seems to me that Clay has charted a path for us that makes a lot of sense, and perhaps our way forward would be -- I am thinking, and, John, you can correct me, but I'm thinking, if we put all of these fisheries, and perhaps a few more, in a bucket, if you want to call it that, and then designate an indicator species to do your assessment, and hopefully set the ABCs and whatnot for all these species, you're going to need an amendment to do that, I would think. I

might be wrong, but perhaps going down that road with an amendment procedure might be the way forward, and I would just throw that out right now.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Jessica. I was going to just remind the committee that there is an amendment out there that would address adjusting ABCs for unassessed species, and so one of our suggestions for how to tackle this particular issue would be to include an action in that amendment to conduct the evaluation for whatever species you decide need to go through the process and then kind of package it all in. There could also be an action in that amendment to consider this single ACL complex, or all those options would be developed for you, with the input from the SSC, in that amendment, and so that was something that we thought could be done all in one document.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That was very helpful, Myra. John.

MR. CARMICHAEL: Myra, maybe correct me if I'm wrong, but I think a lot of these stocks are already in complexes for when it comes to ACLs, and it was individual ABCs used to create the overall complex ACL, and so that's already done, to the extent we could, back in the Comp ACL Amendment, right, Myra?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, and I was referring to Clay's suggestion for potentially coming up with a way to package these species under a single ACL that could then be managed with an indicator species, and so not necessarily our existing complexes, and that's what I was referring to.

MR. CARMICHAEL: So maybe, for that, the council could ask the Science Center to evaluate potential indicator species, or it would actually be a re-evaluation, because that was something else that we tried to do back in the original Comp ACL Amendment, and there was a lot of controversy surrounding the use of indicator species, as I recall, but things change, and the state of the science changes, and, if the Science Center has some ways forward to actually implement that, that would be great.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I like that, John. I am wondering if that could be direction to staff to add something like that for consideration in the unassessed species amendment, and I don't know its official name. Mel.

MR. BELL: I don't know the official name either, but it sounds like, if there's a mechanism that we're already kind of moving on, where we could include what we've been discussing about this concept of removal or not, on an existing mechanism, or an amendment, then direction to staff to just include possible action -- Yes, I would go that route, rather than trying to do a motion to start a whole other amendment.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think that's a great idea. Myra is typing it up right now.

MR. CARMICHAEL: We haven't named that amendment yet, because it's still one that is just on the planning horizon, and we didn't know what all it would include. Maybe it's coming together a little more.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Maybe so.

MR. BELL: The unnamed amendment, at this point.

MS. MCCAWLEY: We have named it the unassessed species amendment. I guess any more discussion here on this particular topic? We need to try to wrap it up, because we're going to move into another presentation this evening. Are we good, where we've left this here, where we don't appear to be removing species from the fishery management unit, and then we have some direction to staff here about how to consider what Clay was suggesting in an amendment that is already being worked on, or a future amendment to be worked on?

MR. BELL: I like that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Anything else for discussion on this? I don't see any more hands. Mel, I am going to turn it back to you.

MR. BELL: All right. Thanks, Jessica, and thanks, everybody, for helping us kind of get through this. We do have to shift back to Full Council again, and we have one more item for the day, under the Full Council, and so we'll do that.

(Whereupon, the meeting recessed on December 7, 2020.)

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DECEMBER 8, 2020

TUESDAY MORNING SESSION

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The Snapper Grouper Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council reconvened via webinar on Tuesday, December 8, 2020, and was called to order by Chairman Jessica McCawley.

MS. MCCAWLEY: We could probably get rolling. Myra, I have first up on our list is the wreckfish ITQ modernization, and I think that the first thing that we're doing is having Brian review the input from the shareholder and wholesale dealer meeting, and is that right?

MS. BROUWER: That's correct, and so Brian will take over here in a minute and get started with that item.

DR. CHEUVRONT: I just wanted to give you a quick update as to where we are and where we left things off. You will recall, in September, that you directed staff to convene a group of shareholders and wholesale dealers to talk about the ITQ program and get some input from them, as well as you directed staff to come back at this meeting and to give you some information about the electronic -- Potentially how an electronic program could work.

Before the September meeting was even over, I was contacted by Jessica Stephen at SERO, who said she would be glad to help out in any way possible, which was great, because she was the one

who immediately came to mind, to me, to help out with the presentation on how an electronic program could work, because she is so intimately involved in how these electronic systems work for the Gulf, and, as it turned out, she really was instrumental in not only putting that together, but helping us also with the meeting in October that we had with the shareholders, and so what we're really going to be doing this morning is sort of tag-teaming on this.

You've got two documents in your briefing book, Attachments 3b and 3c, and 3b is the presentation that we're going to be showing here in a bit, and 3c is this document, options paper, and most of the things that are in the options paper we have some stuff in the presentation to talk about, and so what we would like to do is to review with you what's in the options paper, because we also put in the comments. We summarized the comments that are in the report from the meeting that we had with the shareholders and wholesale dealers from October.

One of the goals that we also have for the Snapper Grouper Committee today, as a way to also keep this amendment on track, is that you're going to discuss you want to vote to send this out for scoping at this meeting, but, in addition, also, to discussing the modernization of the wreckfish ITA program in this amendment, don't forget that, oh my goodness, a year or more ago, you all decided that, in the next full snapper grouper amendment, you wanted to include the modifications that you all had made in the visioning process, the snapper grouper visioning process, modifications to the goals and objectives, and you wanted to include them in the next full plan amendment, and that was this Amendment 48, and so that's a whole other thing, and we have that at the end of this options paper.

Without further ado, let me get up here into this. Right now, just to show you what we've done, in September, we reviewed the original options paper, like we've discussed, and we've met with the shareholders and wholesale dealers in October, and we're going to review that input and talk to you about where we are with the document now and approve the amendment for scoping, potentially.

Because we've already had the shareholders comment and everything on this, and they were probably the majority of those who will be commenting on this document and the actions that are here, the staff's recommendation, and, of course, the council can do whatever you want to, is that you might want to just have a scoping hearing at the March meeting, as opposed to going through another formal process, but that's something that you can discuss when you get to talking about whether you want to do scoping.

Then potentially the staff would be bringing back to you, also in March, the first draft version of the amendment, in an amendment format, and then you would review all of the public comment, additional public comment, that you would get in March and look at actions and alternatives, and then you would review a draft amendment, and perhaps select preferred alternatives, and approve it for public hearings in June. Then you could vote to send it out for public hearings in the summer of 2021, and then potentially finalize it in September of 2021.

Now, one of the things that also needs, perhaps, to be considered as part of this entire review of the wreckfish ITQ program is consideration of the goals and objectives of the wreckfish ITQ program itself, and that's separate from the Snapper Grouper FMP goals and objectives, and so what we've done is -- Originally, when you had seen this before, we had the Snapper Grouper FMP goals and objectives first, but, to create some separation, we had moved those to the very end

of the document and were talking about wreckfish first and starting with the wreckfish ITQ program goals and objectives.

There were six that were in there, and the ITQ review that you approved in September of 2019 basically agreed that these six goals and objectives were pretty much being met, and, just to go over them real quickly, the first one is to develop a mechanism to vest fishermen in the wreckfish fishery and create incentives for conservation and regulatory compliance, whereby fishermen can realize potential long-run benefit.

Number 2 is to provide a management regime which promotes stability and facilitates long-range planning and investment by harvesters and fish dealers, while avoiding, where possible, the necessity for more stringent management measures and increasing management costs over time. Number 3 is develop a mechanism that allows the marketplace to drive harvest strategies. Number 4 is promote management regimes that minimize gear and area conflicts. Number 5 is minimize the tendency for overcapitalization in the harvesting and processing/distributing sectors, and Number 6 is provide a reasonable opportunity for fishermen to make adequate returns from commercial fishing by controlling entry, so that returns are not regularly dissipated by open access, while also providing avenues for fishermen not initially included in the limited-entry program to enter the program.

The shareholders discussed these, and they believe that the current program allows fishermen to be vested in the fishery, which is basically Goals 1 to 6, but they expressed concern that the fishermen -- About giving the fishermen an unrealistic expectation about permanent ownership, because of what happened regarding the unused shares that ended up getting reallocated in the past, and that was, I believe, back around 2010 or 2011, when unused shares were reallocated, and so they were a little concerned about whether Goal 1 gave that unrealistic expectation.

They really felt strongly that the current program is very successful in meeting Goals 2 through 5. However, in Goal 6, the shareholders were hesitant to make any program modification that would encourage new entrants outside of a leasing program. It's a small fishery that's already at maximum capacity with the current effort, and they felt uncomfortable with trying to encourage new entrants to think that it would be easy or possible for them to get in without considerable costs or effort, and the only way that they could probably get in to participate at this point is probably just through leasing some shares. I don't know if anybody wants to discuss any of these topics as we go through them one at a time, Madam Chair, but that's kind of what we have right now for the goals and objectives.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Brian. I had the same thought, that maybe we stop on each one of these and see if there's comments. I just wanted to add that I listened to the meeting with the shareholders and the dealers, and I thought it was a great meeting, and I thought their comments were very helpful, especially when we get into some of the items later in the document, and I also thought that it was helpful that Jessica was on the call, and she was bringing her knowledge of the Gulf program in helping to think about how to modernize the wreckfish program, and so I thought that was great, too.

On these goals and objectives, I kind of agree with the shareholders that I think that they are still fine. On Number 6, I don't know if I read Number 6 the same way that the shareholders read it. I read it more as just a general goal that, to me, is kind of similar across all ITQ/IFQ programs, in

that, in addition to controlling entry, there is a mechanism available for new entrants into the program, and so I read it as more of a general statement, and I didn't read it quite the same way, that it was actually encouraging or trying to get new entrants, and I didn't read it as the same way they did, and so I don't know if you have any insight on Number 6 there, Brian.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Madam Chair, when the review was done that you all approved, a year ago September, when the staff were reviewing it as well, I think we interpreted it the same way that you're describing, because, in that document, we said that -- It says in there that the goals and objectives of the program, as originally stated, were being met, and so I don't remember there being any specific dissent from those goals and objectives, but it was brought up by IPT members that, since we are looking at modernizing the specifics of the program, it makes sense that we would also look at the goals and objectives, just to make sure that the council feels like they still represent what the council believes are the goals and objectives of the program, and it doesn't mean that the council has to change them, but it's just saying that we're looking at them, and we think that they still meet the goals and objectives, or we would like to change something, and so this is just a good opportunity for the council to consider them, if they would like to.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Those are great points, Brian, and I appreciate that, and I definitely feel that way about 1 through 5. I actually think that Number 6 is okay. I mean, I think that, if folks want to tweak a little bit of the wording in there, that's okay too, and I see Chester has his hand up.

MR. BREWER: Thank you. Brian, I am reading the shareholder recommendations, specifically with regard to Goal Number 6, and I don't know whether I should have a little bit of heartburn over that or not, or whether it's just the wording, but it seems like the shareholders are saying that they want to encourage a leasing program, but not necessarily folks having an entry way into the program, other than through leasing, and am I reading that correct, because, if their recommendation is we want to retain our shares and our rights in perpetuity, and lease those shares and rights in perpetuity to the new entrants into the program, I vehemently disagree with that thought, and so I would let you respond to that concern.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Sure. Some of the discussion, the way I think that this has -- I think what they are referring to here is that, right now, the shareholders believe that the ACL is too low, that they could be fishing more than what they are currently allotted, and they are not exceeding their ACL, and some of it is because some of the shareholders -- Let's put it this way. Most of the shareholders are fishing all of their shares each year, but there's a couple who are not, and they would have to lease shares from the shareholders who are currently not fishing all of theirs.

What they're saying is that what they don't want to see happen is -- They are not against new entrants coming into the fishery, but they just don't feel like, the way that the fishery is allocated right now, that there are -- That there's enough fish in the ACL so that the current participants could fish as much as they could currently fish, and that they would encourage there to be a higher ACL before allowing new entrants into the fishery, and that's their real concern at this point, and it's all tied into the fact that they would like to see there be another stock assessment, et cetera, because they believe that the ACL, the current ACL, is set too low, and this is a real complex topic, because this is not just a -- This is probably an Atlantic-wide stock, because the wreckfish are found on both sides of the Atlantic, and so it's a complicated issue, and we have a small number of participants in the fishery here, and I just don't know how this issue would be resolved.

The last time there was a stock assessment, the -- A couple of the participants in the fishery themselves paid for the stock assessment that went before the SSC, and so it's really, really complicated, and I am not sure how that would be resolved for the future. When they paid for that stock assessment, they managed to get the ABC raised slightly, which resulted in a higher ACL, but they think it ought to be higher, and so I think what they're concerned about is allowing new entrants could chip away at what they feel they've got right now.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I thought that was a great explanation, Brian. You said it a lot more eloquently than I would have. I interpreted in a similar way, that they don't like the idea of new entrants at this point, because they are not able to fish as much as they want to, and they feel like the ACL could be raised, but there's not a stock assessment on the horizon to do this, and so I didn't see it how you were describing it, Chester. Mel.

MR. BELL: Well, I think you all's discussion just helped me with that, because I was going to say that I agree with you, Jessica, that Number 6 just seems, to me, to be sort of almost boilerplate for language for any kind of ITQ program, and it's about controlled entry, and then the statement at the end, which seemed to be the issue, about potentially new entrants, and I understand fully that, if the issue really is that they feel the ACL is not adequate, maybe even for the number they have, then I could see their resistance to new entrants, but I think the language in Number 6 is just -- I mean, it almost looks like sort of standard language, to me, that you would use for any ITQ program.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, Mel, and that's I interpreted it, and so, I guess, on this discussion, unless more hands go up and people want to make more comments, I am going to assume that we're okay with these six objectives, goals and objectives, for the wreckfish ITQ. Any more comments or questions or concerns on these six goals and objectives? Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. Well, I am kind of torn with this thing, with Number 6 as well, and I kind of hear where Chester is coming from, but it is a small fishery, and hats off to them for having to go out and get their own stock assessment, but part of me thinks that, well, there really isn't a way for a new person to get into the program, other than leasing, which comes back to, well, we want more ACL, or they want more ACL, but we've got a portion of them not even using the ACL they have, and that's why they're leasing the shares, and so, I mean, I'm not sure whether there shouldn't be some other mechanism that says, well, if we're not using a portion of these shares, if we choose not to fish on them, then, yes, you can lease some, but maybe some goes into some type of mechanism for a new person to actually enter in and absorb those shares.

I don't know, but it just seems, to me, that the way that it's set up now, there really is no mechanism for anyone to actually enter the program. What they're really doing is they're on the outside and just kind of leasing in, and that's -- I am not saying that I'm totally against that, but I'm just saying it's not as clear as it sounds there, and there really is not a mechanism for anyone to actually truly enter into the program.

They're not in the program, and they're just kind of borrowing a little bit of time, but they're not actually a true participant, and I don't know if there is a way, but I agree that they probably could use more ACL, but, at the same time, if they need more ACL, that just means that somebody is going to lease more ACL, and so I don't know, but it just strikes me as odd that they don't want new entries, but they're willing to lease their shares to people because they choose not to fish on

it, but, at the same time, they want more ACL. It just seems like a little bit of a catch-22 to me. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I see what you're saying, but, at the same time, I guess I would disagree that there's not a way to enter this program other than through leasing. I think someone could get the snapper grouper permit and get the wreckfish permit, and then, if someone was willing, they could buy shares from someone, and I don't think that they have to lease, and so I guess I would just say that I'm not convinced that there is not a way for someone to enter this fishery currently, but let me kick it over to Brian and see if he has anything else that he wants to add here.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Well, there is actually a couple of ways. I mean, you can build into the program. Well, the way you describe, there are ways to buy your way in, but there are also -- You can go back to the failed catch share program that was almost instituted for golden crab, and there was a use-it-or-lose-it action that was in that catch share program that was being instituted, and you can go back and look in there, and there was a -- If you had shares that you were not using, and I forgot what the times periods and all that were, because that goes back, my goodness, nearly ten years ago, but those shares would go back into a pool, and those shares would be redistributed.

This fishery is not unlike golden crab, in the sense that it's a very small number of participants. Like golden crab, you've got just a couple of real high-liners in it that have a lot of dominance in the fishery, and I've got to be very careful about what I say, because there is some confidentiality involved in talking about the characteristics of the fishery, but there are ways to do some sorts of things that you could, if you really wanted to look at how you have that fishery set up, and how you distribute shares and all that, and, if you really wanted to get into that, a model that you could look at is to go back and look at what was being proposed for the golden crab fishery, and there were some things in there that look at shares, and, right now, I believe the maximum shares that a single shareholder can have is 49 percent, and that's a lot of shares in a small fishery, but there is things that you can do to help keep those shares active and keep that ACL active.

Part of the problem that I have heard is that some of those who have shares to lease are asking for -- They're asking prices that are pretty high, and so that some of those who need to -- Who could fish additional shares don't find it to be cost-effective to pay the price that's being asked.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Brian. Tim, did you have anything else, or is your hand just still up from before?

MR. GRINER: No, and I did have a couple other things. That does bring up another problem then. There again, if they're going to ask a price that's so high that even the existing guys can't afford to fish on -- If they can't afford to lease the quota, basically that they're already out there fishing, but the price is so high that they can't even afford to catch more fish under the lease scenario, then certainly a new guy can't do it, and so, really, you have -- Entry just purely on the fact that you've only got such a few participants in the fishery that the price is basically monopolized, and so, really, there is a barrier there.

I think the idea that you just spoke of that was kicked around with the golden crab, about some type of pool of unused shares, that is use-it-or-lose-it, and maybe that's something that needs a little bit more thought, and I'm not talking about anything other than just a very small amount that would allow somebody to enter the fishery.

Having said that, it's a very specialized fishery, and the guys that are doing it do it very well, and they know what they're doing, and I don't see this as a fishery where a lot of guys would even be able to jump into it. You can get some input from Charlie, but it's not a very cheap fishery to jump into, even at a small scale, and, in fact, it's almost a fishery where you can't really jump into it at a small scale. I mean, just to lease a small amount of poundage, the investment you're going to have to even get started is going to make that pretty cost prohibitive, unless it's mixed in with some other types of fishery.

Going back to this idea of being able to just go out and -- Right now go out and buy a wreckfish permit, you can't -- I don't think you can actually just go out and get a wreckfish permit, but maybe somebody can weigh-in there, but I was not under the impression that -- If you have a grouper snapper permit, you can't just go buy a wreckfish permit, or get a wreckfish permit. Is that not the case?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Brian can answer, but I don't think that the wreckfish permit itself is limited entry, and I think it is -- I think you do have to pay for it, but I don't think it's limited. Brian.

DR. CHEUVRONT: I believe that is correct. Jessica Stephen is on, but I believe that the wreckfish permit is not a limited-entry permit. The thing that is really expensive is getting the shares. I mean, Chris knows. He has got -- He's a participant.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let's go to Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: Good morning. The wreckfish permits are open access, and I entered into the fishery myself, and the cost-prohibitive part about getting into the fishery is all the gear to get ready to go out and try and attempt to catch a damn wreckfish, and it's a small fishery, and it's super specialized, and I think the fishery is managed how it needs to be, with the guys that are in it know what they're doing, and it's -- I mean, the program is hitting every National Standard you can imagine, and, I mean, like they said, there's not enough fish for them to start diluting it to go around and have more people catching it up and making their businesses not profitable.

That's the whole point of IFQ, and, unless they want to end up on a bunch of little meager trip limits, like we are in the snapper grouper fishery, I say we just leave it how it is. I mean, that's one of the models in the country for an IFQ program, and, while it may be a dinosaur, it seems to work just fine for all the participants in it, but, if it was a different sort of fishery that was easier to get into and stuff like that, but it's not.

It's super specialized, and, as far as what one guys works out with another guy on what the going price is on leasing shares, then, if they're not going to pay it, then that's between them. It's called a free market, and there is nothing we can do to -- I don't see it as our place to try and control what one man thinks his business is worth versus another ones. I will leave it at that, but I think, with the resources we are up against with the council, and all the other items we have to face, I think this is a low-hanging fruit that we can get out of the way and go ahead and finish this review, without trying to get all involved in it, because it polices itself, and that's one of the benefits of having an IFQ fishery, is the guys police themselves, and they do a pretty good job of it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Chris. That was helpful, and so a couple of things. Before we go to Art and Chester, I want to go to Monica and Jessica Stephen, but I also -- Just I think that having this discussion about the program in general is fine. However, we were trying to get some input on these goals and objectives, which I haven't heard anything to indicate that these should be changed, and the only one that seemed to be in question was Number 6, and I thought that Mel described it well, that this is somewhat boilerplate language, and these other discussions that we're having about should there be a use-it-or-lose-it, et cetera, to me, doesn't negate, or change, or necessitate a change, of these goals and objectives, and so I will just throw that out there, but I think it's okay that we're having an overarching discussion about wreckfish in general, and so first I'm going to go to Monica and then Jessica, and then I'm going to come back to Art and Chester.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Thank you. I wanted to just tell you what the regulations state, because, just conceptually, to me, to call this an open-access permit is just odd, and it's not like Spanish mackerel, for example, where you have to meet certain requirements, but you can apply and get the permit. For wreckfish, the regulations state that, to obtain a commercial vessel permit for wreckfish, the applicant must be a wreckfish shareholder, and either the shareholder must be the vessel owner, or the owner or operator must be an employee, contractor, or agent of the shareholder, and so, essentially, to get a commercial vessel permit for wreckfish, the applicant must be a wreckfish shareholder. In my mind, that's a little bit different than -- Because of the whole ITQ, or IFQ, whatever we want to call this entry, it's not, in my mind -- I never think of it as an open-access permit.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Monica. Jessica.

DR. STEPHEN: I was going to make some of the same points. While we technically classify it in the permit system as open, it is not the same way that other open-access permits work, because it does have the linkage to the limited access and some other limiting criteria in order to go forward, and I think Monica stated it really well.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Jessica. Art.

MR. SAPP: Monica stole my thunder a little bit there as well, and the major catch to it is that you have to have a share. Well, none of these fellas seem to really want to sell a share, and the couple of guys that I have been speaking to really want to buy a share, but they can't get one. They have the Snapper Grouper 1 and everything else, but they're desperately trying to get into the fishery and can't, and so I do believe there is an issue in the fishery, and we need to work towards resolving it, and I don't like the use-it-or-lose-it theory, but maybe use it or have to lease it, or at least maybe sell one share to somebody that has shown interest in it, if you're not using it. On a totally separate note, if you folks in the northern region there would please take this cold weather back, I would appreciate it. I'm not used to this fifty-degree stuff.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Art. Sorry that you had to put on a sweatshirt. Let's go to Chester.

MR. BREWER: Well, I am sitting here in my Ole Miss hoodie, and I am perfectly comfortable. Let me apologize for, I guess, kind of starting us down this road. My heartburn was with shareholder recommendations, the third one there, and I've got no heartburn whatsoever with the six sort of guidelines that we've got on the board, and I would say that those are fine, including

Number 6. It's fine, and it says to provide avenues for fishermen not initially included in the limited entry program to enter the program, and that's what my concern is, and that's saying that that's going to be encouraged, and so I've got no problem with 1 through 6.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thanks, Chester. Chris and then Roy.

MR. CONKLIN: You were right about the open access, and it's been a pretty long time since I was able to get in the fishery, but, you know, it just takes a little bit of networking, and I didn't meet any opposition. Those people, they kind of decide how they want their fishery to look and if they think, trust, that you're going to carry it on in the right way and fish it how it's supposed to be fished, and that's up to them, but that's the beauty of it, but, yes, you're right that I think it's not open access unless you have a little bit of shares, but it's very minute.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Chris. Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Last week, I participated in my last Gulf Council meeting, but, right now, I'm having a lot of Deja vu, and I feel like I'm sitting through a Gulf Council meeting, where we've spent literally years and years talking about these kinds of issues, and, basically, what we're talking about are just the way markets operate, and so you've got a fishery with a relatively small quota, and a relatively small number of participants. Well, it should be a small number of participants, because it's a small quota, and they, by and large, catch the quota, or pretty close to it, most years.

To me, there are a lot of things that have to happen for someone to get into this fishery, but the main thing is you have to have capital, and you can say that you can't buy a share, but I'm quite sure that, if you're willing to pay enough, you can buy a share, and so, at some point, the market is driving how much people are willing to pay, based on their expected returns, and I am very reluctant to get involved in trying to have the government dictate any of those kinds of things.

All of these IFQ programs are relatively costly for people to get into, because you have to buy shares, or you have to lease, but the thing about it is that shares are expensive because the fisheries are profitable, and you can make some really good money, if you get in, and, by and large, we have successful businesses that are doing well in these fisheries, and so my advice to you -- One, is do no harm, and be careful, and be very suspicious of the government trying to come in and micromanage things that are best left to the market to drive.

The other thing to bear in mind with it is, because this is a small fishery, with a relatively small quota, we don't have a lot of cost recovery prospects here, and I do believe we need to modernize the program and turn it into a more electronic program along the lines of how the Gulf IFQ programs are run, and I think it's time to get away from paper and some of those things, but to do that entails costs, and we have to contract out with programmers to write all this stuff, and that's not cheap at all, and so anything we do with modernizing this fishery is going to need to be a kind of lean and barebones project, but I have sat through years, literally years and years, of discussion about concerns about leasing and concerns about new entrants and concerns about how much shares costs and those kinds of things, and I haven't seen one thing come out of any of it, except making a lot of people nervous and worrying a lot of people, and so I hope you don't get all wound up in those kinds of things.

That's just some advice to you from a decade or more of experience with dealing with IFQ programs. They work great in a lot of ways, but they do raise concerns with some people, because of the relatively high capital bar you have to reach in order to get in, although, in this fishery, you heard what Chris said, that the biggest cost was really buying the equipment and the gear to be able to fish in it to begin with. I will stop there.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Roy. I share a number of your thoughts and concerns, and I've been involved in those Gulf discussions as well, and, yes, I was hoping that, as you said, and I think Chris said as well, that we could go through and essentially modernize this existing ITQ program that I actually think is working pretty well, but let's go over to Kerry and see what Kerry has to say.

MS. MARHEFKA: Thanks, Jessica. Not to pile on, but Roy said everything that I really wanted to say. If it's not broke, don't fix it, and I wanted to reiterate what Brian had told us this morning. I mean, this is a group of fishermen who got the money together to pay for their own assessment, and, in addition to that, they have done a tremendous amount of marketing for this species. They're not just going out and catching fish. I mean, these guys are invested in the fishery, and they personally have made the fishery successful beyond when they land it from the dock, working with chefs and restaurants and so forth and so on, and so everything else is just a market issue, and that's not our place. I think we don't mess with this right now at all, and I think this fishery is working really well. In this case, it's a success story, and I don't know why we would mess with it, beyond the things we need to do to modernize it.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Kerry. Okay. I'm going to try to wrap up this discussion here, and so it seems like we are okay with these six goals and objectives, as written, and we have had some good discussion about where people are on ITQ programs in general, on this specific ITQ program, and it seems like we definitely want to, at the very least, modernize parts of this, like the paper coupon part, and we've had some of these discussions when we were going through the review.

To me, the part that we're at now is doing some, at the very least, barebones modifications, but I share the concerns that Roy mentioned and Kerry mentioned and Chris mentioned about trying to do a whole-scale major rewrite of this ITQ program works, and so I will just kind of throw that out there, but, Brian, I think that, from everything we've heard, we're good with those goals and objectives 1 through 6, and I'm going to turn it back to you to go through the next portion of the document.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Great. Thanks, Madam Chair. Just to make it abundantly clear to staff who are going to be working on this, there is no need for any kind of action or discussion in the document about any kinds of changes to the goals and objectives to the program, correct?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I would say that is correct. You might want to indicate that we did spend time talking about it and reviewing them, and we are indicating that they seem to still be adequate.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Right. That was actually indicated initially in the review as well, and so being able to say that you had the discussion as well as part of this amendment also is helpful, too. Great. Thank you. Okay. Moving on to the next issue that was discussed with the shareholders

and all was allocation between the commercial and the recreational sectors. As you will recall, the current allocation is 95 percent commercial and 5 percent recreational.

There are some real issues that are going on there, and the recreational fishery -- There has only been -- There has been very little intercepts of recreational catches, and there was just one intercept in 2012 in -- I guess that MRFSS in those days, and the problem is that there's known to be recreational catches of wreckfish, but there's just no real handle on how much of that there is.

Now, you need to understand that the recreational season for wreckfish only occurs in Wave 4, and the bag limit is one fish per vessel. Now, when the folks were talking about in October, one of the shareholders said that, basically, the folks who do catch them, that they're aware of, is mostly in south Florida and the Bahamas, because they don't have to go out quite so far offshore. Chris talked about, just a little while ago, about the gear and all that and how expensive it is to go out and get them, and it's quite an effort to go out this far offshore, especially the further north you go, to get wreckfish. It's not an easy thing to do, and about the only other thing that you catch when you're catching wreckfish sometimes is barrelfish, I believe, and so you kind of have to be really going after wreckfish when you're catching wreckfish.

It's not something that you just go out and are fishing for snapper grouper, and, oh, I got a wreckfish. That just really doesn't happen all that often, and so there's not a huge amount of the catches, and so, when the commercial guys are talking, they're saying that maybe the 5 percent allocation to the recreational sector might be too high, and none of the commercial guys are saying, no, kick out the recreational sector altogether, and we don't want them to have any fish, and there was no feeling, no animosity, there towards that, but they were thinking that allocating 5 percent to the recreational sector probably is too high, but nobody knew for sure what that allocation ought to be.

There was some discussion of having the recreational sector be *de minimis*, and that, as you know, would result in 100 percent of the available catch being allocated to the commercial sector, but that might encourage the recreational sector to go out and develop more of a fishery, because then they knew that they wouldn't be held accountable, at least for a while, and so the fear was that there could be a potential danger there that more fish would be caught over time, and so there could be a potential danger there.

They thought that you could allocate 1 percent, and at least that would try to get some kind of ACL monitoring for it and keep an eye on what was going on on the recreational sector, and, if need be, that could be modified as time goes on, and so, as the discussion went on, it seemed that the commercial shareholders were more in favor of allocating 1 percent to the recreational sector, because it would probably account for the actual amount of wreckfish that was being caught recreationally, and they were willing to -- If it was shown that their percentage was actually higher, then, sure, modify that over time, but they felt that even that 4 percent that would revert back to the commercial sector would help them in their ability just to get that much more fish available to the commercial sector.

That's what those guys were thinking in their comments, and, as I said, not that many fish really are being caught recreationally, and they just know it's happening, and they thought, you know, with just a two-month season recreationally, with a one fish per vessel limit, and it is so difficult to catch those fish, it's just probably not that many fish being caught, although they know that

some are being caught, and so that's what they are thinking at this point, and that's what the folks had to say in October.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Brian. Just kind of a procedural thing here. This is kind of the pre-amendment discussion, I guess, if you will, but, in theory, this allocation would become -- This allocation issue would become an action with these types of alternatives underneath it, and so is what you need today just kind of a thumbs-up that we're good with an allocation action in there and talk about what some of the range of alternatives would be under that action, and is that what you're looking for from the committee today?

DR. CHEUVRONT: Yes, and I think that's what the IPT would like to do, is to start talking about actions and alternatives that they would bring back to you in March, and, right now, I think it makes sense that two of the alternatives, besides the status quo of 5 percent recreational and 95 percent commercial, one would probably be making the recreational sector *de minimis*, and the other would be 1 percent recreational and 99 percent commercial, and probably -- My guess would be something in between 1 percent and 5 percent recreational, but whatever else the council would want to have considered, if they have anything else in mind at this point.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, that's helpful, Brian, and I agree with those particular alternatives as a range under this particular action. Let's see if anybody else on the committee has anything else that they want to add here. Once again, we're just setting this up so that there would be an action to look at this allocation, and there would be some alternatives for what that would look like under this action. Mel.

MR. BELL: I think the way that Brian described that, and you kind of concurred -- I like that, because there may be more going on out there than we realize, and realizing that it's a difficult fishery to prosecute for recreational, but it's also not one that we tend to hit in MRIP intercepts, and so, yes, I think the way you described that would be fine as an action in there.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Mel. Brian, I would have -- I think we're saying the 1 percent as an option, something between 1 and 5 percent for recreational, and a *de minimis* option.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I don't see any more hands. I am going to turn it back to you for the migration to the electronic system.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. Great. What I'm going to do is I'm going to now pull up the presentation for Jessica, and I am going to -- Let's make sure she is unmuted, and you just tell me when you want me to move slides.

DR. STEPHEN: All right. That sounds good. What I wanted to do is -- There have been requests to kind of go over how the catch share programs work, in general, and so I'm going to start with that, and then we'll get into wreckfish. One thing I wanted to start with was a little terminology, because this tends to be an area where, if we are not talking the same terms, we might get a little bit confused, and so, within a catch share, we have the term "shares", which is typically considered the percentage of the quota, and that is resulting in annual allocation. "Allocation" is always calculated from the shares, and so, depending on what the quota is, the amount of allocation a

participant may receive will change over time, and it also changes based on what their share percentage is.

You might also hear allocation called quota pounds in other catch share programs, and, in this case, relating it to wreckfish, you can give allocation as equal to the coupons. The allocation is what is used to harvest the fish within the system, so that you can deduct the appropriate amount of allocation for harvested fish. Typically, you might also fishermen refer to the term “leasing”, or “leasing shares”.

What this is typically meant is they’re referring to allocation, and I just want to caution you that NOAA Fisheries doesn’t use the term “leasing”. We consider every transfer a permanent transfer of that type, and so shares typically result in lifelong transfers of property rights, where allocation is typically annual, and so it is considered a permanent transfer on our part, but that allocation does expire at the end of the year, and so I just want to make sure that we’re clear on the terminology.

When talking about online catch share programs, I want to divide them up into two types of discussions. There is the functional structure of what a catch share program is, and that’s how you define the roles of the participants within it and how it relates to any permit requirements, and then you use those roles and/or permit connections to determine what type of actions occur.

When we think of functional structure, that is rarely changed within a system. When it is changed, it typically requires quite a bit of system rewriting, in order to make those different functional changes. Now, that’s a little bit different from what we consider operational elements within a catch share program. Those operational elements are unique to each program, and they generally are put in place either to aid in management or enforcement of the program requirements, and those operational elements can change over time without requiring a system rewrite.

When we’re looking at SERO’s functional structure within our systems, we are based on an account role within the system. Each account is unique and identifiable, and so, if you think of the same person who is a shareholder and a dealer, the accounts are unique by the role, as well as also who is participating within each of those accounts.

We use these accounts to allow people to access or transfer the rights within the program, and that’s typically then what we call a shareholder role, and then, within the dealer role, we also use it to process landings and deduct that allocation, and, again, you consider that the coupons in this case, from the shareholder’s account.

The reason we are structured in an account-type system is based on our permitting system. We need to be able to link the accounts to the permits, and so we have to follow those different types of permit conventions when we’re building the system, in order to determine who is eligible to harvest as well as who is eligible to become a dealer within the system.

The other functional structure is typically how we set up the share categories and the species within a program. In thinking about wreckfish, this would be one share category, most likely, and one species, and so there’s not a lot of functional discussion really that relates to wreckfish at this point.

Now, when we’re talking the operational elements within each program, they are really unique to the program and how the program was set up with the regulations. They are independent of that

base functional structure, and I have listed here some examples of different kinds of operational elements. Some of them are about who can participate in the fishery, such as program eligibility, or who can harvest. There are also elements that might be based on management requirements, so that you can manage or enforce the program better, thinking about types of actions like hail-in requirements or hail-out requirements and how you transfer the different property rights in it and how often you need to submit information.

There are also measures that allow flexibility or create some limitations, and so examples of that could be share allocation caps within a program, and flexibility measures are often unique to a program and how you want to be flexible. One example we use in the Gulf is allowing a 10 percent overage on one of the final trips of your year, because it is hard to estimate correctly the amount of pounds onboard the vessel. Then, finally, we also keep, in these operational elements, anything relating to cost recovery, such as the percentage and the frequency that it's collected at.

Within the SERO system, we actually have three different types of programs that we have built in our system to-date. We have the individual fishing quota program, or IFQ, and this is where shares are attached to the individual accounts, and so you can think of this as the Gulf of Mexico's red snapper program, and then, later on, we added the grouper-tilefish program. This is most likely the closest relating to wreckfish at this point in time.

We also have in there a cooperative catch share type program, and this is where shares are attached to a collaborative manager type account and then distributed to the participants. We built this type of system using the Gulf of Mexico's Headboat Collaborative Program, and that was a recreational catch share exploration pilot project, and then, finally, we have what I call permit fishing quota programs, where the shares, instead of being attached to the individual or individual accounts, is attached to the permit, and so, when the permit transfers, those shares are transferred with the permit, and a good example of this is the Atlantic HMS's bluefin tuna bycatch quota program. You will see that the designations of IFQ, HBC, and IBQ are used throughout the rest of the presentation here.

When comparing these types of programs, you can start to see the flexibility that you could have with these operational elements, and keep in mind that all the functional elements are the same within the three programs, and so you can have a wide geographical range, or you can have different share categories, and those might be based on different things.

An example with the IFQ program is we have five share categories that contain sixteen species among those five categories, but, if you look at the IBQ program, they have one species, bluefin tuna, but it's divided into four different share categories, because they had concern about the sub-regional components of how those allocations could be fished, and some of that had to do with international agreements.

We can also change the allocation unit from either pounds or numbers, and, obviously, in a recreational program, numbers is more appropriate to be used than pounds, and then who is eligible to participate in the program? With the IFQ system, it was originally just the reef fish permit holders, but it then became open to the U.S. citizens, although harvest eligibility is still restricted to your permit holder.

In the Headboat Collaborative Program, there were people who were within a certain Southeast Headboat Survey and were participating in the pilot study, and so it was a very limited list, and then, if you look at the IBQ program, they actually have different fishermen from different types of gears that participate in their program.

We can also look at the different comparisons of the programs, when you look at share distribution and allocation distribution and transferability, and some of the important things to note is that shares don't necessarily work the same in these three types of programs. Again, as mentioned earlier, the IBQ affixes it to the permit, and, therefore, there really are no share transfers, and they are just permit transfers, whereas an IFQ program is down to the account level, and the transfers occur at that point, and they can be incremental.

The same thing with allocation. You can distribute to those who own the shares, and that might be different, depending on which type of program is set up, and then as well as how the allocation can be transferable. In most of our programs, we do allow an incremental, meaning at the smallest incremental level. In a poundage program, that would be at a one-pound level of where allocation can be transferred between different participants, and then, of course, what allocation does apply to, and, typically, we apply it to landings, but you can see, in the IBQ program, their requirement is for it to account for dead discards, and so they also included that within their allocation.

Looking at the functional structure, I just want to, again, talk about the shareholder account is composed of unique entities, and they hold shares or allocation, and they can also transfer those shares or allocation. In most instances, they are related directly to the permitted entities. Because a permitted entity can have more than one vessel, we create a vessel account within our functional system that is a sub-account of the shareholder, and these must match exactly the names on the permits, in order to make that linkage and allow the eligibility to harvest, and you can typically have multiple vessels to one shareholder account.

The other ability of this is, because you might have multiple vessels to one shareholder account, there are some limited restrictions to this vessel account that does allow for the captains to participate in the landings and not have the shareholder do everything directly, and then, finally, we have the dealer account, which must be associated with a federal dealer permit, and, in our system, they typically initiate and submit the landing transactions, which are confirmed either by the vessel captain or the shareholder, and, again, a dealer account does not hold shares or allocation.

I want to kind of point out the key factors about the shareholder and vessel accounts. One is that you really must match the entity names on the permit, and, typically, you need to be linked to at least one permit for the fishery, in order to do any type of harvesting. We have had instances where, if you change the name on your permit, you will also need to have that adjustment made within the IFQ system, and it's not automatically done, and the vessel accounts are needed to match to the permit system as well, and they typically belong to that shareholder account, and we can build restrictions, so that, if you have a captain functioning in place of the shareholder, they are able to complete those functions without violating any confidential or business information.

I wanted to talk a little bit about the benefits of electronic reporting. Some of the things that we've seen in systems that have moved to electronic, or existing systems that are electronic, is an increased flexibility. When you're thinking about how you're transferring shares and allocation,

this is being done online, and you no longer have to mail anything in and have approval, and so you can have nearly instantaneous approval. You also can increment in smaller pounds. Keep in mind that wreckfish has 100 and 500-pound coupons. Here, you could actually transfer forty-nine pounds, or whatever other amount you wanted, within a one-pound increment. We also create ledgers that are available for the participants, to help aid in their business practice.

On the increased timeliness and efficiency, it takes us quite a bit of effort in the current system to distribute the coupons. We need to get them printed and then mailed out. When we're talking about an electronic system, it can be done in a matter of minutes or hours, in order to do the distribution of allocation, and then reporting data is given back to us immediately, as well as the timeliness, again, of those transferring of any property rights.

We also can create mandatory data collection fields, which eliminate some of the data gaps that were found when looking through the five-year review, and it also has just some QA/QC, in the sense that you can catch errors prior to them happening, so that you don't have to read handwriting, or you can look at a number and know that it's outside the boundary of what was expected.

On the administrative burden, we can streamline some of that. When we move to an electronic system, the data would be contained in one system managed by one office. Currently, the wreckfish is being jointly managed between the Regional Office and Science Center. Those linkages to permits become something a computer takes care of, rather than a person, and the monitoring of the share caps also could be directly done through algorithms within the computer system. Finally, we can have improvements in enforcement and monitoring through an electronic program, as well as the inclusion of some needed economic data collection fields.

Just kind of to go over some of the highlighted differences for wreckfish between the paper and the online, in the shares, we would move from a paper certificate that is numbered to a percentage. With the allocation, we would move from mailed coupons in 100 and 500-pound increments to electronically distributed allocation in one-pound increments. The share transfers become much simpler. Instead of mailing in the certificates and waiting for the creation of the new ones and then having them mailed out, the online transfer could occur to anybody who was eligible and be nearly instantaneous.

Similar, with the allocation transfers, we have them sign the coupon, and, in this case, it would be done electronically without having to pass over physically a copy of the coupon, and there might be additional work within the permits, as you guys have already slightly discussed, and we have the snapper grouper and wreckfish permit requirement on paper, but there could be consideration of looking at different ways to handle it with just the snapper grouper permit, if that is so desired.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Jessica, the next slide is the one talking about the fishing year.

DR. STEPHEN: Perfect. We'll stop right here then. If anyone has any questions about anything we've talked about, I am happy to answer them.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Jessica. Any questions for Jessica? Chester.

MR. BREWER: Thank you. Is the Headboat Collaborative pilot program still in operation, or has that ceased?

DR. STEPHEN: That program has ceased, and so we ran it for two years, but we do have all the structure, and we have maintained all the data, and so, if any other program would come up like that, we could learn off of what we had before and reduce the implementation time period.

MR. BREWER: Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Art.

MR. SAPP: Just a quick question there. So you have a 100-pound coupon, and you catch a seventy-pound fish, and does that -- Do you lose that thirty pounds, or are you able to roll that on?

DR. STEPHEN: It works a little bit weird, and this was some of the problems we had with the data, and so they use the 100-pound coupon, and so, in essence, they lose the thirty pounds, but, likewise, say they had a 120-pound landing, and they would also just use the 100-pound coupon, rather than using two 100-pound coupons. I believe it's at the fifty-pound mark for the 100-pound coupons and the 250 mark for the 500 ones, where we tend to allow spillover in either direction.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Any more questions for Jessica? I don't see any more hands. Thank you, Jessica. I'm going to turn it back to Brian to go back to the document, I guess.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Thank you, Madam Chair. Needless to say, at this point, the shareholders, and everybody who has talked about this, pretty much are in favor of going to an electronic monitoring system, and the fishermen, as Jessica had said, are pretty much -- They like the Gulf red snapper IFQ electronic monitoring system, and they think it would work really well. They are ready to get beyond the paper coupon system. They find it to be a hindrance, and they like the immediateness and all those benefits that Jessica just talked about. They really can see how that would help them out a lot.

They see how -- Assuming that the council wants to go to an electronic system, that has spillover into lots of other things that could help modernize the system, but they see this electronic system as being the cornerstone of the modernization of the program, because so many of the other things that they would like to see happen to the program, in terms of modernization, really hinges on going to the electronic monitoring system.

A couple of things that need to be pointed out, and one is that the -- Even with the electronic reporting system, and probably in all cases, they would still need to do duplicate reporting with the state, and that's not ideal. They would really like to be able to do -- Report just one time, and I think there is some work that's going on that folks would like to be able to just report one time and have it count for everybody everywhere, but that's an issue that happens not just in this fishery, and I think it is an issue in multiple places, but, ideally, they would like to see just having to report once and have it count for everybody, but, anyway, it's not going to solve all issues that they might have at the state level.

One of the things that somebody, and I forgot who had said it in September, who brought up the notion of bringing up VMS with these folks, and somebody on the council had mentioned that in September, to bring up VMS with them, and, inwardly, I kind of groaned a little bit when that happened, because I know that always goes over like a lead balloon with our fishermen in the

South Atlantic, and I was really very surprised by the discussion that happened in October, because these fishermen had a very, very serious discussion about it, and it wasn't an outright, vehement no that we don't want that at all.

They had a discussion about the pros and cons of VMS in this fishery, and they talked about it and said, you know, we're not a fan of VMS, but they thought that it could be useful in preventing quota fraud, and so they could see, in some situations, where VMS could be really helpful, because, if you needed -- If you removed the requirement to need to own shares to transfer coupons, because that was one of the discussions that they did have, was talking about transferring coupons and all that, and, because there is not a huge presence of law enforcement in this fishery, because there are so few participants, and a vessel that has transferred coupons could choose to sell their fish without reporting landings, and so they don't have to access more coupons to support their fishing.

In other words, if they have somebody that transferred coupons to them, and they go out and fish, and there's no law enforcement around, and they can do something like a back-door sale of those wreckfish, and hold on to those coupons, just in case law enforcement comes around later, and they could go out and do more wreckfish fishing on those same coupons.

The idea was that, if there was a VMS requirement on the vessel, it would probably help stop that problem, and so they could see a possibility of a use of VMS, and so they could see a possible positive use for VMS in this fishery, and so that kind of came out as a possible use for VMS, which was really interesting, because nobody really just said, no, no, no, we'll never have VMS in this fishery, like we've had discussions in other fisheries. I thought that was pretty good.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Brian. I thought so, too. I see Roy has his hand up, and I guess let's stop there and go to Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, just to touch on the VMS issue, there are a lot of real benefits, in terms of enforcing these programs, that come from VMS, and, realistically, I think you've got to recognize that, over the next decade or so, we're going to see VMS more and more in commercial fisheries and for-hire fisheries. I think it's going to become cheaper, and it will become gradually more accepted, because the benefits are just so clear. I mean, I think that is where the future is going.

We do need to bring this fishery into an electronic basis, and I think the shareholders all see that, and we do need to, I think, get to a cost recovery part of it, because that's a requirement of the statute, and I think, to do that, we need to get it on an electronic basis. We do not, in our budget in the Regional Office, at this time, have the funds to do this, and we're talking hundreds of thousands of dollars, in order to do the necessary programming and things, but we have put in some proposals for grant funding under the catch shares line item, and so I'm hopeful that, over the next year or two, the region will have some success in putting the funding on it, but I think you guys need to move on with this, but just recognize that to implement what you want to do will require the agency securing the funds to cover the necessary programming.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Roy. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I agree with Roy. I think we need to move forward with this electronic reporting. I am hesitant, a little bit, about the VMS, even with industry support. Just on their

behalf, I'm worried about getting hit immediately with the cost recovery that we're going to need to do for the electronic monitoring and having them implement and buy a VMS system, and I know the cost has come down somewhat since the last time I looked at it, but I worry that it's a big financial hit all at one time for what I'm not sure -- I think the greatest impact in spending money is on electronic monitoring, at this moment, and maybe VMS gets kicked down the road a little, but that's just my opinion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. Jessica.

DR. STEPHEN: I just wanted to mention that the VMS program -- There is a reimbursement program for purchasing a VMS, if that requirement went in place, and so the fishermen would have to outlay the initial funds for the VMS, but then they would be reimbursed from it. I wanted to make sure that everyone was aware of that program.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Jessica. Back to Brian. What do you need from the committee right now, and it seems like there's a desire to go to this electronic monitoring system, and so I assume that would go into the document, and what do you need from the committee?

DR. CHEUVRONT: I think it would just be helpful that what's going to happen is the IPT would need then to develop some kind of actions, action or actions, that it would take to institute what would be the transfer from the paper system to an electronic monitoring system, and I'm not sure how many actions that would take or what the alternatives would be, but I think that, if that's what the council would like, then that's what the IPT will develop, those actions and alternatives, and bring them back to you to look at, and then we'll be able to modify those for the future.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. That sounds good. So then are you going to go back to the PowerPoint?

DR. CHEUVRONT: We're going to go back, because there was one thing that came up, as part of the discussion, that the council has not yet seen that is related to this, and that would probably be another action, if the council decided that they want to consider this, and so I'm going to bring this back to Jessica, and so, if you want to talk about this, Jessica.

DR. STEPHEN: Thank you. One of the things that came up in discussion is the fishing year and how the current SERO catch share program works, and so, currently, with the wreckfish program, it runs April 15 to April 14, with a closure between January 16 and April 14. If we're moving online, some of the things to be aware of is that our current online system always shuts down on December 31 at 6:00 p.m. to January 1 at 2:00 p.m. This is so that we can reset all the allocation for the next year, and so we take back any of the expiring allocation and then set up what the allocation is for the programs for the next year at that point in time. This has to occur regardless, and so that shutdown would happen.

With the wreckfish having a different fishing year change, there would be -- We would need either consideration to change the fishing year to be on a calendar year, but still keep the same closed season, or we would have to have another shutdown within the system during the time that we would need to reset for wreckfish, and so, again, we could change from January 1 to December, with a closed season between January 16 and 14, and this also would mean that we would allow

those share transfers right up to December 31, versus the cutoff time we have now, because we have to manually process share transfers, and I will leave this open for any questions.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Any questions for Jessica? I can't see the little hand-raise thing right this second, and so maybe staff will let me know if they see any hands. I don't see any hands right this second. Brian, I don't know if you're going back to the document or if we're going to stay in the PowerPoint.

DR. CHEUVRONT: I guess what my question is right now is would you like to see a draft action and alternatives addressing the fishing year thing that you can just look at, and then get some more information and then decide whether you want to consider it later on, and it's really -- The thing driving this at this point is the -- It's really more of an administrative need. It was discussed with the shareholders, and they looked at the spawning of wreckfish at that time, and the scientific literature suggested that peak spawning is January through March, and some shareholders participate in golden tilefish in early January, and so they rarely fish for wreckfish prior to January 14 and things like that.

I think one of the shareholders says that he does fish for wreckfish in the early part of the year, but I think one of the things that -- If you would like, we could develop an action with some alternatives that the council could discuss, if that would be okay with you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, I think that's a great idea, Brian. I don't see any additional hands here, but, yes, I think that the committee getting more information about the consequences, positive or negative, for modifying the commercial fishing year.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. That's fine. I just wanted to make sure that that would be okay, and I'm going to scroll back up to where we were. I am going to go back to the presentation. Jessica, we go back now to offloading sites and times.

DR. STEPHEN: One of the other topics that came up during discussion was the current provision for offloading, and so, currently, they are allowed to offload between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. local time, and offload can only occur at a fixed facility of a dealer with the GSAD dealer permit, or they must contact law enforcement not less than twenty hours prior to offload, and so we looked at how the online system could potentially streamline some of these offloading sites and time requirements.

One mechanism is that, by using the online system, they could potentially use that a submission to OLE about where they would be landing and that they could submit and get approved in advance some landing locations that may not already be on the approved list. Another concept that might be considered is using an offload notice as an indication to law enforcement that not only are we here, but we will begin offloading around this point in time, and so there are a couple of different options that can be looked at to improve the flexibility of the system when looking at offloading sites and times. Brian, I will let you take it back now.

DR. CHEUVRONT: So the fishermen talked about that, and the other thing is that the fishermen really don't like that, because it has caused them some issues in the past, and especially, should VMS be instituted, they thought it would really just not be needed, and they thought that -- Of course, the electronic system, like Jessica just talked about, would be really helpful, and now, also,

remember that, at the time when these rules that are currently in place were put in place, there were a lot more participants in the fishery, and I think there were around fifty participants at the time, and now we have I think six or seven.

Some of them thought that you could get rid of it, while others felt that having the approved sites will hold the fishermen more accountable, but the entire issue of offloading sites and times for wreckfish ought to be discussed at the Law Enforcement AP, at their upcoming meeting, and so that's kind of where it stands right now.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I spoke to FWC Law Enforcement about this, and I can tell you that they're certainly not supportive of removing the offload sites and times. Their suggestion was to follow the Gulf model, which does have different times than what is in the wreckfish ITQ program now, and so I think it's fine to include an action and explore this, at the very least changing the times and/or establishing a protocol for approved landing sites, but I think this definitely needs to go to our Law Enforcement Panel, and I see that Kerry has her hand up.

MS. MARHEFKA: Thanks, Jessica. I agree, but, if you can, I would be really supportive of keeping this in here, so that we can really flesh this out and explore it. I was someone who brought up, at the shareholders meeting, sort of that as infrastructure -- As we get squeezed out of infrastructure, I think it's going to be harder and harder for boats to sort of always be able to land between 8:00 and 5:00 Monday through Friday, or whatever the requirements were, and that we might need to find some flexibility within that.

I would also like to suggest that maybe this should be our first opportunity to have a member of this fishery slide into that ad hoc liaison type seat on the LE AP, to be able to have a conversation with law enforcement, possibly at their next meeting, so that industry and enforcement can talk about this together.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All that sounds great, Kerry. Thanks for those comments. Any more discussion on this? Brian, do you have what you need? It sounds like we would include this in the document and include some options for discussion and exploration here.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Yes, I think that's fine, what we've got. The next thing is wreckfish permits.

DR. STEPHEN: All right, and so we've had some discussion about this already with the wreckfish permits. Again, the current requirement is that you must have the snapper grouper permit, which is limited access, and then, to obtain the wreckfish permit, you also need to be a shareholder or an agent of the shareholder and hold that snapper grouper permit. Some of the potential changes that were considered was just solely working with the snapper grouper permit, instead of having the dual snapper grouper and wreckfish permit. If you would do an action like this, you could also still restrict the allocation transfers, if so desired, to only those accounts with shares, which would be very similar to what is currently going on with the snapper grouper and wreckfish dual permit needs in the regulations.

Another area of concern that came up during the review was the provision that the shareholder must be either the vessel owner or the vessel owner/operator must be an employee, contractor, or agent of the shareholder, and so I think this language would need to be revisited, as it was very difficult to determine what "agent" meant in the current permitting system, and that would --

Because of the automatic talking to the permit system, it would create a problem in determine who was eligible to do actions within the program. This also was an area where we had a little bit of trouble getting the waivers and who had the rights to the individual landings in both cases, and so I will leave this up for discussion now with Brian.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. The shareholders also discussed the whole agent issue, and they wondered whether that agent served any purpose in an electronic reporting system, and so they maybe thought that they could just remove the word “agent” out of there altogether, and the council might want to consider the implications of de-coupling the wreckfish permit and the snapper grouper permits.

Some thought that it might be problematic to have wreckfish shares tied to snapper grouper permits, especially if and when those snapper grouper permits were sold. The current cost of snapper grouper permits, the two-for-one requirement, and the cost of shares make it difficult for interested fishermen to get into the wreckfish fishery, and removing wreckfish from the snapper grouper permit requirement may encourage new entrants.

There was some difficulty figuring out, when you’re going to transfer SG 1 permits, if there were wreckfish shares attached to it, how that all would work out, and the electronic system could be developed in a way that would limit participation based on specific eligibility requirements, and so let’s see.

Somebody from SERO said that assigning shares to a permit, which comes with consequences, and different permits have different value, would require the wreckfish permit to remain, because it would not be ideal to tie wreckfish shares to snapper grouper permits, and so the idea being that the values of the permits would be different, because you’re required to have actual shares to have the wreckfish permit. It all boils down to the transfer issue and how that would happen if you tie wreckfish shares to an SG 1 permit. I am not sure, and I think those issues would probably need to be worked out somehow.

DR. STEPHEN: Brian, if I can clarify, that last point was where the AP was considering potentially doing something more similar to the HMS IBQ, where potentially having shares attached to a permit, rather than shares attached to an individual, and it’s just to make note that, if that type of option is selected, there are a lot more consequences that would need to be considered, versus keeping it solely within the account holders.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Just to add to that, I have some concerns about removing the wreckfish permit as well, and I did listen to the discussion that the shareholders had, and I feel like there is a number of factors that are going to come into play here. I guess I don’t mind exploring this in this document, but I -- At this point, based on everything I know, I don’t know that I would want to remove the wreckfish permit.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay, and so we’ll put in an action and alternatives in there, and I think that it’s probably a good thing to have the IPT explore all the ins and outs of what would happen under the different alternatives that would occur under the different scenarios.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. That sounds good. I don't see any more hands at the moment. I guess we will move on to the economic --

DR. CHEUVRONT: Yes, the mandatory data collections.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Brian, I see a hand up from Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: I was just curious. Back a few slides ago, when you were talking about the VMS and the electronic monitoring part, and how much notification does one need to know -- Well, I guess you have landing times for wreckfish right now, but, if you had like a three-hour window, or a three-hour notification, is that enough time for law enforcement for landings?

DR. STEPHEN: I can take that one. When thinking about the time requirement, we do look into what the spread is of the law enforcement agents that are out there and the ability of their time to get to certain locations. In the Gulf of Mexico, we do use a three to twenty-four-hour advance notice, and so they can do it as much as twenty-four hours in advance of landing or as low as three hours. Typically, if they're really close, and they do the three hours, the contingency is you can't actually tie up to the dock before that three hours.

Now, when we looked at the Headboat Collaborative Program that went through, we used a one-hour notification window, and so they just had to do between one hour to twenty-four hours, and so they had a smaller timeframe, and that was just because we had port agents more closely related to where those landing locations were and how many fishermen were in the industry and how they were spread across, and so I think we would look, if we were going with that, where the fishermen are located and where the law enforcement are and make it an hour window that seems appropriate for the ability for law enforcement to arrive at that location, if they can.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Given the mention of the IBQ system for bluefin tuna in the pelagic longline industry, which I'm familiar with, it seemed like -- I'm not advocating for this, and I'm just giving some background, but, with the vessel monitoring system, you could do numerous things.

You could do an estimation of how many pounds are onboard, and you could do a call-in three hours prior to arrival to a dock, and so it seems like, to me, with this, there are multiple ways that would answer questions, if it went down to a route of a vessel monitoring system, and especially if you got reimbursement for the cost of it, and it's about fifty-dollars a month right now for that, and so you could fix about three or four different things, per se, if you had electronic monitoring, similar to what we have in the pelagic longline industry, because, after you set your pelagic longline gear and harvest it all back, you have within twelve hours to write down or send in if you caught any bluefin tuna, and so that would be similar to what your estimation --

This would be an estimation of your catch, and I'm pretty sure the guys are probably pretty close and know how much fish they have onboard, and so I just don't know if folks are understanding the electronic monitoring system, or the vessel monitoring system, similar to the pelagic longline industry, the capability and what you could do with that. Thank you.

DR. STEPHEN: Dewey, that's also very similar in the Gulf, that their three-hour pre-landing notification designates how much they have onboard, estimated, where they're going to land, and

what dealer, and so we can put in this document all the different options used by the different catch share systems, so that there's a good breadth of understanding of what could be possible.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Since they do that in the Gulf right now, there's already something with the system for a vessel monitoring system, and it's not something you would have to reinvent a new app, or so to speak like that, correct?

DR. STEPHEN: Yes, that's correct, and so we would create a new form in the VMS system, and that form would be the notification for the wreckfish, and then we could explore some of the options. In the Gulf, we allow them to submit their notifications either through their VMS unit, through a computer, and so that would be calling someone back on land with access to their account, or we have a call service center that also takes those notifications, and so we could consider what the cost would be to add the wreckfish to the call service line that we use for the Gulf of Mexico, and so it allows three different options for them to report.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Brian, back to you.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. Economic data collection additions.

DR. STEPHEN: Another topic that was raised during the review was looking at how we collect the economic data and what would be the best ways to do it. Currently, there are limited surveys available that really do impede the analysis of how the wreckfish program is doing, and, because it's such a small fishery, if we could get near-to-census-level data for economic collection within that, that would aid our program analysis tremendously.

We were thinking that one way we could do that is to build into the online system an annual survey that would be included. We would, one, streamline for the Paperwork Reduction Act, because we wouldn't have to do it every time a survey occurred, and it would be part of the program as a whole, and this would also kind of streamline the analysis and increase the timeliness of understanding the economic impact from the program, and we would have kind of an expectation, and the question types are known to participants, and so they would know what the same questions are every year, and they would be prepared to answer them, and so it wouldn't be an undue burden on them in trying to figure out the answers to questions that they were unaware of coming down to them. Brian, I will let you talk about the AP's recommendations on this.

DR. CHEUVRONT: They talked about this, and they were comfortable with providing this information that was needed by managers. They wanted to avoid reporting duplicative information, and they wanted to report either trip-level information, which can be burdensome, or annual information, but not both, but the problem with that is that trip-level information is not the same as annual information, and trip-level information is just that. It's trip-level information, like how much did you pay for gas, how much did you pay for groceries, how much did you pay for ice or whatever, versus annual information, which is things like how much did you pay for insurance, how much did you pay for repairs for the vessel, things like that.

The other thing was that, when we were doing the review, we had really a very difficult time, because the data -- So many participants, we had to try to get waivers of confidentiality for a lot of people who were not currently participating in the fishery, and we needed to get confidentiality waivers from some of the people who actually got kicked out of the fishery, when their shares

were revoked, and, of course, a lot of those folks weren't too happy about that, and they weren't willing to do anything to help us out, and so they refused to sign those confidentiality waivers, and so we had a lot of problems getting some of that information, and we weren't able to report some things in the review, and so we were hoping that, at least for the next review, that at least we would be able to get some of the economic information, by being able to have that built into an electronic system.

I believe that there already is some -- NMFS has some ability already collect some information, and they just need to invoke that, but it would be nice if the council was to weigh-in and say really what they wanted and see if they could get that built into the system.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Brian, would this require an action by the council? That part is a little bit unclear to me.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Well, I think, if the council was to say we would like this data collection done, then it just basically reinforces that, yes, this is what you want, and there is -- If you don't say anything, I don't know that there is an impetus to NMFS to say that definitely this is going to happen, and so I don't know. I don't think it would hurt if the council had an action saying that this is what we want.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Well, I guess let's go ahead and put that action in there, so that we can talk about this further. Monica.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Thank you. I guess you could put an action in there, so it could be discussed and the IPT could kind of flesh that out for the council, but the FMP, the Snapper Grouper FMP, already authorizes the collection of economic information, and maybe that hasn't been done with this group of fishers, and I'm not sure, and so I'm not sure what additional elements would be needed, and maybe that's why it's appropriate for the IPT to discuss it, and I'm not sure, but you already have that authorization in the FMP.

DR. CHEUVRONT: I think what happens now, Monica, is that it's a general economic add-on for the snapper grouper fishery, but it's not specifically targeted towards wreckfish fishermen, and so what needs to happen is I think there needs to be targeted data collection for wreckfish fishermen. Jessica has got her hand up, and so maybe she can remember better than I do.

DR. STEPHEN: I was just going to say that I think Scott Crosson has more to add on this, and I think he was trying to raise his hand, and it wasn't being seen. Scott, are you on?

DR. CROSSON: -- Christopher Liese from my group, Christopher has done a big snapper grouper economic profitability estimate for the council, and the SSC has seen it, and I have been handling wreckfish, but, since wreckfish is currently part of the Snapper Grouper FMP -- After the shareholders' meeting, and before actually, and Chris and I spoke, and we do want to kind of integrate the wreckfish survey into the regular snapper grouper economic survey. As long as it stays in the snapper grouper fishery, we can make sure that the guys are not getting surveyed twice over two fisheries that are actually related to one another, and so we can provide this.

The only thing I will add is that, again, if it does get separated out from the snapper grouper fishery, then we would like to see that requirement in there, because OMB has made it more difficult to do

economic surveys of fisheries in recent years, and so, for any fishery that the council does, if there's a requirement for economic monitoring, that makes it easier for me to get permission from OMB to do the actual collection.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Scott, I'm not sure that we heard the very beginning of what you were saying, and so are you saying that, within the existing snapper grouper economic data collection that you could go ahead and do a stratified sample and target wreckfish fishermen?

DR. CROSSON: Yes. Right now, they're getting surveyed by Christopher as part of the snapper grouper fishery, but they're getting randomly drawn from a pool, and so, for this fishery, we need a census, and so all Christopher and I need to do, really, is make sure that all of the participants in the wreckfish fishery get surveyed in the same year, so that I have census-level data, and we will ask them specific questions about the wreckfish fishing, but the rest of the forms will be identical, and then we can do that analysis.

If the council chooses to take wreckfish apart from snapper grouper, then, yes, we would like to see some requirement in there, so that we can make sure that we get compliance on this. I am the only person that's done a survey of these guys for economic data collection, I guess in the past few decades, and it was a little difficult to do it that year, because I did get some resistance, but I think, generally -- I am very sympathetic to what the shareholders said, and I don't think they should be getting surveyed by two different people for fisheries that are related, and so I think we can manage this at the IPT level, and we'll address this and bring this back to the council.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. That's good. As long as you can stratify the sample under the existing system, that would probably work.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Brian, do you think you have enough here on that item for the IPT to bring something back and use to move on to the cost recovery?

DR. CHEUVRONT: Yes, ma'am. That sounds good. Let me get back over here to the presentation and go on to cost recovery.

DR. STEPHEN: I think I have three slides on cost recovery, and so one of the things to be aware of is that it is required by law, and some of the older programs, similar to wreckfish, that didn't have it have now implemented it, and so we're one of the last few that are required to implement it.

With cost recovery, the cost recovery fee cannot exceed 3 percent of the ex-vessel value of the fish harvested, and I want to point out that, while the Gulf programs are currently at 3 percent, there are many other programs that do have less than 3 percent. The way we figure out what that percentage is, it's based on the incremental costs to run the program, and so it's any cost that is directly related to the program that would not have been incurred if the program was not in place.

I want to caution you that this is a with-and-without program comparison and not a pre and post-program comparison, and so we're not comparing to what the wreckfish was before the program ever got started to now, and we're looking at now what would happen with and without the program with respect to cost. It is somewhat difficult to measure the incremental costs, but the Regional Office is looking into how we would evaluate this.

Some of the categories that are typically used to track these incremental costs is the cost of the personnel, and that would be the personnel actually working on the program, and so, while you wouldn't potentially have a full-time person dedicated to this program, you would have hours spent from other staff working on the program. Also included would be the costs relating to data collection, and that would also include some of the IT infrastructure for an online system and the software and software maintenance costs to run those programs.

We would also have cost of any travel and supplies and training, and then, typically, we have given some cost recovery -- We have looked at the incremental costs with relation to law enforcement and their needs, since IFQ programs tend to increase the enforcement aspects.

If we would be sharing an online system, we would actually look at what some of those data collections costs are related to each program to the entire online system, and so it wouldn't be having the entire cost of an online system in the hands of the wreckfish program, but their proportion of what they are using within the system compared to the other programs that are also supporting that online system, and that is a benefit of using the same system that has a similar functional structure, in order to run multiple programs.

Then the final one is just remember that MSA requires the collection at the time of landing, the filing of the landing, sale of the fish, or in the last quarter of the year, and so, when going to implementing cost recovery, the IPT will need to consider what is the best timing, in order to collect the cost recovery, and that would include just not only timing, but the frequency, and then which is the responsible party that would be fulfilling that. That may affect the calculation of the cost recovery fee, as well as when it is due.

Methods of payment typically are through pay.gov. To kind of go back to the frequency and responsibility, I want to bring to you how we do it in the Gulf of Mexico programs, because it is a little unusual compared to the other catch share programs across the nation. In those programs, we collect quarterly from the dealers, but what the dealers are doing are collecting from the fishermen at the time of landing or at the sale of the fish, and so we are meeting Magnuson's requirements of collecting at the right time, but it is only due to us quarterly, so that the dealer kind of holds that money until those costs are due.

We could follow a similar requirement, or we could do something that is more suited to the wreckfish program, such as collecting it all in the last quarter of the year, and I will leave it to Brian to talk about the recommendations from the AP.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. The AP did talk about this, and they have talked about it before, and, in the past, they have not been real excited about paying cost recovery, but there was a good discussion, and I think they understood it a little bit better after the discussion in October. There was some concern about law enforcement being included in receiving some of the cost recovery money on this, and I believe it was Jessica who explained to them that they have to basically submit a justification for what they did and all this to get some of the money that comes from the cost recovery funds, and that seemed to make them feel a little bit better about it.

The shareholders said that they were a little uncomfortable with the dealers paying cost recovery, because they're not benefiting from the fishing privilege. In some cases, or at least in a couple of

cases, the shareholders were also the dealers, but rather -- What they kind of preferred, at least they said at the time, is that the shareholders -- That the allocation holder, or the shareholder, should be responsible for paying the cost recovery fee and not the dealers, but they didn't realize -- I don't think they really discussed at the time that the allocation, or the shareholder, could pay the cost recovery to the dealer, and the dealer then could have paid it later on, and that I don't think was an option that they really discussed in October. That could be worked out later on.

The shareholders had different opinions on the timing of the cost recovery payments, with some preferring to pay quarterly and others preferring to pay in the last quarter of the year, and it also - - It was pointed out to them that there are limits on what you can pay on pay.gov using a credit card, versus having to use checking account information, and that might make a difference on the frequency of when some folks wanted to pay.

SERO also noted, based on the question asked by fishermen, that they were not allowed to deduct trip costs before the ex-vessel value, before calculating what the cost recovery amount was, and it's just based on the ex-vessel value and not minus -- Not being equal to ex-vessel value minus trip costs. They kind of understood that, and they weren't real excited about it, but they realized that this is probably something that is going to happen.

I don't know what kind of action there could be on trip costs, and I think this is a fait accompli here on this, is that trip costs are a requirement of MSA, and they just have to be calculated, and the issue here is going to be -- I don't know how this has worked in the Gulf or not, but whether it's up to the individual operations to decide when payments are due, or can they just figure it out for themselves, and I don't know. Jessica, is this something that you can figure out? Did the individual programs decide when payments are due, or are they able to decide for themselves?

DR. STEPHEN: That is put in the regulation of when the payment is due for the program as a whole, and so each program as a whole can make a decision, but then all participants within that program must follow those regulations.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay, and so at least their related trip costs -- There would need to be an action and alternatives related to payments due timing. Are there other actions that they would have to have?

DR. STEPHEN: Cost recovery would probably be multiple actions, to kind of get all of it down, and we would need to consider the timing of it and how we're calculating it. To give a little explanation, in some areas, where knowing the ex-vessel price is not readily available, set a predetermined standard ex-vessel price and then do comparisons to that, and so that allows fishermen to know in advance the price per pound, and that would be applied to the pounds that they landed, and then they collect that annually.

There are some kind of issues with dealing with that, and we have a much smaller fishery, and so I don't think we necessarily would need to go down that way, versus working on the actual ex-vessel price, in a little bit more real-time mechanism, and I think, as the IPT gets together, we can flesh out where some of these different cost recovery options and alternatives might end up being.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay, and so it sounds like, Madam Chair, there is going to be several actions related to cost recovery.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That sounds good.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. I mean, it's all required by the MSA then. Then there was one additional action that came up related to this, and that was -- An additional topic was a stock assessment for wreckfish. Of course, the fishermen, the shareholders, would really like to see a new stock assessment and get away from using historical landings to set ABC and ACL for the fishery.

SERO is currently exploring the possibility of using any cost recovery funds to help provide for an external wreckfish stock assessment, but anything that could be done to help figure out a new way, or some other way, to look at adjusting the ABC and ACL for this fishery, and there doesn't seem to be really any indication that the stock seems to be in trouble or anything, that anybody is aware of, and so they would like to get some relief. They realize that, because of the size of the fishery and all, that they're pretty low on the totem pole, in terms of being able to get a new assessment through SEDAR, and so they would just like to try to get some relief somewhere, but that was something that was discussed.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think we just keep this in our minds, maybe, when we're thinking about what upcoming stock assessments we would like to see, and I guess we could continue discussions for using these cost recovery funds, but it looks like Jessica has her hand up.

DR. STEPHEN: I was just going to add a little bit more information. Traditionally, cost recovery is not allowed to be used for stock assessments, but, because wreckfish has not undergone a stock assessment, and it wasn't on the list, we were in conversations with our Headquarters about, if it's not up for a stock assessment in X amount of years, do we have the possibility to use that, and so we don't have an answer on that yet.

The other thing I do want to tell you is that -- Back to kind of Roy's points about the costs of implementing the program and the cost recovery, and so this fishery isn't an overly large fishery, and so we're limited at the max of 3 percent of ex-vessel value, and, initially, that would probably go towards the implementation of a system, and so doing something along the lines of a wreckfish stock assessment with cost recovery would be something that could potentially occur later, if we are allowed to use those funds in a way that traditionally we are not allowed to use them, and so I just wanted to be clear about where we stand on this right now.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. I see another hand up from Clay.

DR. PORCH: Thank you, Chair. Just two issues to keep in mind. One is we need to think about what level of review that an external wreckfish stock assessment would have. I mean, the SEDAR review tends to be rather thorough, but the external reviews seem to be limited to only the SSC taking a look at it, and the second issue is just a reminder that we would still -- Even if it's done, the assessment itself, in terms of the analysis, is done by an external source, it still requires information from us, and sometimes rather detailed information, and so that needs to be considered as part of the SEDAR schedule. Thanks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Clay. Then, Brian, do we need to talk about -- I see that you have the Snapper Grouper FMP objectives, and so maybe we need to talk about that next, but don't we need to talk about the timing of this as well?

DR. CHEUVRONT: The timing of the amendment?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Yes, and I think that was also brought up as in the Executive Committee, and I can go back up to what the calendar is on there, and I think it's the same as the one that's for the Executive Committee, and so we can go back to that real quickly, once we talk about the FMP goals and objectives here, and, real quickly, on the goals and objectives, there's a table in here that lists the goals and objectives that the council had approved as part of the visioning process, but the problem was that they were never formally approved through a plan amendment, and I believe it was Monica who had brought this up, when it discussed, and I think it was -- When we went through the whole original allocation trigger policy, one of the things that was suggested back then was to look at all the goals and objectives for all the FMPs and make sure that they were all updated, and that was the time that we realized that the ones for the Snapper Grouper FMP had not been formally adopted.

The decision was made to adopt them in the next full plan amendment, which is why appear here, but what's not really clear to me is the process for adopting them in this amendment, and I wanted to ask Monica about that. Do we need to have a formal action with alternatives to do that here, and so, Monica, if you could speak to the process, that would really be helpful, I think, to the IPT.

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: Brian, I think it's simply a matter of the way you've laid them out here and we put them in an amendment, and then that amendment gets approved by the council and then approved by the Secretary and so on. You had so much back-and-forth, through the visioning process, about which objectives and which goals and all that, and so I see no reason why you would need any alternatives or anything else. It's simply a matter of let's get them formally adopted through the Magnuson Act into the FMP.

DR. CHEUVRONT: So then just simply stating here that the council adopts these goals and objectives for the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan and stating them like that will be acceptable?

MS. SMIT-BRUNELLO: I think that's fine. I think a little bit of background on what happened and how they came about, but that's just in the discussion section, and so I think we can work that out.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Okay. Great. Perfect. I am going to scroll back to the top up here, with the expected timing for this amendment, Madam Chair, and so you can see what we've done here now is reviewed the shareholder input, and I've got a draft motion at the very bottom here to approve the amendment for scoping in March, and, as I had stated early on when talking about this, the suggestion was that the IPT would probably bring back to you, in March, a draft amendment with draft actions and alternatives, based on the discussion that you've had today, and, because the shareholders and wholesale dealers have basically discussed the amendment in October, and

they're the ones who are likely to provide the vast amount of input on this amendment, the suggestion would be to just go ahead and have that scoping session in March.

However, you all can do it however you want to do, and have it at the March meeting and you can then review any input that you get, and you could work on the actions and alternatives in March. You can then give direction to the IPT and work on it some more in June, and perhaps select preferred alternatives, and approve it for public hearing. Then have the public hearings over the summer in 2021 and then review the draft amendment and modify the document and approve it for formal review in September of 2021.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think that this timeline looks good, Brian. I am good with combining the scoping with the March council meeting, and it looks like we have a draft motion there to approve Snapper Grouper Amendment 48 for scoping during the March 2021 council meeting. Do we have somebody that would like to make that motion?

MR. POLAND: **Madam Chair, so moved.**

MR. CONKLIN: Second.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Steve. I heard a second. All right. It's under discussion. Mel, do you have anything to add here?

MR. BELL: No, and I think it's a good plan, and I was just weighing-in on the motion.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. Is there any objection to this motion? **Hearing none and seeing none, the motion stands approved.** I think this concludes the wreckfish item. I appreciate all your work on this, Brian.

DR. CHEUVRONT: Madam Chair, I just wanted to say that Christina Wiegand has been working on this as well, and she has done at least as much work on this, if not more, than I have since before the September council meeting, and this actually is the last amendment that I'm going to be working on and presenting to the council now before I retire at the end of next week, and Christina is the one who is going to be taking over this one, and so she's more than fully ready to do that, and she could have easily have done this at least as well, if not better, than I could have at this meeting.

You're going to be in very good hands with Christina working with you as your staff lead on this, and I could tell you that folks like Jessica Stephen and other folks at SERO have just been really great at working on this, and Mike Travis and Nikhil Mehta and several others have just been really wonderful working on this and so many other amendments that we've done over the years, and it's just been a great experience working with everybody.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Brian, and thank you, Christina, for your willingness to step in and work on this wreckfish item. We really appreciate it, and we really appreciate Jessica and everybody else on the NMFS side that have been helping out here. Anything else for us on this item, Brian?

DR. CHEUVRONT: No, ma'am. I am done here.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. I am going to turn back to Myra. Well, actually, let's take a five-minute break, but when we come back, Myra, I believe that we are good to move to red porgy, I believe is the next item on our list.

MS. BROUWER: That is correct, Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right, and so, when we come back, we'll be looking at Amendment 50, and so a five-minute break.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MS. MCCAWLEY: It looks like most folks are back or are coming back, and I believe we can go ahead and get started here, and, Myra, I'm going to turn it over to you to do the overview of the decision document.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Jessica. What I would like to do is walk you through this options paper, decision document, and go action-by-action. This is somewhat similar to what you saw in September, and we have some additional preliminary analyses to show you, as well as the input from your Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel.

Just to orient everybody and bring you back thinking to red porgy here, as far as background, this is a species that has been assessed four times since the SEDAR program began. The stock has been overfished and under rebuilding plans, several of them, since 1991. The most recent assessment, SEDAR 60, which was conducted this past year, determined the stock continues to be overfished and is undergoing overfishing. Throughout its management history, despite management efforts, the stock has not rebuilt.

NMFS notified the council of the red porgy status in June of this year, and so what that means is the council has until June of 2022 to develop an amendment with actions to end overfishing and rebuild the stock, and so there's a good bit of background in here, and I'm not going to go over all of this, and it's mainly just to orient you and give you some history, and, as I said, the Snapper Grouper AP met in November, and recall that you had requested that they give you specific recommendations on possible management measures for this stock.

Here's just figures from the stock assessment, and so to see the status of the stock, and here are the potential management actions in this amendment, and the amendment would establish a rebuilding schedule, since the previous one expired, I guess, at the end of 2017, and it would revise the catch levels, and so the ACLs and the annual catch target for the recreational sector, and it would revise allocations, and then possibly modify management measures and accountability measures, and I have those displayed with a question-mark, because the council has not had a chance to discuss those just yet, and so we'll be doing that at this meeting.

Here is a table showing the proposed timing of the amendment, and so, since there is a statutory deadline, we need to have everything in place by mid-2022, and so we would be looking to conduct scoping hearings in the next couple of months, ahead of the March meeting, and those comments would come to you in March, and, by then, we would have some preliminary analyses for you to look at and provide more guidance to staff and the IPT.

We would modify the amendment accordingly and select preferred alternatives, if you haven't already, at the June meeting, and then conduct public hearings that summer. We would bring that back to you in September and approve all the actions and make whatever other modifications need to be made at that time and then have the amendment ready for review and consideration for final approval either in December of next year or early in 2022, to make sure we have everything submitted in time for the statutory deadline.

Here is the draft purpose and need. At this point, unless the committee is so inclined, we could make changes to it, and it's not imperative that you do at this time, but I wanted to display it and give you that option. Basically, the purpose of the amendment, as I said, is to revise the rebuilding schedule, the acceptable biological catch, sector allocations, and annual catch limits, and the recreational annual catch target for red porgy, based on the results of the most recent assessment and modify management and accountability measures. There's lots to do in this amendment.

The need, of course, is to end overfishing of red porgy and rebuild the stock and achieve optimum yield, while minimizing, to the extent practicable, adverse social and economic effects. I will pause there, Jessica, to see if there's any desire to rework or any comments the committee may have on the draft purpose and need.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Myra. Any comments here on the draft purpose and need of this document? No hands. All right. I'm going to turn it back to you, Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you. Okay. Moving on, here's where we start getting into the actions, and so there is not an action, per se, to revise the ABC, but, just to refresh your memory on that, this is what the SSC has recommended, and those recommendations came to you in June of this year, and this is just a graph showing the recruitment of age-one fish.

Poor recruitment is one of the things that is consistent with red porgy, and here is the table showing you the recommendations from the SSC, and these are based on landed catch. For the ones that are highlighted blue, that's your OFL, overfishing limit, recommendations, in pounds whole weight, at the top, and the ABC, the acceptable biological catch recommendations, again in pounds whole weight, on the bottom, highlighted in blue, and then the corresponding values in numbers of fish. These are based on the assumption that management would start in 2022.

I wanted to bring your attention to this note underneath the table. Just for the record, the SSC had a difficult time implementing the ABC control rule, because red porgy has made very little to no progress towards rebuilding, given the low recruitment in recent years. The projections indicate that the ABCs will have only a very minor impact on stock rebuilding, and, if recruitment continues to be low, the productivity of the stock and the benchmark reference points will need to be reevaluated, and so I just wanted to make sure that that was on your minds as we walk through this.

Here are the proposed actions. Action 1 is to establish the rebuilding schedule for red porgy, and so these projections assume long-term average recruitment and management implemented in 2022. The catch levels from the rebuilding projections, the ones that we have available, are going to be higher than the recommended ABC. Alternative 1 is no action, and the red porgy stock has been

under an eighteen-year rebuilding schedule, and that was expected to rebuild the stock by the end of 2017. Red porgy did not rebuild, and, currently, it is not under a rebuilding plan.

Action 1 is not going to be a viable alternative, because the rebuilding plan has expired. Alternative 2 shows you the shortest allowable time to rebuild, and that's that T_{min} value. It assumes no fishing and no discards, and so this is the projection that F equals zero, and getting to a 50 percent probability of rebuilding success would take eleven years, with 2022 being year-one.

Alternative 3 is T_{min} plus one generation time, which the generation time for red porgy was recently updated, and it is on your screen, 6.64 years, and so add approximately seven years to that T_{min} , and so that puts you at an eighteen-year rebuilding plan, and, again, all of these have 2022 being year-one. Alternative 4 is T_{min} times two, and so that's twenty-two years. We do not currently have projected catch levels for Alternatives 3 and 4, and so that's going to be one question for the committee, is do you want to request those projections from the Science Center.

Alternative 5 is the longest allowable time to rebuild, and so this is your T_{max} , and it is based on a projection at a fishing mortality of 75 percent of FMSY, and so, if you look at when you would achieve a 50 percent probability of success, that happens in twenty-six years, and so the rebuilding would take you to 2047, and the table shows you the different catch levels, and, again, noticing that these catch levels are higher than the recommended ABC from the Scientific and Statistical Committee.

The discussion here is pretty much everything I've already said, and, as far as committee action, the only things I have here is, again, do you want to request those projections, and are there other projections that you may want to request at this point? I will pause there and see what you guys have to say.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Myra. Questions? Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. Myra, if I am understanding this right, we've got alternatives that the catch level would exceed the ABC, and is that correct? If it is correct, how could we even have that as an alternative?

MS. BROUWER: That's a good question, Tim. They do exceed the ABC. The ABC is a recommendation from the SSC, and you always have the option of going back to the SSC and ask them to reconsider. Of course, that would get in the way of our timing here, but it's something that you always have the option to do. That's the situation we're in.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Mel.

MR. BELL: A twenty-six-year rebuild and ABCs greater than recommended in Alternative 5, it would seem to me that Alternative 5 wouldn't be something you would want to ask people to spend time on projections, that one for sure, and it just seems obvious.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree, and I'm wondering if we should remove Alternative 5, but I see that Roy put his hand up.

DR. CRABTREE: I think this is the situation with this, and, if I get it wrong, I will ask Clay or Rick or someone, or Nik, to correct me, and so you have a situation here where recruitment has been very low for a fairly long number of years, and, if recruitment stays at the level it's been in recent years, then this stock will never rebuild, no matter what you do, and, if that is what happens, you will, at some place, have to decide if there has been a change in stock productivity, a regime change of some sort, and, I mean, we know the ocean is changing, and temperatures are changing, and lots of things are changing, and so it wouldn't be that surprising if the productivity of some stocks have changed.

If you did that then, you would say, okay, the level of recruitment now is going to be lower than what it would be in the past, which means the stock is never going to produce the kind of yields that we thought it would in the past, and it's going to rebuild to a lower biomass level. The trouble is we don't really know if there's been a regime change or if the recruitments have just been low for a while, and they may well go back up, but no one knows.

At any rate, when you do the rebuilding projections, you use the stock-recruitment relationship that the model estimates, and so that means the rebuilding projections are assuming that recruitment is increasing over the rebuilding period, and that's why the rebuilding projections show the TAC is going up as you rebuild up to the MSY level.

My recollection is the ABC is based on assuming that recent recruitment levels persist for the next several years, which means that recruitment stays constant and low, and set the catch levels based on that, and so, after a number of years, the ABC becomes lower than the projections, and I think that is the correct way to handle this, and the appropriate way to handle it, because we just don't have any basis of knowing if recruitment is going to go up or not, and so let's assume it's going to be similar to what it's been in recent years. That way, we can be assured that we're ending overfishing, and then we can circle back, after some period of time, and readdress the regime change issue, and that is my understanding of what is going on and why this fishery is a little bit odd, in terms of how these things pair up, and I see Mike Errigo popped up, and so he's going to probably tell me the errors of what I just said.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Mike.

DR. ERRIGO: Actually, I was going to say that Roy is exactly right. I just wanted to make sure that everyone --

DR. CRABTREE: Excellent answer, Mike.

DR. ERRIGO: Thank you, Roy. Roy is exactly right, and that is exactly what's going on here. That's why the ABC values from the SSC are lower than some of the projection values, and so he did a great job of explaining it. That's all.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Mike. So then, Myra, what do we need to do here with this action today? Are we trying to remove some of the alternatives?

MS. BROUWER: At this point, I think, if the council was interested in getting catch levels for some of these other rebuilding projections that we don't have catch levels for, Alternatives 3 and 4, you could request that we ask the Science Center to provide those, and, yes, I mean, you can

always remove alternatives that don't seem like something you may want to consider. Alternative 2, for example, has the assumption of no fishing and no discards, which we know is not realistic, and so perhaps you're interested in removing that alternative from consideration. At this point, that's the kind of guidance we're looking for, to help us sort of narrow down what it is we're going to bring back to you in March.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I agree with you, and I don't think we want Alternative 2, because it's not realistic, and I don't know that Alternative 5 is good, but Shep has his hand up.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would not remove Alternative 2. The statute requires the rebuilding time period to be as short as possible, taking into account certain factors, and that provides our analytical benchmark for what is as short as possible, right, and then everything else is built upon that, and that's why I would strongly advise that you not remove it. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay, and so keeping Alternative 2 as one of the alternatives in there for consideration, and that's probably good there, based on what Shep said, and I see more hands in the air. Mel and then Chester.

MR. BELL: I am just trying to be sensitive to workload on everybody with this too, and what's reasonable, but Shep's description of why 2 needs to stay -- I mean, I would be comfortable with -- I don't think 5 is very reasonable, if I understand it correctly, and so maybe we go with 2, 3, and 4 and call it a day at that, and I don't know.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Chester and then Myra and then Tim.

MR. BREWER: I've got a question, I guess mostly for Shep and for Monica. Under the Act, is there some way that we can make a statement, or have a finding, that, because of change in conditions, there is no way that this fishery can be rebuilt to what it once was, and the condition - - Nobody wants to say it, but the condition is that these fish are probably -- When they're small, they're being eaten by red snapper, and I think that may be a major reason for the very low recruitment over the past years.

Until we get a handle, or a better handle, on red snapper, I don't know that you're going to be able to rebuild this fishery, and I don't know how you make that kind of statement or how you comply with Magnuson when you're faced with a situation like that, but I truly believe that's the situation that we're faced with.

MR. GRIMES: Can I respond to that, Madam Chair?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Go ahead.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you. Well, I mean, I think you have that -- Well, let me back up. That, to me, seems to be a change in the scientific information. At some point, the science, let's say, can decide that, okay, well, your rebuilding target isn't what it used to be, because whatever factors have changed, and this is the new norm for recruitment, and this is what we would expect, but it doesn't seem to me that any of that has happened yet.

I have heard a lot of discussion about what red snapper are eating, and I understand that's a possibility, but it seems like it's largely speculative at this point, and, until you get some feedback from the science side of the house that, okay, the stock is no longer as productive as we thought, and here's what the new rebuilding target would be, and here's what the new rebuilding schedule associated with that new information might be, but it doesn't sound to me like we have any of that at this point. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you. Two things. First, if Alternatives 3 and 4 remain, and you request projections from the Science Center, and those projected catch levels are higher than the recommended ABC, just bear in mind that this may have to go back to the SSC, and I would like to either Chip or Mike E. to confirm that on the record, but I believe they would have to have an option to review those catch levels before we can proceed with further analyses.

The other thing that I was going to point out is there has been a recent study, through I believe the South Carolina DNR, the MARMAP program, looking at diet, and specifically as it pertains to red porgy and red snapper, and so we're going to try to see if we can schedule some kind of a special webinar or something where those data can be presented to the council, maybe sometime in the winter, and so I just wanted to kind of make you aware of that, and that, I think, is going to be interesting, and it will bring a lot of information that, as you've pointed out, at this point is still sort of speculative. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Myra. Before Mike answers, I guess I had another question. Didn't, in red grouper, we assume a long-term average recruitment in the rebuilding, but we used lower recruitment when we set the ABC, through a framework action, and so I thought that we picked two different recruitment scenarios, and that's my recollection, but maybe Mike can respond to what Myra said and what I said.

DR. ERRIGO: What you're doing here is you're looking at the resulting timeframe, and you're not setting the ABC in this action, in these alternatives, and so, yes, in order to set the rebuilding timeframe, when you're looking long-term, you use one recruitment scenario, which is the long-term average recruitment scenario, which comes from the stock-recruitment curve.

That gives you all of these alternatives here, but you can use a different recruitment scenario for the short-term ABC and then reevaluate, after several years, to see where you're at, and, if the recruitment has gone back up to the long-term average, then you can change the ABC, and, if it hasn't, then maybe you can say, well, maybe we're at a regime shift that we have to redo this assessment, with that in mind.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Mike. To Myra's question, do we need to go back to the SSC right now?

DR. ERRIGO: I don't think so. I would say that for this particular action, you can choose one of these, but still set the ABC where the SSC has the ABC set, and then set the ACL in relation to that ABC. If this says that the ABC can be higher than the SSC gave you, and you set it lower than that, that just means that you're giving yourselves a better chance of rebuilding.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Thank you. Tim.

MR. GRINER: A couple of things. You know, we haven't been able to rebuild in eighteen years of working at this, based on the SSC-recommended ABCs, and that hasn't worked in eighteen years, and I hear Shep saying, and I think he's right, that Alternative 2 is the minimum, and, when I think about this, we need the minimum to show us a baseline, but I think we also need a maximum, which is Alternative 5, which is the twenty-six years, and so I think there's a lot of value in having Alternative 5 in there, and leaving it in there so that we could see what it would take to use the maximum allowable time to achieve the rebuilding.

To me, it seems like the most prudent way to go about it would be to use the maximum term available, to give us the best shot, and then we set the ACL as we see fit. We don't have to go with this 105,000 in 2022 and 123,000 in 2023, but I do think there's a lot of value in using the maximum allowable time, and, as Mike said, then that gives you more time to evaluate whether there is just some regime change or whether it's something that's really never going to come back in this fishery and that rebuilding is just purely not feasible.

I think, to me, in my way of thinking, you need to give yourself the maximum allowable time to figure all that out and to try to achieve that anyway, and so I was a little bit confused there, for a minute, about, well, we're exceeding these ABCs, but, at the same time, we don't have to exceed the ABC, just because we're using that alternative, if I'm reading it -- If I understand that correctly. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Tim. Shep, I don't know if you want to go now or later in this queue of people here, but, yes, I didn't think it was the timeframe of twenty-six years was the issue. I thought it was that the projections exceeded the OFL, but that's why Alternative 5 wasn't working, but maybe you could speak to that when we get down to you, Shep.

MR. GRIMES: Or I can go now, if you would prefer.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay.

MR. GRIMES: I guess I had originally raised my hand to make the point that Mike E. did, and that is simply that if -- This is setting the timeline for it, but, because you can fish at a higher level and still rebuild within the timeline, and you're fishing at a lower level, that's a good thing, right, at least in terms of higher probability of rebuilding, and so, as Mike was saying, it's not a problem that the rebuilding timeline would allow you a higher harvest level than where you set the harvest level, and that's just increasing your chance at rebuilding there. I would say, to me, the fact that there is this issue that the catch level under this scenario would exceed the current ABC is not a problem for this alternative, in my opinion. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Shep. Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: I agree with what Shep said, and I basically agree with what Tim said, and so I think we need to keep Alternative 5 in, and I think we just need to be clear, as we explain these things, that the projections for rebuilding are one set of numbers, but the catches need to be set based on realistic assumptions about recruitment, which means they're going to be set lower, and I think that's fine.

My leaning, at the moment, is I would probably be leaning towards Alternative 5 as the preferred, but I don't think we should choose a preferred for this particular action at this point, because I would like to see a little more analysis, and I think you guys then would come back to it.

As to Chester's comment about it's because of red snapper, well, I can't say that's wrong, and that may be, but I would point out that, really, in terms of distribution, there are a lot of differences between red porgy and red snapper. Red porgy tend to be deeper, and they tend to be -- Their center of distribution tends to be north of red snapper, and red snapper is mostly Florida, and a little bit of Georgia, but red porgy are more North Carolina, and that's where the fishery has historically been, and so, while there may be some interaction going on with red porgy and red snapper, I don't think it's as clear as Chester laid out.

I think a lot of these productivity issues are probably more related to changes in water temperature and things related to climate change. If a stock is spreading towards the north, and the fish are moving towards the north, but the fishery is more in the south, then that could affect these things, and so I think it's more complicated than that, and the only way I think you figure this out is to set the catch levels conservatively and then come back in a few more years with a new stock assessment and see if the recruitment has changed or not. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Roy. Kyle.

DR. CHRISTIANSEN: I was just going to say that I agree with Chester wholeheartedly. I think there's -- I think it's more interaction than what the scientists actually want to admit.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Clay.

DR. PORCH: Thank you. It's not really a matter of what scientists want to admit. I mean, the fact is we don't have any evidence that red snapper is a major predator of red porgy, and there is no information to that effect, and so there's no real reason to assume that they are, and then, as Roy already mentioned, they have rather different distributions. There is some overlap, but it's really hard to see red snapper as a major driver for red porgy.

It is possible that there is some -- That there has been some changes in the environment that have caused recruitment to be a little lower than would be expected from the spawner-recruit relationship, but we just don't have the clear smoking gun yet, but we have noticed that these similar trends exist for a few other species, and so there quite possibly is some change in the environment. What we don't know is the time scale of that change and how long it's going to continue into the future, and so I think it's premature, on any level, to assume that there's been a regime shift, but, as things develop and we conduct some more research, maybe we'll get that smoking gun, but, right now, it doesn't exist.

I think the other thing that we need to remind ourselves is that the projections for red porgy tend to be a bit optimistic in terms of the ABC they give, because they are assuming that the discards are reduced by the same proportion as the landings, when, in fact, because you might have a longer closed season, discards were probably about the same, or may even increase, as the closed season gets longer, and so I think part of the reason that you're not seeing the recovery is our projections have been a bit too optimistic.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Clay. Chester.

MR. BREWER: I fat-fingered it. I am sorry. I didn't have any further comments.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Back to this Action 1. Based on the discussion that we've had, I think that we want to keep all of the alternatives, the 1 through 5, that we have here. Myra, do you need anything else from the committee?

MS. BROUWER: No, and that sounds good, Jessica. We can move on then to the next action. This one would revise the total annual catch limit and the OY, and so, of course, these are catch levels that are based on the recommended ABC from the SSC. The current ABC for red porgy is 328,000 pounds whole weight.

Alternative 2 would revise the annual limit and the OY to equal the updated ABC, and so you have the table showing you what those levels would be, starting in 2022 through 2026, and we have shown it to you in pounds whole weight and also in numbers of fish. Alternatives 3 and 4 simply reduce it by 10 percent and 20 percent, respectively, to have a buffer there for management uncertainty, and those are the landing values that you see on your screen for those two alternatives.

Here, we would be looking for you to approve the range of the alternatives that we have just presented, and, in order for us to conduct further analyses to bring back to you in March, it would be good for you to select a preferred alternative, and I will pause there.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Myra. Are these done -- Shep has a comment.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was just going to mention that -- I don't know if I have mentioned this in this context before, but the National Standard Guidelines for OY and ACL are not identical, and there is specific language in there about the relationship between the two and the framework for specifying those, and, essentially, you can -- OY is a long-term average, and ACL is an annual yield, and so OY, just straight OY, equals ACL is not consistent with the guidelines, and we would need to add language indicating that it is an annual OY, or something to that extent, and I don't expect us to address this here, and I just wanted to mention it, because I am going to raise that issue at the IPT level, and we can massage the language as needed, but I wanted to raise it at the committee level, so everyone could hear it. Thanks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Shep. I had a question. Are these based on low recruitment or high recruitment? Do we know?

MS. BROUWER: These are based on the ABC recommendations from the SSC, which assumed, or looked at, the recruitment from the last three years of the assessment, I believe, and so a short-term recruitment.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Any comments on this range of alternatives? Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: The range seems fine to me. I think it's a matter of how conservative do you want to be, and, if you went with Alternative 2, then you're putting in place the, as I understand it, basically the ABC from the SSC, based on the recent recruitment scenarios, and then you have alternatives that put additional buffers into place, 90 and 80 percent, and there are reasons why

you might want to go with some additional buffer, because, as Clay said, there are issues with how we're dealing with the discards, and I've had a number of discussions with the Science Center about this, and my personal opinion is the discard mortality is likely going to be higher than what the ABC and all of this is assuming.

If that's the case, then the overall fishing mortality rates are likely to be higher than what is anticipated, and so one way to deal with that is to set your catch levels, your ACLs, below the ABC, with one of these buffers, and try to compensate for that, but I would leave it up to you guys to decide.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Well, if you were going to make a suggestion for another buffer there, what would it be?

DR. CRABTREE: I would be inclined probably to go with Number 3, which puts it at 90 percent, and so you have a little bit of buffer in there, but, you know, so much hinges on what the recruitments are going to do, and it's really hard to come up with a good reason that pinpoints this is what we should do, and so it's kind of how conservative do you want to be with it. Historically, we haven't been conservative enough with red porgy, but I have a feeling, if you start setting it down to 80 percent or those levels, you're going to run into some pushback on what that means in terms of how the fishery is affected, and so you just sort of have to balance that, but, just me, I would probably go with 10 percent and leave it at that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Mel and then Shep.

MR. BELL: I thought Myra said something about being a preferred, and I guess she wasn't talking about right now, right?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think she is talking about right now, because I think that we have to have a preferred to run some other scenarios, and is that right, Myra?

MS. BROUWER: Correct, and so all the other actions that we're going to go through are going to depend on what ACL you are selecting, in order for us to do any more analyses, and so, if you select a preferred right now, it would be for analysis purposes, and you can always go back and change it later, but it would facilitate us conducting analyses.

MR. BELL: Okay. Thanks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Shep.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you, Madam Chair. I would just follow-up on a little bit of what Roy had said, and I know I have made pleas in the past not to set ACL equal to ABC and that you need to consider whether there was management uncertainty and whether a buffer was required, and, generally speaking, this council has not done that, and I think, in this instance, not only would I make my normal case, but I would also say, as Roy discussed, we have not hit our rebuilding targets with this stock in the past, and there are a number of reasons why the council's approach should be more conservative than the council has been in the past and with other species, and I would encourage you to address all of that information in picking a preferred alternative. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Shep. Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. I agree that we need to be as conservative as possible, but part of me is struggling to believe that, by offering a buffer, we have helped our discard problem. In my way of thinking, the buffer reduces our ACL, and, the more you reduce the ACL, the more we're going to -- The more time we're going to encounter that fish with it being a regulatory discard, and so I'm not sure that the buffer really helps us with the discard problem at all.

The discards are going to be pretty much a function -- At least on the commercial side, they're going to be a function of the fishery being closed while we're fishing, and so I do want to be as conservative as possible, and that's why I keep circling back to using the longest timeframe, but I'm not sure I'm sold on the need for a buffer and that it would achieve the conservation that we think that it would. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, I mean, Tim makes a point there. My guess is, on balance, still, if you lower the catch levels, you will probably get some reductions in mortality overall, but, to the extent that Tim is right that those fish are going to be caught anyway, and then you're going to have discard mortality, that would offset the efficacy of the buffer, but my guess is that some of the fish that would have been landed but now are released -- Some of those will live, especially if people practice good release practices, and so you get some benefits out of it, but I think Tim makes a valid point.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. We need to pick a preferred here. I am a little concerned about picking Alternative 2, because I feel like this is what was in place the last two times, and we didn't make a lot of progress on this rebuild, and so I would just throw that out there. Chip.

DR. COLLIER: Thank you. I just wanted to point out that this hasn't gone out for scoping yet, and so scoping is generally the investigating phase of what you're going to be doing and what could be options, and so I just wanted to point that out before you guys start selecting preferreds.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. What would the committee like to do here? Mel.

MR. BELL: Well, if we have to pick one, 3 would seem to be kind of in the middle, I mean at this point, and I'm not saying that's the right one, but, if we have to, for analysis purposes, if that would help, 3 might be kind of less objectionable at this point.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: I agree. I support going with Alternative 3 as our current preferred.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Would you like to make that in the form of a motion?

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes, and I couldn't remember if I can, as co-chair, and my Roberts Rules are packed away. **If that's okay, then I move that we adopt Alternative 3 as our preferred alternative to go out to scoping.**

MR. BELL: Second.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. We have a motion to adopt Alternative 3 as the preferred. It's under discussion. Any more discussion on this item? Kerry, do you have your hand up again, or is it just left over from before?

MS. MARHEFKA: Just a left over.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Just checking. All right. **Since I don't see any hands, is there any objection to this motion to make Alternative 3 the preferred in Action 3?** Tim.

MR. GRINER: Yes, I object. I go back to Alternative 2 was the ABC recommendation, and I realize we've gone down that path and haven't found success for eighteen years, but there's also inherent buffer and conservation in their ABC recommendation to begin with, and so I just don't think this is the correct preferred. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. Since we have an objection here, Myra, do we need to call the roll?

MS. BROUWER: That would be my suggestion, Jessica, and I'm prepared to tally up the votes. I have the list of the committee members in front of me, and so I could do the calling, if you would like.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, please.

MS. BROUWER: Steve Poland.

MR. POLAND: No.

MS. BROUWER: Anna Beckwith.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Chester Brewer.

MR. BREWER: No.

MS. BROUWER: Chris Conklin.

MR. CONKLIN: No.

MS. BROUWER: Tim Griner.

MR. GRINER: No.

MS. BROUWER: Jessica McCawley.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Spud Woodward.

MR. WOODWARD: No.

MS. BROUWER: Carolyn Belcher.

DR. BELCHER: No.

MS. BROUWER: Art Sapp.

MR. SAPP: No.

MS. BROUWER: Kyle Christiansen.

DR. CHRISTIANSEN: No.

MS. BROUWER: Roy Crabtree.

DR. CRABTREE: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Kerry Marhefka.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Mel Bell.

MR. BELL: Yes. There goes my assumption of least objectionable.

MS. BROUWER: Madam Chair, I'm not sure if our Mid-Atlantic Council representatives would need to vote as well, and I believe they would.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think so.

MS. BROUWER: Tony DiLernia.

MR. DILERNIA: Abstain.

MS. BROUWER: Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Abstain.

MS. BROUWER: **Madam Chair, that's seven no and five yes. The motion fails.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: **Okay, and so the motion fails.** Would someone else like to choose a different preferred alternative under Action 2 that we could then vote on? Tim.

MR. GRINER: Just so I understand, can we not send it out to scoping first and then pick a preferred after it comes back from scoping?

MS. BROUWER: You absolutely can, Tim, if that's what you prefer. I mean, you selecting a preferred right now allows us to do more specific analyses to bring back to you in March. Otherwise, we would have to analyze all of these alternatives, and it would create a lot more work for staff, but it's absolutely your choice, and it's fine if you don't want to choose a preferred right now.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Tim, is that your preference, to not choose a preferred?

MR. GRINER: **Yes, and I would like to go ahead and make that motion, to send it out to scoping prior to picking a preferred.** Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. All right. We have a motion. Do we have a second?

MR. WOODWARD: I will second that, Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. It's seconded by Spud. It's under discussion. Myra, can you call for a vote on this, or call the roll for a vote on this? Wait. Sorry. Chester.

MR. BREWER: I had a question, because I'm very sensitive to unnecessarily burdening staff. If we do not pick an alternative, or a preferred alternative, today, does that mean that staff has to go through and analyze all of the alternatives prior to getting the results from scoping, or can they wait until after we've had scoping?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Myra.

MS. BROUWER: So we can definitely wait until after scoping. If we conduct scoping hearings in the next couple of months, we would bring those back to you in March, but we wouldn't be able to start producing more analyses for you until after the March meeting, and so it would just crunch us a little bit towards the end of the year, when we have to really do more of the heavy lifting, in terms of developing the effects analyses and that sort of thing, and compiling all the summary information, and so it's up to you. If you would like to wait until after scoping, when you can give us more specific guidance as to what you want to see, in terms of analyses, we could bring that to you in June.

MR. BREWER: Okay. While I say I'm very sensitive to unnecessarily burdening staff, I am not -- I've got to say that I am not terribly comfortable with anything that I'm looking at right here, and so I'm going to vote in favor, but I will wait until it's my turn to do so, and I just don't want to send staff running around the rosy with no good reason.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I understand. Thank you, Chester. Mel and then Roy.

MR. BELL: I was going to just point out that this one does have a statutory deadline, and so that means that the burden on staff -- We'll just have to do what we have to do, but it may mean, if we get into a crunch at some point, that something else is going to have to give that we also feel is important, but that's -- So just keep that in mind.

I mean, I would probably just support this to go along, because I don't like any of the others at this point, but, if that's the way you all want to proceed, just keep in mind that it's a balancing act, every time we're trying to figure out what we're going to assign staff to, and this does have a statutory deadline, and so it will -- At some point, if we get a little behind, it might preempt other things that you also feel are important.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Mel. Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Well, I mean, as someone who won't be here the next time you talk about it, I will just tell you what I think. I think you are putting the burden on your staff, and I think you ought not to put burdens on your staff by putting off decisions because they're not easy. I don't think you're going to be any more comfortable with this when you come back at the next meeting, and it's a difficult decision, and my sense is, from a lot of the discussion, is that this has gotten somehow tied up with red snapper, and so people are voting no because they don't believe the red snapper situation.

I am not sure what to do about that, and I'm not going to push that we ought to pick a preferred, but I don't know what you think you're going to learn from scoping that would cause you to be more conservative. I suspect what you'll hear from scoping is complaining about all the things you talked about, and then you're going to probably come back, and, if you don't want the buffer and aren't comfortable with it, you will choose Alternative 2, and so, if it's reasonable to think that you're going to end up with Alternative 2, which is no buffer, I think you save your staff a lot of work if you just go ahead and pick it now.

You can always change it, and, if I'm wrong, and all the public comes in clamoring for you to be more conservative on red pogy, then you could change it, but I suspect you're going to get a lot of public comment out of folks in North Carolina and that area, and they're not going to push you to be more conservative, and you're not going to know any more about red snapper and whether it's causing this at the next meeting than you know right now, and so the reality is, if you want to help your staff out, pick a preferred.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Roy. Anna and then Steve.

MS. BECKWITH: I would support Roy's position on this. **I would make a substitute motion to pick Alternative 2 as our preferred.** I just see that being where we end up.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Good point. So we're getting a substitute motion on the board, and that substitute motion is to select Alternative 2 as the preferred. Do we have a second to that motion?

MR. POLAND: Madam Chair, I will second.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Steve seconds. This is under discussion. Anna, would you like to add more here to this?

MS. BECKWITH: I mean, I would just say that I'm not -- I have to look at red pogy on the basis of red pogy, and I'm not tying this to red snapper, and this is a difficult issue, and it's going to cause problems, and I suspect those after I will be looking at a regime change at some point in the

future, but, for what is currently before us in this moment, this seems like a reasonable path forward.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Steve.

MR. POLAND: I don't have much to add. I was raising my hand to make a substitute motion, and so Anna jumped in ahead of me.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Any more discussion on the substitute motion? Myra, will you call the names of folks who are voting? Well, we all need to vote on this substitute motion. **The substitute motion is to select Alternative 2 under Action 2 as the preferred alternative.** I am going to turn it to you, Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Jessica. Okay. We'll start this time with Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Anna.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Chester.

MR. BREWER: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Steve.

MR. POLAND: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Carolyn.

DR. BELCHER: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Mel.

MR. BELL: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Kyle.

DR. CHRISTIANSEN: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: No.

MS. BROUWER: Tony.

MR. DILERNIA: Abstain.

MS. BROUWER: Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Abstain.

MS. BROUWER: **Madam Chair, there is a total of ten yes, one no, one abstention.**

MR. SAPP: I didn't get to vote.

MS. BROUWER: I am so sorry, Art.

MR. SAPP: No worries. Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Okay. **That makes eleven yes.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thank you. **The motion passes.** Now the substitute motion becomes the main motion, and we need to vote on this as the main motion. Before we do that, Chester, you have your hand up, and do you have something to say here before we take a vote on the main motion?

MR. BREWER: I had my hand up before the last vote, just to try to say that it probably makes more sense to call to see if there's any objection to the motion before doing a roll call, because, if there's no objection, you don't need to do a roll call. That was it. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you. I feel like we should still call the roll on this main motion. **Once again, this is to select Alternative 2 under Action 2 as the preferred.** Myra, can you call the names one more time?

MS. BROUWER: Yes. Starting with Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Anna.

MS. BECKWITH: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Chester.

MR. BREWER: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Tim.

MR. GRINER: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Steve.

MR. POLAND: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Carolyn.

DR. BELCHER: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Mel.

MR. BELL: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Art.

MR. SAPP: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Kyle.

DR. CHRISTIANSEN: Yes.

MS. BROUWER: Roy.

DR. CRABTREE: Okay.

MS. BROUWER: Tony.

MR. DILERNIA: Abstain.

MS. BROUWER: Dewey.

MR. HEMILRIGHT: Abstain.

MS. BROUWER: **That makes twelve yes and two abstentions, Madam Chair.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. **The motion passes.** Myra, I believe we can move on to Action 3.

MS. BROUWER: Correct. Action 3 has to do with allocations, and so what we're showing here -- We kind of had to sort of pick one total ACL scenario, in order to show you some numbers moving forward, and so these allocations are based on the total ACL being equal to the updated ABC.

Alternative 1 is just retaining the current allocations, which, in this fishery, the total ACL is split 50/50 commercial and recreational. Recently, you also implemented a split season for the commercial sector, and so 30 percent of that ACL is allocated to Season 1, which is from January through April, and 70 percent is allocated to Season 2, which is May through December. That is what the catch levels would look like under 50/50 allocation, based on total ACL equals updated ABC.

Alternative 2 applies the current allocation formula, which looks at average landings from 2006 through 2008 and takes half of that and adds it to half of the landings, average landings, from 1986 through 2008, and so, if you apply that formula, it would result in a commercial allocation which is pretty close to 50/50, and so the commercial sector would get 51.43 percent, and the recreational would be allocated 48.57 percent of the total ACL, and that's what those catch levels look like, and it's both in total pounds, or in total weight, and also numbers of fish.

There's a little note in here, and this is just sort of to provide you some of the rationale for why, initially, the council put that 50/50 allocation, even though the distribution of landings at the time, which I believe this was done in Amendment 15B, which was around 2008-ish, and there is a higher discard mortality in the recreational sector, and there was concern, at the time, that, if more of the ACL was allocated to the commercial sector, there would be more discard mortality.

Alternative 3 basically just removes sector allocations, if that's something you would like to consider, and it would manage it under the total ACL, and so those are the three alternatives that we have for you. I know that the staff are putting together a decision tree approach that is going to be developed over the next year that is going to inform allocation decisions that you're going to make in the future, but, for this amendment, these are basically the only options that the IPT was able to come up with, and so I will pause there and answer any questions you may have.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: Thanks. Can somebody refresh my memory on the allocation formula we used for mahi, and is that one of the -- Is that the same as Alternative 2?

MS. BROUWER: I don't remember, off the top of my head, what the allocation formula is for dolphin, and so I'm going to see if John Hadley may have that, or somebody else on staff.

MR. HADLEY: The current allocation formula looks at a set of baseline years, and I believe it's 2008 through 2012. One of the allocation alternatives that you're looking at in Dolphin Wahoo Amendment 10 is setting the commercial ACL equal to its -- Or relatively equal to where it is right now on a pound basis and then kind of floating the rest of the allocation over to the recreational

sector, and so the idea is to kind of freeze the ACL for the commercial sector and then float the rest, if you will, to the recreational sector. Does that help?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: I mean -- No, I'm just wondering -- I guess I would like to hear what the rest of the council is going to go with, but it seems like we need to sort of have some continuity in our allocation ideology, and it sort of needs to stay the same across I guess all the species, or at least within this fishery, and, I mean, we can't just start jumping around because we don't like an allocation or something, and that's a road that I certainly don't want us to go down, and so let's be fair and equitable in however we do it. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Shep.

MR. GRIMES: I guess my initial intent was to say that it sounds like the rationale for the existing allocation doesn't have the same level of impacts from FES changes than some of our other allocations, right, because it's just 51/49 because that's what was in existence at the time, but I guess, looking at it now, looking at the second bullet under the discussion, it's 2001 through 2003 landings, and I don't know if that was explicitly part of it or if Myra had just put it in there, and so maybe there is an FES issue that we would need to address, if the council wanted to keep the current allocation, and I just wanted to throw that out there, and maybe Myra had some thoughts on it. Thanks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Shep. Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you. This rationale is what I pulled out of the amendment where the allocation for red pogy was set, and so I'm not sure why 2001 through 2003 were selected as the years upon which to base that allocation, and I would have to go back and try to find some rationale, but I recall trying to dig it up, and it wasn't very clear, other than the council, at the time, wanted to keep the allocation close to how the landings were distributed at that time. Then there was the issue of the commercial discard mortality being higher, and so they didn't want to go above 50 percent.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. I guess my question is about the discard mortality and not going above the 50 percent allocation, but did any of that take into account the new seasons and new trip limits that we enacted for the commercial sector?

MS. BROUWER: Tim, no, and this rationale that I'm providing is what the council, back in 2008, provided as their rationale for the 50/50 split. At that time, there were no seasons, and that was done this past year.

MR. GRINER: Correct, but I thought, underneath that Alternative 2, that there was a statement underneath it that -- Let's see. Okay. We know now that possibly that discard mortality is a little bit lower, because of this new trip limit and season that we enacted a year ago, and so that means, in my way of thinking, that the 51 percent is -- Being above the 50 percent doesn't necessarily have those same impacts of discard mortality, and would that be correct thinking?

MS. BROUWER: I see where you're coming from now, Tim. I don't know if that is a correct assumption, but I understand what you're saying.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Anna.

MS. BECKWITH: I am always a little bit concerned when I see the Alternative 3, the remove sector allocations and manage under the total ACL, and I know we discussed that for yellowtail, and we're discussing it now, and maybe that's a trend that the council will continue to discuss, but I think maintaining some sector allocations is probably better, in the long run, for both sectors, in this situation, and protecting the commercial ACL might benefit the commercial guys. I think there is other ways of dealing with that. Even if we do maintain sector allocations with the accountability measures that we've discussed, either not closing until the whole ACL, or not having a payback, unless the entire ACL has been reached, and there is, I think, other ways of doing it, but I'm always a little cautious of the precedent that managing under one sector ACL can cause in the long run, and so I will just throw that caution out.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: That's exactly what I was going to speak to. Alternative 3 just doesn't make any sense to me, and so that would certainly not even be an option for me, and maybe we need to keep it in there to make people feel good or something, but, as far as that goes, you can't talk me into that one.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Tim.

MR. GRINER: I think my hand was just still up, but I do agree with Anna and Chris.

MS. BROUWER: Am I hearing -- I don't know if the committee would be interested in removing Alternative 3 for further consideration, and that would just give you no action and then Alternative 2, and so I would be interested to know if Shep can speak to the -- I know that we always want to have more than two alternatives for analysis.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Shep.

MR. GRIMES: Thank you. Yes, Myra, that's right. I really don't like that, when it comes to allocation, and you have so many different options with allocation, and that's saying you only have -- Your only reasonable alternatives are the two that are presented, and that doesn't seem to be considering the full range there, and I would discourage you from doing it. Thanks.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. So, I guess, what do we want to do here? We're trying to either approve this range of alternatives or recommend modification, and I don't think I would suggest selecting a preferred at this time, but that's just me. Chester.

MR. BREWER: I was going to say that I agree with Anna and Chris. Alternative 3, that ain't going to get it, but, if we need to have alternatives, or a number of alternatives, leave it in, but I can tell you, at the end of the day, I would never vote for that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thanks, Madam Chair. I mean, I agree with everything said about Alternative 3, but certainly leave it in the document, given Shep's input, and I agree with you that I don't think we need to select a preferred, because this is definitely something that I would love to hear feedback from the stakeholders on, and so I think, as a committee, we can just move on, and I have nothing else to add.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thank you, Steve. All right, Myra. On to the next action.

MS. BROUWER: Thanks, Jessica. The next action would revise the red porgy recreational annual catch target. Currently, that's set at 117,555 pounds whole weight, and it was determined, using the existing formula, which was adopted by the council in the Comprehensive ACL Amendment, which sets the target at the recreational catch limit times one minus the mean proportional standard error over the previous five years. That was the formula that was adopted.

Alternative 2 would revise that ACT based on the revised ACL and the updated PSEs for 2015 through 2019. Here, I have to note that the average PSE for those years is 44.66 percent, and so it's pretty high, and so here are the values that would result from applying that formula, and then we included Alternative 3, which would be an option to remove the ACT and not specify a new one. I should clarify that recreational ACTs in the South Atlantic region are not currently used to trigger any regulatory action, and they are not codified in the regulations either, and so you have the option there of simply removing it or revising it, and I will pause there.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. I think that these alternatives look good under this action, and is there any willingness to want to change the alternatives that we see here under this action? I don't see any hands raised, and I think we can move on to Action 5.

MS. BROUWER: Okay, and this is where we get into management measures, and so we have not fleshed out any alternatives, pending your guidance, based on recommendations from the AP. What we have is some more preliminary analyses and descriptive stuff for you guys to try to flesh out maybe either some alternatives or ranges of things that you may want to see and for us to take out to scoping.

Some of this is similar to what you've already seen, a summary of landings over here, and this is kind of a two-part table, and so, on the left-hand side, you have what landings have been in recent years, in pounds whole weight, and we still have -- The 2019 data in this table are still preliminary, and then, under the proposed ACL, and this is, again, based on total ACL equal to ABC, and then allocation remaining at 50/50 in this middle column and the commercial allocation being a little bit higher on the right-hand side.

Then we just included a summary of what the commercial regulations are, just so that we have it as part of the discussion, and there's a fourteen-inch minimum length limit, and then, as I mentioned earlier, there is a split season for the commercial, with a trip limit of sixty fish in Season 1, from January through April, and 120 fish from May through December.

Here is where we get into some more descriptive information, and this figure here shows you the percent of trips that were harvesting red porgy from 2010 through 2019, and it's showing that over

50 percent of the trips are estimated to have harvested less than thirty fish during a trip, and this is based on about 13,000 trips. Here is a table showing the estimated reductions from projected landings from the potential trip limits, and so what was done here -- I should mention that these analyses were conducted in the region by Jeff Pulver, who is in the audience, and, if there's any specific questions, I'm sure Jeff could probably elaborate much better than me.

This column here shows you the predicted percent change in the landings, and the bookends that were used for trip limits were forty-five fish, thirty fish, fifteen fish, going down in Season 1, and a similar range for Season 2, and these are based on data from 2017 through 2019, with the current trip limits, and so here it shows you the distribution of those landings by month, noting that January through April had to be backfilled, because the fishery has been closed for the commercial sector during those months.

Finally, this table shows you the predicted season length, and this was, again, based on the ACL that was recommended, equal to the ABC, and taking into account the current split season, and so it shows you the predicted closure date and the range for the 95 percent confidence for that predicted closure. I will pause there and see if there is any questions or clarifications, and these, I should say, were a similar analysis, and pretty much everything else that I just presented, except for this table, was shown to the advisory panel, and I can switch to their recommendations at this point, if that would be helpful, Jessica, or allow for more discussion or clarifications first.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Let's hear what the AP had to say. I think they made a couple of motions.

MS. MCCAWLEY: The AP -- I think Jimmy is in the audience, and he can interject, and so there were some general observations first, and I will skip over to the motions that were approved. For the commercial sector, they recommended that you consider a range of trip limit options, and they suggested twenty-five to sixty fish and consider a closure only during peak spawning. That was the motion that was approved for the commercial sector.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Myra, and so let me just ask a couple of procedural questions here. We're trying to come up with management alternatives here, under this action, for commercial, and so we would need to specify some specific alternatives, and is that correct?

MS. BROUWER: Right, and we're looking for ideas for any changes you may want to make for both sectors, and everything is lumped under an action right now, because we haven't had a chance to have this discussion yet, and so it may be that we have to flesh out different actions, one for commercial and one for recreational, but that is the idea.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Let's have a discussion on commercial. I guess, when I look at the items that are in these tables for the trip limits, going down to forty-five, thirty, fifteen, in the January through April timeframe, and then again -- May through December is sixty, forty-five, thirty, and fifteen, and those seem like pretty good alternatives, and they encompass what the AP was suggesting, which was options ranging from twenty-five to sixty. The AP was also suggesting a closed season during peak spawning, and I thought peak spawning was December to March, and so I will throw that out there also, but let's go to Jimmy first, and then I'll come back to you, Steve.

MR. HULL: Thank you, Madam Chair. The AP was very concerned about we do not totally close this fishery down, and we need to at least keep the commercial fishery open at these reduced levels,

and we came to the determination that was presented by staff of the percentage of reduction that has to be obtained, and I think it might have been on Table 3, but there were a percentage of reductions that had to be obtained to -- There is the reductions there.

It was somewhere around a total of 70 percent reduction from the current landings, and so, if you throw in a couple of options like a closed season, whether it's, like it used to be, during the snapper grouper shallow-water closure, and then you had something like a fifteen-fish per trip limit, and the fishery would stay open for those months, other than the snapper grouper shallow-water closure, and so the idea was to try to accomplish whatever reduction we had to do to pass muster and keep the fishery open for data collection and for a little bit of the bycatch that we're going to encounter. That's on the commercial side.

There was a lot of discussion on the recreational side also, but you're not talking about that now, and so, on the commercial side, I think these lower trip limits, along with maybe a combination of some type of closure during either the peak spawning or the shallow-water grouper closure, would get us to where we wanted to be.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Jimmy. Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just wanted an answer to what is the spawning period for red porgy, and is it that kind of December to March time period?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, Steve. That is, and I'm going to pull up here, in a minute -- The peak spawning months, I believe, are from December through -- Let me pull it up, and then I will get back to you.

MR. POLAND: Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. Well, I wouldn't like to see us go back to a closure, a total closure, during the shallow-water grouper spawning season, even if that is the peak season for their spawn. I mean, the reasons that we are where we are -- You know, we just have only a year under us of going down that road, and that was to eliminate some of the discards, and so I would rather see us keep it open during then, that shallow-water closure, but just reduce a trip limit if we have to, but, to totally close it again, it's going to be tripping over ourselves and going right back to where we were.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Thank you, Tim. It looks like Myra has found the peak spawning, and it's December through March. I guess I am looking to the committee. I made some suggestions here for potential trip limits, using Table 3, and I'm looking for what alternatives we want to add for these commercial trip limits and if we want to consider some type of closure, and I feel like the closure has only been removed recently, and red porgy is not recovering, and so may we need to reconsider the closure, but let me go to Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you, Myra, for finding that information. I tend to agree with Tim, and I don't really see a need to reconsider the closure, since we did away with it about a year ago, because, I mean, discards are going to be an issue, and I am much more

in favor of looking at adjusting the trip limits accordingly, to try to keep some harvest for as long as we can to turn those discards into harvest, and so, I mean, I would support an option to look at these trip limits in the table and no spawning season closure.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Do you have some specific suggestions, or are you making the suggestions that are in this table, which this table is 4, Table 4, Steve?

MR. POLAND: I would really like to hear from Tim and Chris on this, because, I mean, certainly for the January to April time period, I mean, I am fine going all the way down to fifteen, but, for May to December, I would like to hear some input from some of the commercial reps on the council, to see what is reasonable, as far as turning discards into harvest, but not really incentivizing, I guess, a lot of targeting or making it enough harvest to make it worth the effort,

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. I agree with Steve, and I think that's the real hard part, is to figure out exactly what that trip limit should be to get the most bang for the buck here, and, during the January to April, I would say that I would be pretty comfortable with dropping that down to the thirty fish, and we have some pretty bad weather during that period anyway, and that February 13 closure date could easily push out to the March 13 closure date that you see there for a fifteen-fish alternative, and I think thirty fish during that period of time -- At the end of a couple of years of analysis, I think you would see that the majority of the trips were probably somewhere between the fifteen and the thirty, that those trips are really targeting vermilion and triggers, and the idea there was just to make sure that you didn't have to throw any of the porgies away, and, I think, at the thirty, you wouldn't be throwing too many away.

For the May through December, there, I think we really need to think hard about, again, those 50 percent of the trips and what they normally are catching, and, there again, I think forty-five fish could probably get you there, and, again, I think, at that time of year, you're starting to open back up the second season of the vermilion and the trigger, and so I think having the ability to at least keep the forty-five, instead of the 120, kind of gets you back to limiting the discards and still being able to put a trip together, and so, if I had to lean toward one way or the other right now, it would be somewhere towards the thirty in the January to April and the forty-five from May through December.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay, and so I appreciate that, but we're also trying to find a range here that can be analyzed, and so let me try to interpret. So, in the January through the April timeframe, it sounds like analyzing forty-five is okay, although likely too big of a number, and thirty sounds good. It sounds like fifteen is a little small, and would you also like some analysis on a number like twenty or twenty-five, Tim?

MR. GRINER: Yes, and I was going to suggest that, that we can easily add a couple more alternatives for the trip limits, and I think twenty would be a good one for both seasons.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. All right. So, also, the numbers you see in the table, are they okay for analysis in these two separate seasons, but add twenty to both seasons?

MR. GRINER: Correct.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. All right. Myra, does that help?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, and I'm trying to capture it here.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Do you want me to call it out? In the first season, you would look at fifteen, twenty, thirty, and forty-five, and sixty, of course, is the current limit. In the second season, you would look at fifteen, twenty, thirty, forty-five, and sixty, I believe, but let's see what Steve has to say.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I was just going to support looking at twenty for that second season, because, looking at the closure date difference between thirty and fifteen, I mean, that's a big jump, and I'm just curious where that kind of break is there in those projected closure dates, and so I'm in support of twenty for that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Sounds good, and so it sounds like we've got a pretty good range going here. There's more support for analyzing this twenty-fish limit. Chris.

MR. CONKLIN: Those look fine to me. I just wanted to offer that do I think that this is going to help rebuild the fishery, or get us to where we need to be? No, and I think there's something much larger going on with red porgy, and we're not going to achieve much of anything, especially the way we've been going, and I don't think it has anything to do with fishing pressure.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Great point. I guess that -- Myra, I'm assuming that we don't need a motion here, but just direction to staff to examine this range here.

MS. BROUWER: Yes, that's fine, Jessica.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. I am inclined to go ahead and break for lunch, and then, when we come back, to start the discussion on what we want analyzed on the recreational and then move through the last action in this amendment, if that's okay with you, Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Sounds good to me. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. So then we will be back at 1:30. All right. Thanks, everybody.

(Whereupon, a recess was taken.)

MS. MCCAWLEY: We finished with the discussion on commercial alternatives, and now we need to talk about the recreational landings and the preliminary analysis and what we might want to suggest for alternatives to be analyzed on the recreational side, and so I'm going to turn it back to Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Jessica. We'll get through this as quick as we can, but I do want to show you -- Again, it's the same thing for the recreational, and we have a summary of landings with that kind of a two-part table in front of you, and we have just a listing of the current regulations, and the current bag limit is three red porgy per person per day or three per trip, whichever is more restrictive.

Here, we have a summary of landings by two-month wave, and the predicted future landings are shown as the geometric mean, and this estimate for 2018 is rather large, and we are aware that PSEs are an issue with recreational estimates, and so, here, I just wanted to note that we recognize that there is going to be these issues, and we are in conversations with the region to try to figure out how to address these large PSEs moving forward. This is just a breakdown, like I said, by wave of the landings.

This figure here, which I believe in your attachment has the wrong title, but it actually shows the percent of trips that are harvesting red porgy for the three modes, private, charter, and headboat, from 2017 through 2019, and you can see the majority are catching zero to one fish, and these are including the FES data.

Similarly to the commercial, we have a breakdown of the percent change in landings for each potential bag limit by mode, and, obviously, the bag limits are only two or one, and you can see what those percent reductions, predicted percent reductions, would be, and the overall is here at the bottom. Then, finally, we have the same prediction of the season length, based on the projected 2022 -- This is the projected closure dates, I should say, with the 95 percent confidence intervals as well.

Below that, I just summarized a little bit of the life history information, and we already talked about the peak spawning months being from December through March, and then transition from female to male occurring between thirteen and fifteen inches in the South Atlantic.

Following is the Snapper Grouper AP recommendations, and we've already talked about the commercial, and they already had -- They had also some observations there for you, which we have already mentioned, and here is the motion that they approved. It's recommending closing the recreational fishery for red porgy in synchrony with the shallow-water grouper spawning season closure and then consider reductions in the bag limit to either two fish or one fish per angler per trip, and so I will pause here for discussion or questions. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Myra. Do we have any discussion or questions? Do we want to make a suggestion for what the recreational limit should be that would be some alternatives in the document? Tim.

MR. GRINER: Thank you. Could you remind me what the terminal year of the assessment was, please?

MS. BROUWER: I believe that was 2017.

MR. GRINER: That included the new FES data?

MS. BROUWER: Yes.

MR. GRINER: Just to make sure I've got it, the terminal year is when you picked up the FES data, and so we have a terminal year that includes the new data in the assessment, correct?

MS. BROUWER: That's correct.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. I am still looking for suggestions for some alternatives to be analyzed in the document for the recreational fishery, and so the AP's motion is on the board there, where they suggested a possible spawning closure during the same months as the shallow-water grouper closure, and then they were also suggesting one fish per angler or two fish per angler, and is that what we want to go with to be analyzed in the alternatives, because we're currently at three right now. Jack.

DR. MCGOVERN: I think what the AP suggested for the recreational sector is a good range. I also noticed, when Myra showed the motions, that the AP also suggested a spawning season closure for the commercial sector, and we didn't have that in the range, and I didn't know if we wanted to consider that as well for the range of alternatives for the commercial sector.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Jack. We did have a discussion about that on the commercial side, and it seemed that folks were not wanting to consider a commercial closure again, and I heard that from a couple of different people. If we do want to go back and add that, we certainly can, and so, so far, Jack has suggested analyzing a recreational spawning season closure and a one per angler or per trip or two fish per angler per trip. Mel.

MR. BELL: Since we're at three already, I think that's fine, and analyzing one and two makes sense, and the concept of the spawning season closure is fine as well, and it's a different dynamic here than the commercial fishery, but, I mean, this is a good place to start. The only other way to restrict -- If you wanted to do a further restriction, we could look at a boat limit or something on top of that, but I think this is a good place to start, one and two, and we don't tend to have a lot of boat limits.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Mel. Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: Thanks, Jessica. Just to see what it would mean, I would be interested in seeing the effect of the spawning season closure and the current bag limit, the three fish. If that's not unduly burdensome, I would just be curious to see what that is in the analysis, too.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Sounds good, and so, Myra, what I have heard so far is a spawning season closure for recreational, and I've heard one fish and two fish, and I have also heard analyze the effect of both the closure and the one, two, and three-fish limits, and so I'm going to let you get that on the board.

MS. BROUWER: Does that capture what Spud suggested, Jessica?

MS. MCCAWLEY: Well, I don't know if it's completely clear that we are wanting an analysis of just the trip limit by itself, the spawning season closure by itself, and then the closure and the trip limit combined, and is that clear? Okay. That sounds good. Steve.

MR. POLAND: I was going to ask for that clarification, because, as I was understanding it, we were going to receive an analysis of one and two fish with and without the spawning closure, as well as three fish with a spawning closure.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Mel.

MR. BELL: I was trying to clear that up. What I thought Spud said was just the three and the spawning closure, but, if you want to do them all, that's fine, but it's just more analysis.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think I would like to see them all, but that's just me. Any other discussion on this direction to staff on recreational limits? Steve.

MR. POLAND: I was just going to say that I would prefer to see them both, with and without the closure, because I assume the table that we have in the decision document, looking at closure dates, is assuming no spawning season closure, and I would like to compare that to closure dates with a spawning season closure.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Chip.

DR. COLLIER: Myra, could you scroll up to the seasonal catch? I mean, I think, if you're wanting to see analysis just based on seasonal catch -- If you look at the waves for November/December, January/February, and then in March, you're getting very little change in those months, and so, looking at those by themselves, they're probably not going to get you the reduction that you need. You're looking at about an 80 percent reduction, and is that right, Myra?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, Chip. That's my recollection, yes.

DR. COLLIER: So it's likely going to be a combination of management measures that you need in order to achieve that kind of reduction.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Myra, do you mind scrolling back down, to the direction to staff? This is making it the same time as the shallow-water grouper closure, and is that definitely the timeframe that we want to pick, or do we want something more directly on top of the peak spawning here? I will throw that out there, and do we -- I guess, Chip, are you suggesting that a spawning closure and this reduction in bag limit is still likely not going to be enough to get us to the 80 percent reduction and we need to add some more alternatives here? I am not fully understanding what you're suggesting.

DR. COLLIER: In looking at some of the data -- I guess, if you scroll up a little bit, Myra, if you -- Again, looking at the Table 7 there, if you're looking at that closure date, you're really only having, essentially, one wave in there, because, in the first two waves, there is very little landings in those time periods, and it's really the third wave. The third and fourth wave is where all the landings are occurring, and so it's basically do you want Wave 3 or Wave 4, and I think either one of those would likely get you to that total ACL.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay, and so then I would think, in that direction to staff, in addition to a closure that would occur at the same time as shallow-water grouper, can we also analyze a closure in Wave 3 and, separately, a closure in Wave 4? Mel.

MR. BELL: A lot is going in that direction too, and the time we had picked for the spawning closure wasn't really going to get you that much, in terms of a reduction in harvest, and so, yes, you need to be considering perhaps -- If you're going to rely on a closed period to achieve enough to get you towards 80 percent, you're going to have to look at -- Unfortunately, you're just going

to have to consider some other waves, and so that's just a fact. I don't think we'll just get there with a spawning closure alone, even if you go to a one-fish, probably.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, and so look at the direction to staff and see if you think that's okay, and I'm going to go to Steve.

MR. POLAND: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just want to make sure I'm clear, because kind of how I was interpreting what Chip was explaining is not necessarily looking at the effects of a closure in Wave 3, or in Wave 4, but kind of the inverse of that, and maybe just a fishing season of like one wave, of Wave 3 or Wave 4, and I would be interested in pursuing that analysis, because, I mean, my concern with having a closure in Wave 3 and Wave 4, but especially Wave 3, is there's a lot of boats on the water that time of the year, and we're just creating a lot of discards, and we've kind of taken the approach, with the commercial sector, of maintaining some harvest and not turn every caught fish into a discard and allowing some landings, and I think that holds true for the recreational sector in those waves where effort is the highest. I'm not really interested in seeing a closure in Wave 3, but, as the inverse, only allowing an opening in Wave 3 and reduce the bag limit.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think I would like to see both, but that's just me. Spud.

MR. WOODWARD: I guess, now hearing this conversation, it takes me back to what Mel said about a vessel limit. If there is adequate information on which to base that analysis, I would like to see what some various vessel limits could do, and a lot of folks that go offshore, especially offshore to where red pogy are at, are taking a lot of folks on their boats, and so, if we could sort of lessen the impact of potential temporal closures, then maybe a vessel limit might be a way to mitigate some of that, and so, if that information is there, I would like to see an analysis on that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. So we have analyze range of vessel limits, if there is adequate data, and analyze a potential fishing season in Wave 3 or 4. Steve.

MR. POLAND: I just wanted to reiterate, Jessica, that I'm for looking at both kind of wave-open and wave-closed options, but, also, I feel like, looking at our list of potential analyses, we're asking an awful lot from this MRIP data right now, especially given that PSEs for this species are upwards of 70 to 80 percent, and so that might make the analysis real easy for staff, and I don't know, but I don't think we're going to get type of resolution and the available data to really kind of pick it apart at this level.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I am just unsure, but I feel like we're on a time crunch here, and so I feel like we need to ask for things that we would like to see considered, so we're not asking staff to go back and losing a whole council meeting, I guess is kind of my philosophy here. Any other thoughts here? Myra, do you feel like you have what you need?

MS. BROUWER: We certainly have a lot of guidance for this analysis, and I'm just not sure, not being the one to conduct it, how feasible it is to have all this packaged and ready for you in March, and so I would have to consult with Chip and folks in the region, to see if this list is feasible. With that understanding, I think we can move on.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. That sounds great.

MS. BROUWER: Okay. The next action is, again, another one that the IPT did not flesh out alternatives, and we are simply just reminding you of what the existing accountability measures are and consider that, if you are going to be changing some other things, we're going to need to take a look at the accountability measures as well, and so there's a lot of words here, but, basically, what we have going on for the commercial sector is we have an in-season closure, if the ACL is met or projected to be met. There is a payback if the ACL is exceeded and red porgy is overfished.

For the recreational sector, we have an in-season closure, if the ACL is met or is projected to be met, regardless of stock status, unless NMFS determines otherwise. If the ACL is exceeded, we monitor for persistence. If the total ACL is exceeded, we reduce the length of the season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the overage, if red porgy is overfished, unless NMFS determines otherwise. That is kind of, in a nutshell, everything that is in place for red porgy.

Here, we would be looking for your guidance on whether you are wanting to modify current accountability measures, and I realize we don't have a whole lot of time to flesh anything out right now, but, if you want the IPT to bring back some options for you, we could certainly work on that, and then, finally, while I've got the mic, the last thing we're going to need from you for this amendment is to approve it for scoping in the winter of 2021.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Discussion first on the modifying red porgy accountability measures. Do we want to do that, yes or no? What do folks think about that? Myra.

MS. BROUWER: It's going to be tough to craft accountability measures if you don't know how your management measures are going to end up, and so, for scoping purposes, we could simply just go out to the public and say, hey, we're aware that there's going to have to be some revisions to accountability, and we're not quite sure how things are going to end up, and I really don't want you guys to feel like you're under pressure to come up with something right now. That's all.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Good. That was very helpful, and so then I suggest we wait on that. Instead, we can move on to the discussion about approving this amendment for scoping in the winter of 2021. Mel and then Jack.

MR. BELL: I like that idea, Jessica, because I was trying to go through, in my mind, what would be modify, if we modified it, and that could take a while, and so I think, if we can come back to that, that would be great, and so we can just move on to the last thing that we need to talk about.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Would you like to make a motion to approve the amendment for scoping in the winter of 2021?

MR. BELL: I guess I could do that, since you're the chair of this committee. **Madam Chair, I would move to approve Amendment 50 for scoping in the winter of 2021.**

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Motion by Mel. Do we have a second?

MR. POLAND: Second, Madam Chair.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. It's seconded by Steve. It's under discussion. Jack.

DR. MCGOVERN: I was just going to agree with Myra that we have a whole lot of alternatives in here to consider, in terms of AMs. Down the road, one thing we might consider is, depending on what alternatives we wind up with for analysis for an AMs, is a projected season that is announced at the beginning of the year, but we can wait on that, for sure.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Yes, I agree, and I like that thought as well. All right. We have a motion on the board here. Any more discussion on this motion to approve Amendment 50 for scoping in the winter of 2021? This would be scoping via webinar. Any more discussion on that? **Any objection? I don't see any hands, and I am going to assume no objection, and we'll consider this motion approved by the committee.** Myra, I think that this is the end of red porgy, and maybe now we're going to go into amberjack?

MS. BROUWER: Yes, this is the end of red porgy, for now, and we'll get Mike Schmidtke -- We'll switch things over to him, and he's going to walk you through what we have on amberjack. For that amendment, while he gets things ready, we're basically just looking for guidance, and you received results of the assessment in June, and so he's just going to walk you through the things that you may want to consider for that species, and so here he is.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Thanks, Myra. Today, I'm going to be going through an options paper looking at Amendment 49 for greater amberjack, and this is just kind of a follow-up on the assessment that finished up for greater amberjack earlier this year, and so that was SEDAR 59, and it determined that greater amberjack in the South Atlantic are not overfished and not experiencing overfishing, and this assessment was notable, because it did include the FES recreational estimates, and so, in the follow-up process, the council would be looking to consider changes to ABC, ACL, and various limits and levels, based on incorporating that FES information. Projections for this assessment were made from 2020 through 2024, and just note that timeframe, because it will pop up a little bit later, as we go through the presentation.

The SSC reviewed the assessment earlier this year and recommended OFLs and ABCs through 2024, and the current ABC is about just under two-million pounds whole weight, and you see the OFL recommendations and ABC recommendations there on the screen. 2020 and 2021 are both years that likely won't be affected by the management, and we'll see the timing of that pretty soon.

The issues and questions that kind of led to the initiation of this amendment, the current ABC, total and sector ACLs, and the allocation percentages, as well as the recreational ACT, and that's all currently based off of the MRFSS recreational data, and MRIP will be using the FES currency, moving forward, and so the question coming out of this most recent assessment is does the council want to update numeric values for management to reflect the new assessment and the recreational estimation methodology.

There is a note that the current values are more conservative than the new values, and so, technically, if the current values were maintained, they would fit the requirement of being lower than the SSC's recommended ABC, but then, also, another question is does the council want to make any other changes to the management of South Atlantic greater amberjack?

The potential timing for this amendment would have it going through the entirety of 2021, with the next step after this -- You also review it for scoping March of 2021, and, eventually, regulations

would not be effective until mid to late 2022. As a reminder, greater amberjack has a non-calendar year fishing year, and so that mid to late 2022 would fall within a 2022 to 2023 fishing year, but that's one of the reasons why I brought up the projections that only go through 2024, and we will likely need to get an update to those projections.

There are three actions that are currently listed in the options paper, and what we're looking for today is some guidance as the IPT kind of develops this document, in preparation for March, when you all would review it for potential scoping. We're asking if these are all of the actions that want to be taken within this document, as well as are these the options that you all would like to see when it goes out for scoping.

As it is right now, ABC equals the optimal yield, which also equals the ACL, and there is no buffer in between the ACL and ABC, and so Action 1 is looking at the total ACL and optimal yield, taking that from the SSC's recommended ABC values. The alternatives that we are looking at here, we have the current value, having that potentially be maintained, or the alternatives coming from the SSC recommendation, their full recommended ABC level, in either pounds or numbers, and then the other alternatives are 90 percent or 80 percent of those recommended levels.

This would -- These lower levels would have some difference between the ACL and the ABC, and so that's the extent of options for Action 1. In preparation for that scoping discussion in March, we are planning to request updated projections, so that we can extend it out a bit further and see what that looks like. There is a little bit of concern, and we've had some conversations, but there is a little bit of concern with the timeframe of projections being pushed out so much, but that's kind of where we are, given the terminal year of the assessment being 2018, and we've been looking at projections out into the mid-2020s.

Some questions that we would like some guidance on are whether optimal yield should be separate, or should be modified separately, from ACL or if the council wants to keep those two levels the same as they are now, and, also, any guidance on potential changes to the units that are used. Right now, pounds whole weight, pounds gutted weight, and numbers of fish are all used in different parts of the management. The total ACL is listed in pounds whole weight, while the commercial tracking is done in pounds gutted weight, because the commercial trip limits is in pounds whole weight or gutted weight, and so there's kind of interlocking of those, and then, on the recreational side, the ACL is in pounds whole weight, but the recreational trip limit is in numbers of fish.

We have conversions between all of these metrics, and that's how the management has been working, off of those, up to this point, and so it can work in the same way, but I just wanted to check in and see if the council wanted to make any changes to that aspect. There are projections and ABC recommendations, in pounds whole weight and numbers of fish, for these and any decisions moving forward.

Action 2 addresses the sector allocations, and the current formula that was used came from the Comprehensive ACL Amendment, and that used the weighted average of the commercial and recreational landings over the total landings, and that average weighting was done with half of it on the 1986 to 2008 timeframe and the other half on the 2006 to 2008 timeframe, and that was done using the MRFSS data, and so it was not done using the Coastal Household Telephone Survey data, and MRFSS has been the metric, from then all the way through the present. The current

allocation, as a percent, is about 40 percent to the commercial and about 60 percent to the recreational, and you can see the poundages associated with that there on the screen.

The alternatives that are currently listed within the document are using maintaining the current formula and values, updating the current formula -- Or maintaining the current formula and updating the values, to show the FES estimates, and so the calibrated FES estimates and looking back in time and plugging those 1986 to 2008 values into the same formula, and that would produce an allocation of about 30 percent commercial and 70 percent recreational.

A third option that we explored was the maintain the commercial allocation poundage and to only adjust that recreational portion, with the recommended ABC levels, and that ended up being very close to Alternative 2. That had commercial values, depending on the year within that five-year projection timeframe -- That had commercial percentages between 28 and 30 percent and recreational percentages between 70 and 72 percent, and so very close to Alternative 2, the way it worked out. Then, finally, the option of no sector allocation within that fishery.

You will see on the screen that I crossed out the terms “framework”, and it was plan. On here, there was some discussion, the last time this was brought up, about whether these actions could be accomplished through a framework amendment, and we have been given guidance from the Regional Office that that is not an option for this action. This would all need to be accomplished through a plan amendment, if any changes are going to be made to the allocations.

The final action that’s put forward in the options paper is looking at the recreational ACT, and the current ACT is about 990,000 pounds whole weight, and that’s based on the current ACL and the MRFSS data through 2008, and there is a formula, and it’s shown in the document, that uses the recreational ACL and the PSEs, an average PSE from the last five years, and, when it was most recently applied, the last five years that were available were 2005 through 2009, and so that’s where that level comes from, but the ACT is not currently used in any accountability measures, and so it’s something that was calculated, but it’s not incorporated into those measures, currently.

In Action 3, the alternatives that are listed right now are to maintain the current formula and value, to maintain the current formula and update the values, incorporating the PSEs from the most recent years, along with the recreational ACL that would fall out from Actions 1 and 2. There is a table, within the document, and it’s shown here on the screen, that kind of assumes some of the actions, and so, if Alternative -- These should be alternatives, but, if Alternative 2 in Action 1 and Alternative 2 in Action 2 are both selected, then this is kind of what the -- This is what the recreational ACL and the recreational ACT would look like. Then a final alternative of not having an ACT at all, considering the fact that it’s not used in any of the accountability measures right now.

Finally, as kind of catchall, there is some more information, and there’s a list of various measures that are in place right now, and we’re just asking the council, while we’re looking at potential changes to the catch limits, are there any other changes that the council would want considered in this document, and there is a spawning closure that’s in place right now, and there are minimum size limits, a bag limit, a recreational bag limit, or any of the accountability measures. Right now, the fishing year is not set with the calendar year, and does that want to be maintained or not, and that has changed a little bit over time, and then are there any changes that the council may want to make to the commercial split season and the trip limits?

One thing to note is, if the commercial ACL ends up changing, there is kind of a follow-up question that would go along with that of how would the council want to allocate the split season. Right now, a portion of it is allocated to the beginning of the fishing year, and any harvest that is left over from that beginning portion can be pushed to the later portion of the fishing year, but how does the council want to set that up and have those seasonal limits?

That's the brief overview of the document, and I have the document open here, so that we can navigate to any questions or sections that you all would like on the screen during the discussion, but that's all I have, Madam Chair.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Mike. I guess let's just dive right into this amendment. Do we need to review the purpose and need statement?

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Right now, the purpose and need is in draft form. The plan is for the IPT to adjust it, based off of the discussion today, because, right now, it only talks about the catch levels, but, if you all would decide to make any management measure changes, then that would kind of adjust the language within that, and we could take that guidance -- Like I can take that guidance back to the IPT and make that adjustment, but we're not looking to finalize, necessarily, the purpose and need today.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. That sounds great. Then let's skip on past it. Then I assume we want to go to the options for proposed action, the first action. Myra.

MS. BROUWER: Thank you, Jessica. I am wondering -- It could take quite a while to walk through the entire options paper action-by-action, and I'm wondering if the committee might want to consider tweaking this as you see fit, and potentially just giving us a little bit more guidance on things you might want your Snapper Grouper AP to comment on, and they will probably meet in the spring, and I'm not quite sure yet.

Typically, they meet in April, and I'm not sure if we could get them to meet before the March meeting, but I'm just trying to find ways to sort of expedite this a little bit, given that you are not scheduled to approve it for scoping until the March meeting, and so there's a little bit more time, but we wanted to make sure the committee had a chance to just be aware of what we're dealing with here with amberjack and if there's anything in particular that you want the IPT to focus on at this point.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. That sounds great. I like that idea, Myra. I certainly don't have anything that jumps out at me. There's a question in the document, kind of like there was in the red porgy document, asking if there are particular changes for the management measures that are in place right now, and I guess that maybe that would be something to ask the Snapper Grouper AP at their next meeting, based on what they see in this document, but I'm going to turn it to the committee. Any questions or comments or changes or things that you want to look at in this document? Mel.

MR. BELL: Given the amount of time we have and all too -- I think, if we get into it too much, we'll get bogged down, but one of the things under a change -- I am not clear about why it isn't on a calendar year and where all that came from, and so that might be something to ask the AP, or

to consider, is -- I mean, is there a reason to change the year, maybe, or I'm not sure how this got in that position in the first place.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I can't remember the history of it either, and so, yes, I think that's a good question for the AP as well. Jack.

DR. MCGOVERN: One thing I thought the IPT could do is this one question about modifying the optimum yield and coming up with alternatives separate from the ACL, and I think IPTs have addressed that in other amendments, and they can come up with a range for that.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Great idea, Jack. Anything else from the committee here? Myra or Mike, anything else that you would be -- I see Chris's hand.

MR. CONKLIN: Thanks. I have said this before, but I would certainly like to see how much of the recreational ACL has been met over the past several years with this updated data, and I would imagine that it's probably in the document, but I'm not sitting where I can look at it, but I don't know a ton of guys around here that are recreational that actually even see greater amberjack, and this is one of those species that has is very tangible in price, and it feeds a ton of people, and it seems like this is one of those allocations that is not right at all, and, if there's any chance of shifting a little more than a half-a-percent or something over, to bring the fish to the market, it would be nice to be able to see how much actually is being brought in by the recreational community, because I just don't understand this allocation.

I am going to put it on the record that I just think that this is completely bogus, that commercial fishermen are held to a standard to keep records, and we had to stop fishing for a species, because we were bumping up against our ACL, and here goes the unaccountable recreational sector, and, all of a sudden, they can harvest more fish, and they get a big bonus, and you guys are putting out offers for us to stay where we are, and it just doesn't make a lot of sense, and I know there's going to be more said about it further down the road, but I wanted to keep that -- For people to keep that in mind, and it's certainly not the recreational sector's fault that they don't have more accountability, because I know there's plenty of people that want to be more accountable, but there just hasn't been a way for them, and so, anyway, I'm glad this is in its early phases, and we can send it out and get a lot of feedback. Thank you.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thanks, Chris. Kerry.

MS. MARHEFKA: Since Chris can't look at the screen right now, I was just going to say, Chris, it looks like, with the exception of 2016/2017 and 2015/2016, and the recreational sector went over by about 20 percent. The rest of the years, they're a good bit under, and I would like to echo what Chris said, and I think that, if we could take a look at that. I can tell you, from our perspective, it's been a more valuable commercial fish, and it's more accepted by chefs and in restaurants, and it's just become a bigger part of something we can make a trip out of, and so I would agree with Chris and see if we can look at this a little bit more.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Thank you, Kerry. So then, Myra and Mike, are there any other things that you need from us at this time, any other questions for the committee?

DR. SCHMIDTKE: I guess, in follow-up to the last two comments, right now, as the options are, the current allocation is, what 60/40 recreational to commercial, and the alternative option that is here, or, really, both alternatives that are there, are 70/30, recreational to commercial. Is there -- From the last two comments, it seems like those would be looking for the potential for another option that would go into the opposite direction, towards commercial. Is that something that you all would direct us to do within the IPT?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I would say so, based on those last two comments, that we need some more options, at least one, if not two, that would go more in the commercial direction.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Okay.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Anything else, Myra or Mike?

DR. SCHMIDTKE: I think that's all I have, and I can go off of the comments here and pass those on to the IPT. It sounds -- Just, I guess, before I leave this from here, it sounds like the council is fine with this being focused on total ACL, sector allocations, and recreational ACT. There, at this time, isn't an additional management measures that needs to have specific options drawn up for it, and is that correct?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think so, but I think we would like to ask that of our AP, and so I thought that they were also going to talk about fishing year, and we were going to ask the AP about changing the fishing year.

DR. SCHMIDTKE: Okay. All right. I think I have what I need then.

MS. MCCAWLEY: Okay. Thank you. So then, Myra -- Go ahead. I feel like you're going to say something.

MS. BROUWER: Sorry. This whole webinar thing is weird. I just wanted to make sure -- I understand we would like the Snapper Grouper AP to provide input on this, with the understanding that I'm not quite sure if they're going to be able to meet before the March meeting, and so, if they don't, we would come back to you with whatever information we've been able to gather outside of their recommendations, maybe some clarification on the fishing year and how that came to be, talking about potentially modifying OY, as Jack suggested, and maybe -- Whatever the IPT can come up with, in terms of alternatives, and then bring that back to you in March and go from there.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That sounds good, and then it sounds like we would have a few items that we would specifically want the AP to address after that March meeting.

MS. BROUWER: Sounds good.

MS. MCCAWLEY: All right. Thank you, Myra. Thank you, Mike. Then, Mel, I know that we're behind here, and I don't know if we want to go to the AP items that were not covered elsewhere in this agenda or just go into Other Business, which I'm not sure there is any other business, but, Mel, what's your recommendation here?

MR. BELL: We're a little pinched on time, because we're already kind of maybe cutting -- We have cut into Habitat by an hour, and we might be able to extend, by going a little later today, but are there some AP items that you think we really ought to mention specifically at this point? Are any of them time critical or sensitive? Also, I'm just thinking about the big schedule, and we don't really have much flexibility with tomorrow to push anything, because we've got a hard stop in the afternoon, but are there any specific items, AP-wise, that you would like to mention?

MS. MCCAWLEY: I was glancing at that, and I don't see anything that looks like it requires immediate attention.

MR. BELL: We have that, and I would encourage everybody, obviously, to read everything, and I think, if there's nothing that we need to have any discussion on from that, then maybe we're okay.

MS. MCCAWLEY: I think so. I think we're okay, and I haven't heard of any other business items for the Snapper Grouper Committee.

MR. BELL: Okay. Well, then, when you're ready, if we've got nothing else, you could adjourn Snapper Grouper, and we could take whatever time we need to to shift over to Habitat and let Steve get rolling.

MS. MCCAWLEY: That sound great, Mel. I think we've good to go to Habitat.

MR. BELL: So the plan is we're going to go ahead and shift to Habitat now.

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

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Transcribed By
Amanda Thomas
January 30, 2021

SAFMC December Council Meeting

Attendee Report: (12/07/20 - 12/10/20)

Report Generated:

12/08/2020 07:44 AM EST

Webinar ID

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Actual Start Date/Time

12/07/2020 01:01 PM EST

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Carmichael	01John
Chevront	01Brian
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Corey	Morgan
Crimian	Robert
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Neer	Julie
Nesslage	Genny
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Reichert	Marcel
Reynolds	Jon
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Sapp	Art
Sartwell	Tim
Schmidtke	01Michael
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Sedberry	George

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Sinkus	Wiley
Smart	Tracey
Smit-Brunello	00Monica
Smith	Duane
Spanik	Kevin
Spurgin	Kali
Stemle	Adam
Stephen	Jessica
Swanson	Chris
Sweetman	CJ
Travis	Michael
Vara	Mary
Vaughan	Douglas
Walter	John
Wiegand	01Christina
Wiggins	Jennie
Williams	Erik
Willis	Michelle
Wilson	Scotty
Woodward	00Spud
Wyanski	David
brewer	00chester
burton	michael
collier	01chip
crabtree	00Roy
crosson	scott
moss	david
poland	00steve
sandorf	scott
thomas	01suz

SAFMC December Council Meeting

Attendee Report: (12/07/20 - 12/10/20)

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12/09/2020 07:40 AM EST

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Chaya	01Cindy
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Chevront	01Brian
Christiansen	00kyle
Clarke	Lora
Conklin	00 THE REAL Chris
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Mahoney	Andrew
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Mendez-Ferrer	Natasha
Merrifield	Mike
Murphey	Trish
Murphey	Steve
Neer	Julie

Nesslage	Genny
O'Shaughnessy	Patrick
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Poholek	Ariel
Porch	00Clay
Prewitt	Brian
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Sedberry	George
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Smit-Brunello	00Monica
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Whitten	Meredith
Wiegand	01Christina
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