



SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Melvin Bell, Chair | Stephen J. Poland, Vice Chair
John Carmichael, Executive Director

Revised SAFMC Meeting Agenda

September 13-17, 2021

Via Webinar

Webinar registration: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5582815786823771915>

Except for advertised (scheduled) public hearings and public comment sessions, the times indicated on the agenda may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the completion of agenda items. Interested parties should be aware that meetings may start earlier or later than indicated.

Use the online comment form at: <https://safmc.wufoo.com/forms/mlf29u00s74vmy/> to submit comment on items on this agenda. Comments will be accepted from August 30 to September 17, 2021. These comments are accessible to the public, part of the Administrative Record of the meeting, and immediately available for Council consideration.

View submitted comments at: <https://safmc.wufoo.com/reports/2021-september-council-meeting-comment-report/>

Monday, September 13, 2021

COUNCIL SESSION

COUNCIL SESSION I /Mel Bell 1:00 pm – 5:30 pm

Call to order and introductions

Adopt agenda

Approve minutes

Oath for new Council members

1. Reports (state agencies, Council liaisons, NOAA OLE, USCG)
2. Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) Control Rule
3. Allocations Decision Tool
4. Citizen Science Update
5. Outreach and Communications Update
6. Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan update (SERO Protected Resources)
7. Brief on Congressional directive to NMFS on shark and dolphin depredation issues in South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico fisheries

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Snapper Grouper Committee/Jessica McCawley 8:30 am – 12 noon

1. 2-for-1 permit evaluation
 - a. Overview
 - b. AP comments and recommendations
2. Greater Amberjack (SG Amendment 49)

- a. Overview
- b. AP comments and recommendations

12:00 noon to 1:30 pm Lunch

Snapper Grouper Committee/Jessica McCawley 1:30 pm – 5:30 pm

- 3. Snowy Grouper (SG Amendment 51)
 - a. Overview
 - b. AP comments and recommendations
 - c. Approve for scoping
- 4. Yellowtail Snapper (SG Amendment 44)
 - a. Overview and approve for scoping
- 5. Red Snapper (short-term response)
 - a. SSC recommendations
 - b. Overview of options
- 6. Wreckfish (SG Amendment 48)
 - a. Options for possible restructuring and guidance to staff

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Snapper Grouper Committee/Jessica McCawley 8:30 am – 12:00 noon

- 7. Red Porgy (SG Amendment 50)
 - a. Overview (public hearing during public comment session)
- 8. Gag
 - a. NMFS guidance on rebuilding options
- 9. Vermilion Snapper Trip Limit
- 10. Fall 2021 AP meeting topics
- 11. Red Snapper and Greater Amberjack Counts Update
- 12. Exempted Fishing Permit Brief

12:00 noon to 1:30 pm Lunch

Dolphin Wahoo Committee/Kerry Marhefka 1:30 pm – 3:45 pm

- 1. Update on DW Amendment 10
- 2. Information paper for framework amendment

Wednesday, September 15, 2021

PUBLIC COMMENTS

4:00 pm

Public comment will be accepted from individuals attending the meeting regarding any of the items on the Council agenda. The Council Chair, based on the number of individuals wishing to comment, will determine the amount of time provided to each commenter. To sign-up to give a verbal public comment during the public comment session, visit:
<https://safmc.wufoo.com/forms/mycp1x11mwgbk/>

Please use the online comment form to submit written comments:

<https://safmc.wufoo.com/forms/mlf29u00s74vmy/>

Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) Request

Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (ALWTRT) Proposals

Approval for Scoping:

- (1) Snowy Grouper (SG Amendment 51)
- (2) Yellowtail Snapper (SG Amendment 44)

Approval for Public Hearings:

- (1) King Mackerel (CMP Amendment 34)
- (2) Gulf Cobia (CMP Amendment 32)

Public Hearings:

- (1) Red Porgy (SG Amendment 50)

Final Approval:

- (1) Shrimp Fishery Access Area (Coral Amendment 10)

Thursday, September 16, 2021

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Mackerel Cobia Committee/Steve Poland 8:30 am – 12:00 noon

- 1. King Mackerel (CMP Amendment 34)
 - a. Overview and approve for public hearings
- 2. Gulf Cobia (CMP Amendment 32)
 - a. Overview and approve for public hearings

12:00 noon to 1:30 pm Lunch

Habitat & Ecosystem Committee/Steve Poland 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

- 1. Shrimp Fishery Access Area (Coral Amendment 10)
 - a. Overview and final approval
- 2. Habitat Blueprint update
- 3. Fall 2021 AP meeting topics

COUNCIL SESSION II/ Mel Bell 3:00 – 5:30

COUNCIL SESSION

- 1. Council Chair and Vice Chair elections
- 2. Litigation brief (if needed)
- 3. Protected Resources
 - a. Integration agreement
 - b. Dolphin Wahoo Biological Opinion
 - c. Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan Discussion
 - d. Update on items not already covered

COUNCIL SESSION II /Mel Bell 8:30 am – 12:00 noon

4. Committee Reports
 - a. Snapper Grouper/Jessica McCawley
 - b. Dolphin Wahoo/Kerry Marhefka
 - c. Mackerel Cobia/Steve Poland
 - d. Habitat & Ecosystem/Steve Poland
5. Exempted Fishing Permit Discussion
6. FMP workplan review
7. Council staff reports
 - a. Executive Director
 - b. Climate Change Scenario Planning update
8. NMFS SEFSC reports
 - a. Commercial Electronic Logbook Update
 - b. Updates:
 - i. Southeast Region Climate Team and the Climate Regional Action Plans (RAPs) for the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic
 - ii. US South Atlantic Ecosystem Status Report
 - iii. Fish Climate Vulnerability Assessment
 - iv. Atlantic Coast Science Coordination Workshop
9. NMFS SERO Reports
 - a. Southeast For-Hire Electronic Reporting Program update
 - b. For-Hire Electronic Reporting Program letters response
10. Other business
11. Upcoming meetings

Adjourn



9/17/21 News Release: Council Approves Expansion of Shrimp Fishery Access Area Adjacent to Deepwater Coral

It has been seven years since expansion of the northern end of the Oculina Bank Habitat Area of Particular Concern (HAPC) was approved by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. Designed to provide additional protection for the rare, slow growing, deepwater *Oculina* coral found off the central east coast of Florida, the expansion also included historic fishing grounds for the economically important rock shrimp fishery, shutting off access along the eastern boundary. The initial Oculina Coral HAPC, established in 1984, was the first deepwater coral protected area in the U. S., and its boundaries were developed in cooperation with the rock shrimp industry. Vessel Monitoring Systems have been in place since 2003 for the fishery. Following expansion of the Coral HAPC in 2014, the Council assured rock shrimp fishermen that the area would be reviewed to determine if the historic trawling areas could be reopened. During its quarterly meeting this week, members of the Council voted to approve Coral Amendment 10 to establish the rock shrimp fishery access area. The amendment must be approved by the Secretary of Commerce before the measures are implemented.

The decision to reopen the fishery access area, a narrow strip along the eastern edge of the Coral HAPC measuring approximately 22-square miles, was not without controversy. Over the years, the Oculina Bank has suffered extensive habitat damage due to mobile fishing gear (trawls and dredges) and anchoring. Council members considered recommendations from its advisory panels and received public comment both in support of and against the rock shrimp fishery access area.

Letters in support of the fishery access area included those from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, fishing industry leaders, and a former Council member. Coral biologists, scientists, and environmental groups were among those who expressed concerns that reopening the trawling area could damage existing coral habitat, noting the negative impacts of sediment from trawling activities. "We've heard from both sides on this issue and sincerely appreciate all of the letters and public comment received," said Council Chair, Mel Bell. "After exploring options, including additional mapping and bottom surveys, we felt it important to move forward with this amendment." If approved by the Secretary, the new regulations would become effective in 2022.

Red Snapper

Discussion of Red Snapper management continued to focus on the challenge of dealing with the increasing number of fish that are released throughout the year as the stock continues to rebuild, and the estimated number of released fish that don't survive. In June 2021, the Council received the results of the most recent stock assessment for Red Snapper, which indicated that the stock is not yet rebuilt and experiencing overfishing. According to the stock assessment, released fish account for 90% of the fishing mortality for Red Snapper in the South Atlantic.

After receiving a report from its Scientific and Statistical Committee at this week's meeting, the Council agreed to immediately look at actions to help reduce the number Red Snapper killed by

discarding. Measures to be considered include gear modifications (single hook rigs, larger hooks, leader modifications, natural bait prohibition), consideration of a slot limit, increased outreach on best fishing practices, and data collection through the Council's Citizen Science Project, *SAFMC Release*. The Council also requested a Research Track stock assessment be conducted for Red Snapper at the next available opportunity. Council members acknowledged the need to consider the multi-species snapper grouper fishery as a whole and will form a workgroup to lead a Management Strategy Evaluation (MSE) approach to reduce discards and increase landed yield across the entire snapper grouper fishery.

As required, the Council will also begin an amendment to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan to revise management parameters for Red Snapper based on the latest stock assessment and recommendations from its Scientific and Statistical Committee. The amendment will incorporate the results of the MSE project and consider additional actions for the snapper grouper fishery to address widespread fishery issues such as discard losses. The Council will receive input from its Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel and continue work during its December 2021 meeting.

Other Business:

The Council accepted public hearing comment on proposed measures for Red Porgy during its meeting. Despite being under a rebuilding plan to rebuild the stock by 2017, recruitment continues to be low and the stock remains overfished and undergoing overfishing. Amendment 50 to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan would establish a new rebuilding plan based on the latest stock assessment and reduce harvest for both commercial and recreational sectors. Under the Council's preferred alternatives, the amendment would reduce commercial trip limits during the annual split season, reducing Season 1 (Jan-June) from 60 fish to 15 per trip and Season 2 (July-Dec) from 120 fish to 15 per trip. The current recreational bag limit of 3 fish per person per day or per trip, whichever is more restrictive, would be reduced to 1 fish. An annual recreational season of May-June would also be established for Red Porgy and recreational accountability measures modified to help ensure the new recreational catch limit is not exceeded.

There was good news for the King Mackerel fishery, with the latest stock assessment allowing an increase in catch levels. Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 34 includes measures to Increase the recreational bag limit for King Mackerel from 2 to 3 fish off East Florida and reductions in minimum size limits. Coastal Migratory Pelagics (King Mackerel, Spanish Mackerel and Cobia) are managed jointly with the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. The Council approved the amendment for public hearings on the proposed measures. The amendment will be reviewed by the Gulf Council in October where they will select preferred alternatives and consider approval for public hearings.

The Council also approved Coastal Migratory Pelagic Amendment 32 for public hearings. The amendment addresses measures for Cobia off the east coast of Florida as part of the Gulf of Mexico Cobia management group. The intent is to hold public hearings later this year with listening stations along the east coast of Florida from Key West to Jacksonville.

The Council re-elected Mel Bell as its Chair and Dr. Carolyn Belcher as the new Vice-Chair.

Additional information about this week's Council meeting, including the September [Council Meeting Story Map](#) and final committee reports is available from the Council's website at: <https://safmc.net/september-2021-council-meeting-details/>. The next meeting of the South

Atlantic Fishery Management Council is scheduled for December 6-10, 2021, in Beaufort, North Carolina.

New England Fishery Management Council Meeting Agenda
Tuesday – Thursday, September 28-30, 2021
[By Webinar](#)

Sending comments? Written comments must be received at the NEFMC office no later than 8:00 a.m., Thursday, September 23, 2021 to be considered at this meeting. Please address comments to Acting Council Chairman Eric Reid or Executive Director Tom Nies at: NEFMC, 50 Water St., Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950. Email submissions should be sent to comments@nefmc.org.

IMPORTANT: Due to ongoing public safety considerations related to [COVID-19](#), this meeting will be conducted by webinar. Please continue to monitor the Council's [September 2021 meeting webpage](#) for updates.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: The Council's "Guidelines for Providing Public Comments" can be found [here](#). Anyone interested in speaking during the open period for public comment on September 30, 2021 at 1:30 p.m. should email Janice Plante at jplante@nefmc.org to get on the list.

Tuesday, September 28, 2021

- 9:00 a.m. Introductions and Announcements** (Acting Chairman Eric Reid)
- 9:10 Swearing-in of New and Reappointed Council Members** (GARFO Regional Administrator Mike Pentony)
- 9:20 Election of 2021-2022 Officers**
- 9:40 Reports on Recent Activities**
Council Acting Chairman, Council Executive Director, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) Regional Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) General Counsel, Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC), Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC), Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), U.S. Coast Guard, NOAA Enforcement, Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary, NOAA Fisheries Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel
- 11:30 Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA)** (Executive Director Tom Nies)
Receive overview of H.R. 4690, "Sustaining America's Fisheries for the Future Act of 2021," a bill to reauthorize the MSA; Council discussion; approve Council comments
- 12:30 p.m. Lunch Break**
- 1:30 Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan (ALWTRP)** (Colleen Coogan, Marisa Trego, GARFO)
GARFO presentation on: (1) ALWTRP Phase 1 final rule for Northeast lobster and Jonah crab trap/pot fisheries; and (2) ALWTRP Phase 2 scoping on potential measures for U.S. gillnet and other trap/pot fisheries to reduce entanglements of North Atlantic right whales, humpback whales, and fin whales with commercial fishing gear; Council discussion and input on scoping comments
- 3:00 Atlantic Herring Committee Report** (Rick Bellavance)
Framework Adjustment 9: final action on (1) rebuilding plan to address the overfished status of Atlantic herring; and (2) adjustment of herring accountability measures
- 5:00 NS 1 Draft Tech Memo on Annual Catch Limits (ACLs) for Data-Limited Stocks** (Executive Director Tom Nies)
Receive overview of National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) National Standard 1 Technical Guidance Memo on managing with ACLs for data-limited stocks in federal fishery management plans; approve Council comments

Wednesday, September 29, 2021

- 9:00 a.m. Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO)** (Dr. Mike Sissenwine)
Report on NAFO's 43rd annual meeting
- 9:15 SSC Social Science Subpanel Review of Recent Groundfish and Scallop Frameworks** (Dr. Lindsey Williams)

Presentation on Scientific and Statistical Committee's (SSC) Social Science Subpanel Review of socioeconomic information in Groundfish Framework Adjustment 59 and Scallop Framework Adjustment 32; Council discussion

- 10:00 Scallop Committee Report** (Melanie Griffin)
Framework Adjustment 34: summary of 2021 scallop survey results and update on development of 2022 fishery specifications, 2023 default specs, and inclusion of Amendment 21 measures in Framework 34; Evaluation of Rotational Management Program: progress report; Scallop Survey Working Group: update
- 11:30 Transboundary Resources Assessment Committee (TRAC)** (Tara Trinko Lake)
Receive TRAC summary of 2021 assessment results/updates for Eastern Georges Bank cod, Eastern Georges Bank haddock, and Georges Bank yellowtail flounder
- 12:00 p.m. Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) Report** (SSC Chair Dr. Jason McNamee)
Receive SSC recommendations on overfishing limits (OFLs) and acceptable biological catches (ABCs) for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder for fishing years 2022 and 2023
- 12:15 Transboundary Management Guidance Committee (TMGC) Report** (Libby Etrie)
Review and approve TMGC recommendations for 2022 total allowable catches (TACs) for shared U.S./Canada stocks on Georges Bank
- 12:30 Lunch Break**
- 1:30 Groundfish Committee Report** (Rick Bellavance)
Framework Adjustment 63: progress report on action that includes (1) 2022 TACs for U.S./Canada shared resources on Georges Bank (GB), (2) 2022-2023 specifications for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder, (3) 2022-2024 specifications for Georges Bank cod and Gulf of Maine cod, (4) possible adjustment of 2022 specs for Georges Bank and Gulf of Maine haddock, (5) adjustment of 2022 specs for white hake based on rebuilding plan, (6) additional measures to promote stock rebuilding, and (7) alternatives for setting groundfish default specifications; Atlantic Cod Stock Structure Workshops: consider measures that can be adopted regardless of assessment outcomes
- 4:15 Skate Committee Report** (Libby Etrie)
2022-2023 Specifications: receive SSC recommendations on overfishing limit and acceptable biological catch; Council final action
- 4:45 Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel (NTAP):** (Dr. Mike Sissenwine)
Update on recent NTAP meetings; approve revised charter

Thursday, September 30, 2021

- 9:00 a.m. Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management (EBFM) Committee Report** (John Pappalardo)
Committee update on: EBFM public information workshops; National Standard 1 issues related to potentially managing catches by stock complex rather than as individual stocks; and report on potential committee recommendation for example EBFM Management Strategy Evaluation exercise
- 10:00 Habitat Committee Report** (Eric Reid)
Receive updates on: (1) recent Council comments to federal agencies on offshore wind projects and other issues; (2) upcoming comment opportunities; and (3) other habitat-related work
- 10:45 Monkfish Committee Report** (Libby Etrie)
Report on committee discussion of analyses of discard estimation methods and potential next steps
- 11:15 Peer Review Report on June 2021 Management Track Stock Assessments** (Dr. Mark Terceiro, NEFSC)
Northeast Fisheries Science Center presentation on peer review of June 2021 Management Track Stock Assessments for black sea bass, scup, Atlantic mackerel, and golden tilefish
- 11:45 Whiting Committee Report** (Rick Bellavance)
Overview of committee discussion on 2020 Annual Monitoring Report and whether management adjustments are needed

12:30 p.m. Lunch Break

1:30 Open Period for Public Comment

Opportunity for the public to provide brief comments on issues relevant to Council business but not listed on this agenda (please limit remarks to 3-5 minutes)

1:45 2022 Council Priorities – Initial Discussion (Executive Director Tom Nies)

Initial discussion on 2022 Council Priorities for all fishery management plans and other Council responsibilities

2:45 Other Business

Times listed next to the agenda items are estimates and are subject to change.

This meeting is being held entirely by webinar. Council member financial disclosure forms are available for examination on the Council website.

Although other non-emergency issues not contained on this agenda may come before this Council for discussion, those issues may not be the subject of formal action during this meeting. Council action will be restricted to those issues specifically listed in this notice and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under section 305 (c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

Documents pertaining to Council actions are available for review prior to a final vote by the Council.

Please check the Council's website, www.nefmc.org, or call (978) 465-0492 for copies.

This meeting will be recorded. Consistent with 16 USC 1852, a copy of the recording is available upon request.