

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2
3 REEF FISH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

4
5 Hyatt Centric New Orleans, Louisiana

6
7 January 30, 2018

8
9 **VOTING MEMBERS**

- 10 Johnny Greene.....Alabama
- 11 Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....Alabama
- 12 Patrick Banks.....Louisiana
- 13 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
- 14 Doug Boyd.....Texas
- 15 Roy Crabtree.....NMFS
- 16 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
- 17 Phil Dyskow.....Florida
- 18 Tom Frazer.....Florida
- 19 Martha Guyas (designee for Jessica McCawley).....Florida
- 20 Campo Matens.....Louisiana
- 21 Paul Mickle (designee for Joe Spraggins).....Mississippi
- 22 Robin Riechers.....Texas
- 23 John Sanchez.....Florida
- 24 Bob Shipp.....Alabama
- 25 Greg Stunz.....Texas
- 26 Ed Swindell.....Louisiana

27
28 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

- 29 Glenn Constant.....USFWS
- 30 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
- 31 LT Mark Zanowicz.....USCG

32
33 **STAFF**

- 34 Steven Atran.....Senior Fishery Biologist
- 35 Assane Diagne.....Economist
- 36 Matt Freeman.....Economist
- 37 John Froeschke.....Fishery Biologist-Statistician
- 38 Douglas Gregory.....Executive Director
- 39 Karen Hoak.....Administrative & Financial Assistant
- 40 Morgan Kilgour.....Fishery Biologist
- 41 Ava Lasseter.....Anthropologist
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- 43 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
- 44 Carrie Simmons.....Deputy Director

45
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- 48 James Bruce.....LA

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2 Nick Farmer.....NMFS
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4 Kory Freed.....
5 Susan Gerhart.....NMFS
6 Kai Lorenzen.....GMFMC SSC
7 Charlie Phillips.....SAFMC
8 Clay Porch.....SEFSC
9 Clarence Seymour.....Ocean Springs, MS
10 Jessica Stephen.....NMFS

11
12
13

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PAGE 96: Motion in Action 3 to select Alternative 5 as the preferred alternative. The motion failed on page 99.

PAGE 109: Motion to table, indefinitely, Amendments 41 and 42. The motion failed on page 117.

PAGE 119: Motion to add a new Action 5.4, Reclamation of Latent Shares. The motion carried on page 119.

PAGE 129: Motion to add a new Action X, Units of Measure for Quota Distribution and Reporting. The motion carried on page 130.

PAGE 157: Motion to instruct staff to begin development of an action in the appropriate document that considers removing the historical captain endorsement to reef fish and CMP permits and allow those permits to be fully transferable. The motion carried on page 159.

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1 The Reef Fish Management Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery
2 Management Council convened at the Hyatt Centric, New Orleans,
3 Louisiana, Tuesday morning, January 30, 2018, and was called to
4 order by Chairman Johnny Greene.

5
6 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
7 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
8 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**
9

10 **CHAIRMAN JOHNNY GREENE:** Good morning. We have a one-day Reef
11 Fish meeting scheduled, which is a nice change, and hopefully
12 we'll get through all of it today. With that, we will move on
13 into our agenda. Is there any additions or changes or adoptions
14 to the agenda as written? Mr. Anson.

15
16 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** I would like to request that, under Other
17 Business, I have a few minutes to talk about a day that we set
18 aside, or are scheduling, to review red snapper research that's
19 been conducted off of Alabama for the last ten years or so, and
20 I will provide details then, if it goes through.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Any other additions to the agenda?
23 Is there any opposition to the agenda as modified? Seeing no
24 opposition, we will adopt the modified agenda. Next up is
25 Approval of the Minutes. Is there any additions, deletions, or
26 changes to the minutes as written? Seeing none, we will adopt
27 the minutes as written.

28
29 Number 3 is provided for our review, and it's Tab B, Number 3,
30 the Action Guide and Next Steps. That is Tab B, Number 3, and
31 so, if you want to pull it up and kind of keep it to the side,
32 to keep up with what we're doing, but there is nothing new
33 there, as far as that document. It's just the information that
34 will be found on that document, and so, with that, we'll go into
35 our next action item, which will be review of Reef Fish
36 Landings, which will be Tab B, Number 4.

37
38 **REVIEW OF REEF FISH LANDINGS**
39

40 **DR. NICK FARMER:** Good morning, everybody. I am Nick Farmer,
41 and I'm with the Southeast Regional Office. You all are
42 probably going to get tired of me this morning, because I think
43 I've got three presentations with you, and so I will try to make
44 them quick.

45
46 Our intent, with this update, is to provide you a comparison of
47 the landings relative to the annual catch limits, and so a few
48 notes. We've got commercial landings data in here, and these

1 are from dealer trip tickets or the IFQ program, depending on
2 the species or species group, and please note that all the 2017
3 landings that I will present to you today are considered
4 preliminary, for the recreational and for the commercial.

5
6 Here are the commercial landings, as compared to the ACLs. The
7 way to interpret this table is we've got the species here in the
8 first column, the landings total for 2017, the quota, the ACL,
9 the percentage of the quota that's been met, and the percentage
10 of the ACL that's been met, and then whether or not a closure
11 was enacted, and so, for the IFQ program, we don't have any
12 closures. We just have the program manage the species. You
13 will note that the two quota closures that we had were gray
14 triggerfish, towards the end of the year, and greater amberjack
15 in June.

16
17 For the recreational landings data, we have MRFSS or MRIP data,
18 and please note the MRFSS data that we're using here are MRIP
19 data that have been back-converted to MRFSS. These are for
20 species where the stock assessments haven't quite caught up with
21 the new recreational landings monitoring protocols, and so the
22 landings are summarized using MRIP or MRFSS, as appropriate, and
23 we also have headboat data, Texas Parks and Wildlife, or TPWD,
24 data, and data coming in from the LA Creel survey.

25
26 These estimates are consistent with the way that SERO assigns
27 the ACLs, and so, in some cases, you might go to the MRIP
28 website, and it might look different from what you're seeing
29 here. That would either be because the landings have been
30 converted back to MRFSS units or because we have reassigned
31 Monroe County to the Atlantic, based on SEDAR stock assessment
32 decisions.

33
34 All the 2017 landings are preliminary, and, in this
35 presentation, the landings that you will see from MRIP and
36 headboat are through October 31, or through the end of Wave 5.
37 The LA Creel landings are complete, January 1 through December
38 31, for a few of the species, and then the Texas Parks and
39 Wildlife data are complete through May 14.

40
41 Here are some of the recreational landings for gag grouper, gray
42 triggerfish, greater amberjack, and red grouper. You will
43 notice that, for gray triggerfish and for greater amberjack, we
44 have overages of the ACL, and you will note that the ACL for
45 both gray triggerfish and greater amberjack are substantially
46 lower than you might expect, and that's because they've been
47 reduced, due to a payback from an overage in the previous year.
48 Gray triggerfish was closed on the 1st, and then the greater

1 amberjack closure was on March 24.

2
3 Then, for red snapper, we're showing the federal for-hire and
4 private angling landings here from 2015 through 2017. Again,
5 note that the 2017 data are incomplete, and you can see here the
6 percentage of the ACT that's been achieved for the for-hire mode
7 has ranged between about 88 and 92 percent, and the percentage
8 of the ACL that's been achieved has ranged between about 70 to
9 73 percent, whereas, for the private angling component in 2015,
10 we were at 94 percent of the ACL. In 2016, it was 127 percent,
11 and, in 2017, with the preliminary landings data that don't
12 include the high-use for TPWD, we are at 170 percent of the ACL
13 and 212 percent of the ACT.

14
15 Here is a look at those preliminary landings in millions of
16 pounds whole weight by wave, and you can see that the bulk of
17 the landings are coming in during the May/June time period, with
18 some additional high levels of private angler landings in July
19 and August.

20
21 There is quite a few notes on here, but the thing to recall is
22 that, in 2017, the recreational red snapper season was set from
23 June 1 to June 3, and then it was extended by the Department of
24 Commerce from June 16 through September 4 for a weekends and
25 holiday season.

26
27 Here is a breakout of the 2017 red snapper landings by state,
28 and you can see that, for the federal for-hire mode and for the
29 private angling mode, the lion's share of the landings are
30 coming from Florida and Alabama, with a relatively large portion
31 of the private angling also coming from Louisiana. Note also
32 that the Texas landings are incomplete, and that is part of the
33 reason that the Texas slice of the pie here is relatively small.
34 That is all I have to say about recreational landings. Does
35 anybody have any questions?

36
37 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Mr. Diaz.

38
39 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** Thank you, Dr. Farmer, for putting all of this
40 together for us. It was a good presentation. Back on the slide
41 where you've got the federal for-hire, and you showed ACT for
42 2015, 2016, and 2017, I realize that 2017 is still preliminary
43 numbers, and so that 91.87 percent could still go slightly
44 higher, between now and the time we get final data, and is that
45 accurate?

46
47 **DR. FARMER:** The 2017 data are preliminary, and so, if any
48 adjustments were made to the MRIP data or the Southeast Region

1 Headboat Survey data for Waves 1 through 5, then you would see a
2 slight change reflected in the final totals here. I wouldn't
3 anticipate high landings coming in for Wave 6 that would be
4 assigned to federal for-hire.

5
6 From MRIP, any charter boat landings coming in for Wave 6 would
7 be assigned to the private angling component, because the
8 federal season was not open in Wave 6. We do assign all
9 headboat survey landings to the federal for-hire quota,
10 regardless of when they come in. However, I wouldn't anticipate
11 any coming in for Wave 6.

12
13 **MR. DIAZ:** A follow-up, if I may. I have brought this up a few
14 times before, but the federal charter/for-hire have not hit
15 their ACT since we implemented sector separation, and I am not
16 sure if you're the proper one to answer this, but, last year, I
17 think we said that you all were going to look at the
18 calculations and try to take some things into consideration and
19 try to do some things to maybe come up with a little bit better
20 calculations.

21
22 They are slightly better, but I just did some back-of-the-
23 envelope numbers, looking at the amount of fish that was landed
24 and the number of days they had over the three years, and, just
25 to get to the ACT, and we're not talking about ACL, and we're
26 talking about ACT, in 2015, it was down 4.4 days. In 2016, they
27 were down 6.3 days, and, in 2017, they are down 4.3 days.

28
29 I understand this is very difficult to try to make projections
30 on what's going to happen the following year, and it's just,
31 four years in a row, these folks have not been able to catch
32 their ACT, and, collectively, across the Gulf, it's a big deal
33 to the charter fleet. Is there anything we can do new this
34 year, when we look at the calculations, to try to take into
35 account that we have been so far below?

36
37 If you start looking at the number of days below their ACL, I
38 mean, it's drastic, but we're not talking about ACL. We're
39 talking about with a 20 percent buffer in place, and can you
40 speak to how you all plan on doing the projections, if you're
41 going to do anything new or how we can improve them?

42
43 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** To that point, Dr. Crabtree?

44
45 **DR. ROY CRABTREE:** Yes, and so I expect they will have a longer
46 season this year than they had last year, which was forty-nine
47 days last year, and so I expect they will have fifty-some days
48 next year.

1
2 Remember that we have had some storms come through the Gulf the
3 last few years and some other things that you can't anticipate
4 that keep them off the water for some periods of time. The
5 positive side on this, Dale, is their season is getting longer
6 each year, but I anticipate that we will, when we do the
7 projections for this year's season, we will factor in that the
8 catch rates, for whatever reason, have been lower, and that will
9 be reflected in the next projections, and that will result in
10 some additional days.

11
12 Now, if we get several hurricanes blow through the Gulf in the
13 month of June, that will throw things off, but, if the weather
14 is, by and large, similar to what it's been in the past, we
15 should come pretty close to it, I would think, and so we are
16 aware of the situation, and we are trying to correct it by
17 adjusting the projections and the catch rates and the number of
18 days in the season.

19
20 **MR. DIAZ:** Thank you for that, Dr. Crabtree, and it is slightly
21 better this year. It's just something that I am concerned
22 about. If we had a better way to track fish, where we could get
23 numbers quicker, we could do some things differently, but,
24 anyway, I just wanted to get it on the record that I was
25 concerned about that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

26
27 **DR. CRABTREE:** Well, if I could, Mr. Chairman, we do have the
28 for-hire electronic reporting amendment, which will be
29 implemented at some point in the future, but that's going to
30 require some time to get it in place and some time to work
31 through the bugs in it and then the various calibration issues,
32 but our goal is to get to a more real-time source of data that
33 would allow us to do something.

34
35 Now, last year, even when we realized they were low, if we had
36 thoughts of reopening them, we wouldn't have been able to do
37 that, because of the extended private season and all of our
38 analysis indicated that we were likely over, and the statute
39 doesn't allow us to reopen in those circumstances.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Mr. Banks.

42
43 **MR. PATRICK BANKS:** Thanks, Dr. Farmer, and I don't know if this
44 is a question for you or maybe for Robin, but when do we expect
45 to get those finalized landings? When will we have the final
46 picture of what happened in 2017?

47
48 **MR. ROBIN RIECHERS:** They should be in and to Nick already

1 through November, and so the last month is really dealing with
2 our next time period, and so you wouldn't really be able to
3 calibrate those until around April, but we also have given Nick
4 a recent different sort of expansion method that we have helped
5 to create for the EFP and other things, which actually you had
6 before, and we went away from it.

7
8 We used it for a while, and we went away from it, based on
9 consult with you, and we're now back using it again, and so I
10 think there is a way to estimate that today. It's not going to
11 be final until we get to that further point in time, but it's a
12 pretty tight estimation, and so I think that it could be
13 included as of today.

14
15 **MR. BANKS:** I appreciate that, Robin, but, really, the question
16 then is on Nick. Whether you agree with what numbers they sent
17 you, or estimation method, when would you be able to give us
18 this slide and have it say "final"?

19
20 **DR. FARMER:** Typically, the way that the data management process
21 works, the data is transmitted from TPWD, and the Southeast
22 Fisheries Science Center evaluates that data for us and provides
23 it to us. We tend to receive the high-use wave data from TPWD
24 somewhere in the June time period from the following year.

25
26 The last few years, I have reached out to Mark Fisher with TPWD,
27 and he has provided me with preliminary estimates prior to the
28 June council meeting, so that we can go ahead and get the red
29 snapper analysis polished off in the late March or early April
30 time period, and that's when we tend to release the report on
31 the SERO website and also the Fishery Bulletin associated with
32 the season projections.

33
34 I would consider those landings that I received from Mark in an
35 email to be preliminary landings, because our Southeast
36 Fisheries Science Center goes through and uses the biological
37 sampling programs from other states to fill in some of the gaps
38 in all the state sampling programs to provide us the best
39 possible estimates of the weight of fish landed. Because we
40 manage red snapper in weight, it's important for us to get those
41 good weight estimates, and so it tends to be right around when
42 we're announcing the next federal season.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Bosarge.

45
46 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** Robin, your landings that you just submitted
47 go through November, you said, and then that December month
48 falls into your next six-month period or something?

1
2 **MR. RIECHERS:** Yes, and we're stratified on a high-use and low-
3 use, and the period running from April to November is high-use,
4 as we call it, and then we have a low-use period. That's the
5 way we stratify it for years, and so the stratification, in this
6 case, is equivalent to waves, but this is a problem we have
7 faced for years, folks. This isn't anything new.

8
9 This is an analytical question of how you can basically take the
10 data we collect and create a different estimation technique.
11 The difference between what we're talking about here, from
12 preliminary estimates to final estimates, we can go back and
13 look at that, Nick. In more recent times, I haven't gone back
14 and looked, but I don't think the difference is going to be
15 enough that we would have a management concern about those
16 differences, certainly, and so it's going to be a real tight
17 estimate.

18
19 **MS. BOSARGE:** I would assume that there's really not going to be
20 any landings in your December data. I thought that the deal was
21 that all the states became compatible and September 4 was the
22 end, and no states were going to open up after that. Wasn't
23 that the end of fishing?

24
25 **MR. RIECHERS:** I'm sorry, but could you say that again? I
26 didn't understand the question, Leann.

27
28 **MS. BOSARGE:** I thought that the, I guess, agreement between the
29 states and the Secretary of Commerce last year for that extended
30 season was contingent upon everybody, all the states, sort of
31 getting on the same page and having the same season and that
32 they wouldn't reopen after September 4. I thought that was part
33 of the whole gist of it.

34
35 **MR. RIECHERS:** No, we opened our state waters back again on
36 September 4.

37
38 **MS. BOSARGE:** Did any other states open back up? All right, and
39 so there may be some December landings.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

42
43 **MR. BANKS:** To that point, there were discussions, Leann, along
44 that line, but, when the final decision was made, the states
45 were still offered the ability to reopen their state waters, and
46 I think Texas chose to take that opportunity, and the rest of
47 the states chose not to, but the choice was allowed, or was
48 given to the states.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Mr.
3 Anson.

4
5 **MR. ANSON:** Just a little point of clarification on that. I
6 believe Alabama agreed to stay with the federal season days, and
7 we didn't offer, nor were we given the opportunity, to open up
8 state waters again after the federal season closed.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Is
11 there anything else for Dr. Farmer on this particular item? Ms.
12 Bosarge.

13
14 **MS. BOSARGE:** I want to go back to the commercial landings in a
15 minute, but, first, let's finish with the elephant in the room.
16 I was kind of -- Obviously, I wasn't super excited about what
17 happened last year, just because of what it meant to the science
18 and the decisions that were made, but I was hoping that
19 something positive would come out of it and that maybe it would
20 be a grand experiment of some sort and that, as we extended or
21 unrolled that season, we would hopefully see that we would stay
22 under the quota, because people really wouldn't fish as hard
23 every single day, and I can see where they didn't fish maybe
24 quite as hard, but we still overshot it, way overshot the mark,
25 and I shouldn't say "we". It wasn't us. It was not this
26 council.

27
28 That has ramifications for everybody. That has ramifications
29 for me in the shrimp fleet. I mean, that extends our rebuilding
30 plan, and we have thresholds that we have to stay under in the
31 shrimp fleet until that stock is rebuilt, and I can only
32 imagine, if the shrimp fleet exceeded their threshold by a
33 percent or two, do you think that anybody would have pity on us,
34 and say, it's okay, and we'll do better next year? I don't
35 think so.

36
37 I think we've got to keep this in mind, as we go forward with
38 these EFPs, and really take a good look at them, and make sure
39 that we build stopgap after stopgap and safety after safety and
40 a lot of accountability in there, because, every year that we
41 overshoot these quotas, it has ramifications for the other
42 fishermen on the water in other sectors, and even fishermen that
43 are not the directed fishery. We are held accountable, and we
44 have to stick to a standard, and so we've just got to keep that
45 in mind and do everything we can to try and manage it properly.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.
48

1 **DR. CRABTREE:** Just one thing. I do not think that this will
2 extend or delay the rebuilding plan or recovery. When we get
3 the new assessment later this year, and the fishing levels come
4 out of that, they will project out what the F rebuild is or what
5 rate can we fish at, and the recovery date will still be 2032,
6 and so the recovery date hasn't been extended.

7
8 It may have some impact on the catch levels between now and
9 recovery, but, in terms of the overall amount of fish we're
10 taking out of the fishery, fourteen-million pounds, plus a great
11 many dead discards, yes, we're over some, and that's certainly
12 not a good thing, but I don't know that one year of it will make
13 a huge difference, and my suspicion is that the recruitment
14 levels and what's going on will make at least as large of a
15 difference in it. It will self-correct after the assessment,
16 when we do the projections and pull these landings in, and the
17 recovery date we'll be shooting for will remain 2032.

18
19 **MS. BOSARGE:** It will self-correct if we cut the commercial
20 sector back and tell them that you can't catch as many fish.
21 That's the way you stay on track for 2032.

22
23 **DR. CRABTREE:** That remains to be seen, but it could affect the
24 total allowable catch, you're right.

25
26 **MS. BOSARGE:** Yes, and so, I mean, it has an effect one way or
27 the other. Either you stay at your catch levels and you extend
28 rebuilding or you tell the people that didn't overfish that
29 you've got to catch less fish to pay this back, and so,
30 essentially, the commercial sector will have a payback for this
31 overrun.

32
33 All right, and so let's get on to something that is a little
34 different. Can we back up, if you will permit me, Chairman
35 Greene, to those commercial landings? I just kind of wanted to
36 point something out to the group for a discussion that is
37 pertinent to something that we're going to talk about later with
38 red grouper today.

39
40 I wanted the group to just kind of look, on those commercial
41 landings, at that percent of ACL. Red grouper is what we're
42 going to talk about later that we have some concerns about, and
43 the fishermen have been telling us that we have a problem, and
44 the numbers that are showing up now say that, hey, yes, they
45 were right and you should have listened, but red grouper is at
46 about 40 percent of the ACL, but look at the other groupers.
47 Look at gag grouper. It's right in the same neighborhood. Look
48 at the shallow-water grouper. It's right in the same

1 neighborhood.

2
3 I just wanted us to kind of keep that mind as we're thinking
4 later about that grouper complex and maybe what's going on and
5 just kind of be aware, and I just wanted to kind of plant the
6 seed, so we can look at the whole picture. That's all I have.
7 Thanks, Chairman Greene.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Anything else for Dr. Farmer? I have a
10 couple of questions. On the preliminary 2017 recreational
11 landings, gray triggerfish shows to be at 137 percent of the
12 ACL, but it was closed on January 1. Is that from state-water
13 landings, or how did that come about?

14
15 **DR. FARMER:** I am not quite sure, and I would have to look into
16 that, but I'm assuming -- The federal season was closed for this
17 year, and so it would have to be either a few MRIP samples that
18 came in from folks who were harvesting it from either state or
19 federal waters that got picked up and expanded out to that
20 total.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Then, on greater amberjack, it closed
23 on March 24, and we were at 142 percent of the ACL, and that's
24 because we have an overage in 2017. We went over by 42 percent,
25 and that's correct?

26
27 **DR. FARMER:** Yes, and so we're paying back a substantial portion
28 of that by reducing the ACL.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. Ms. Gerhart.

31
32 **MS. SUSAN GERHART:** I just wanted to point out that the payback
33 for amberjack and triggerfish are only if it exceeds the
34 original ACL, and those are the numbers that are down the table,
35 and so there will not be a payback in 2018 on those.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I think that's where I was trying to get to,
38 but I just wanted to make sure, and thank you for pointing that
39 out. Anything else for Dr. Farmer? Thank you, Dr. Farmer.
40 Anything else before we leave this item and move on in the
41 agenda? Seeing none, we will move on to our next action item,
42 which will be Number V, Ad Hoc Private Recreational Red Snapper
43 AP Summary, Tab B, Number 5, and Dr. Froeschke.

44
45 **AD HOC PRIVATE RECREATIONAL RED SNAPPER AP SUMMARY**

46
47 **DR. JOHN FROESCHKE:** Good morning. I will just give you a brief
48 summary of the happenings of this, and I will await your input.

1 We held this meeting. As you recall, this was the second
2 meeting of this AP. At the first meeting, they had requested
3 some additional background information on how stock assessments
4 work and how economic data are used in fisheries management and
5 some other things, and so we tried to accommodate that list and
6 provide it in the background information, such that they could
7 provide you all with the recommendations that you asked for in
8 the charge.

9
10 I will start with the end and just say that the group felt that
11 they were making progress, but they are not quite to the point
12 of official recommendations, and they have asked for an
13 additional meeting and continued existence of the group, and so
14 that's the end, and I will kind of go through the highlights of
15 how the meeting went.

16
17 We did provide them with additional background information on
18 stock assessments and fisheries data, both fishery-independent
19 data and fishery-dependent data, and sort of how those are used
20 to determine stock status and calculate landings.

21
22 One of the things that the AP also asked for was some
23 information about congressional legislation that may be
24 potentially affecting red snapper, and we did explain that, as a
25 council, and council staff specifically, it's really not in our
26 purview, and so we didn't comment too much on it, other than
27 there certainly are things out there, and the council has
28 reviewed those in times past, and they did pass a motion just to
29 iterate their support of the Modern Fish Act, as incorporated in
30 HR 200, and we told them that you guys don't deal with that
31 directly, but they did want to emphasize their support for that
32 bill and just for your information.

33
34 I am going to just go, and, if you have something, please just
35 interrupt me. Moving down on there, the next thing we looked at
36 is allocations and how the allocations were done, based on
37 landings and things, and we went through the -- The snapper
38 allocations, I am going to save, but this is the economics and,
39 so I will go through this.

40
41 We went through and talked about -- Dr. Diagne explained how
42 economic data are used in fisheries management, and he
43 described, quite succinctly, the difference between economic
44 impacts and values and how those differences are used and what
45 the appropriate metrics are, in terms of fisheries management.

46
47 Based on this -- They had a lot of discussion on this, and what
48 they recommended was that the council consider reviewing red

1 snapper allocations, including all relevant factors, including
2 social, economic, and historical catch, as well as the increased
3 participation in the recreational fishery in recent years.

4
5 They did review the state management documents. Dr. Lasseter is
6 going to cover that portion of the summary during the state
7 management. Dr. Calay gave an overview of stock assessments,
8 and, more specifically, the red snapper stock assessment and how
9 the information is collected, the factors that go into an
10 assessment, the specific regional nature of the red snapper
11 assessment, and she gave them a fairly detailed overview of the
12 process, and she answered a lot of questions from the AP.

13
14 I think they got a better understanding of how complex of a
15 process this is and that the inputs, the changes in inputs, for
16 example, changes in landings and things, it's very difficult to
17 predict how that cascades through the whole system, and so I do
18 think they had a new appreciation for that portion of the
19 management and the science.

20
21 One thing they did ask about was how the incorporation of
22 Mexican-landed red snapper are incorporated in the assessment,
23 and the Science Center provided an answer that it was their
24 opinion that the landings, in terms of the entire fisheries of
25 all removals, that part is modest, in terms of impact, but it is
26 there, and the AP recommended that the council investigate the
27 impact of this and the potential effects on the red snapper
28 stock.

29
30 They also talked about descending devices and new technology,
31 and they are very supportive of the potential use of descending
32 devices and venting tools to reduce discard mortality, and they
33 recognize that there may be a potential for increased allowable
34 harvest if these could be implemented, and we did talk about the
35 nuances, in that, if they wanted to use RESTORE funding to
36 provide these tools to the fishing public at large, then it
37 couldn't be a regulation, as I currently understand it, and so
38 we did talk about that.

39
40 The recommendation they did make was to explore the requirement
41 of descending devices and venting tools to reduce discard
42 mortality in all sectors, commercial and headboat and
43 recreational.

44
45 The last kind of thing they talked about was the technology.
46 The fishing group is aware of all the different reporting
47 technologies, and they are supportive of these, and they felt
48 that they do have some potential to enhance the data collection.

1 They were supportive of voluntary angler electronic reporting
2 programs to estimate harvest and discards, and they were anxious
3 to see how that information could be better used in management.

4
5 Again, kind of going to the end of this, they recognize that
6 it's a complex problem, and they didn't feel that they were
7 quite at the point to make a recommendation, and they requested
8 to be convened again at a future time to continue this work.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Dr. Stunz.

11
12 **DR. GREG STUNZ:** Thanks, John. I've got a question for you.
13 Backing up to that point that the AP made about the illegal
14 fishing that's going on, and you said that the Science Center
15 basically said that that impact is a modest impact, or what is
16 the modest impact?

17
18 **DR. FROESCHKE:** There was a lot of conversation. On one hand,
19 there was discussion that, in terms of removals, that the
20 Mexican -- The estimates of this may approach the total removals
21 of the recreational fishery, and so, in that perspective, it
22 could be quite large.

23
24 On the other hand, in terms of the stock and the total removals,
25 there are many other -- There is the commercial, but there are
26 also discard mortalities and removals from the shrimp fleet and
27 things, and so, in their perspective, and they can correct me if
28 I'm wrong, but, incorporating all of those sources of mortality,
29 the impact of those, the estimated impact, was much more modest,
30 and so they're not saying it wasn't there, but that was the
31 perspective they provided.

32
33 **DR. STUNZ:** If I can follow up to that, the reason I am asking
34 is maybe they mean modest to the effect that Roy made a while
35 ago, that some of these overages, in the grand scheme of things,
36 may not do much, but, to say that fleet coming up and illegally
37 catching those fish is modest, I think that's quite an
38 understatement.

39
40 If you remember, and it was Lieutenant Zanowicz's predecessor
41 that gave us some reports, but I recall numbers in the millions
42 of pounds, and 1.4 comes to mind, and so that's a lot. If you
43 think about -- We're talking about a 200 percent overage, from
44 the report that we just got, in recreational landings, and while
45 certainly nobody likes that, that overage is not near as -- I am
46 trying to do the back-of-the-envelope calculation here quickly,
47 but it's approaching what we're over on the recreational side,
48 and that's what we know about that is being captured, and

1 there's no telling how many illegal fish are occurring that we
2 don't even know about.

3

4 We had an interesting discussion at lunch yesterday with the
5 Admiral, and he said that there is probably a lot more activity
6 going on than they can actually really even get their heads
7 around at this point, and so I guess the point that I'm making
8 is that, if the stock is still going up and we've got the
9 recreational side going over, which no one likes, and you've got
10 the Mexican fleet catching who knows how many millions of
11 pounds, but at least what the overage was, and we're missing
12 something here in this assessment.

13

14 I guess there is no real short answers for that here, but I
15 think it's something that we maybe should pursue more as a
16 council, at least on the legal side, because that's a lot of
17 fish. We're fighting over some crumbs here on overages, in a
18 way, I guess you could argue, and then, meanwhile, other
19 countries are taking it out behind our backs, and look at what
20 we're missing, and so I guess I don't know what the solution is
21 to that immediately, but I think it's something that we need to
22 begin some discussions on, to see what the ideas are around the
23 table.

24

25 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Lieutenant Zanowicz.

26

27 **LT MARK ZANOWICZ:** Just adding to that discussion, we'll be
28 giving a presentation tomorrow about the Coast Guard activities
29 we've seen, or rather Mexican lancha activities we've seen, so
30 far this year, but, just from an observational standpoint, just
31 since October, since the last council meeting, we have
32 interdicted fifteen Mexican lanchas with over 1,000 red snapper
33 onboard, total. From an observation perspective, I think saying
34 that it's something that is a modest effect is maybe -- It maybe
35 something worth looking into.

36

37 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

38

39 **MR. ANSON:** Maybe, as part of that presentation, do you know if
40 there is going to be some quantitative estimates that were
41 derived? I think the Coast Guard came to us a little over a
42 year ago, and what Dr. Stunz was referring to was an estimate
43 that they had provided at that time, but I thought, at that
44 time, they were also refining their model or looking at
45 additional data to try to refine their model, and is that going
46 to be part of the discussion tomorrow?

47

48 **LT. ZANOWICZ:** As far as that presentation tomorrow, I will just

1 provide the total number of fish we have recovered, but we can
2 definitely look into that information and provide that maybe at
3 a later meeting.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Porch.

6
7 **DR. CLAY PORCH:** Thank you. Some time ago, we actually reviewed
8 the Coast Guard's estimation methods there, and we didn't have
9 all the details that we needed to do a thorough review, but it
10 seemed like it was about in the right ballpark, and the
11 estimates they had at the time were something closer to 500,000
12 or 600,000 pounds of red snapper. The bigger numbers were the
13 total number of fish that were caught, and that's including
14 sharks and all sorts of things.

15
16 Now, I don't know if they have updated it since that time, but
17 the ballpark was more like 500,000 or 600,000 pounds, which is
18 considerably less than the total landings that are taken out of
19 the fishery, and so it's modest in that sense. Now, that still
20 has an economic impact, obviously, because 500,000 pounds of
21 fish has -- However you value it for the recreational fishery
22 and whatever the commercial value would be. "Modest" is just a
23 relative term, is the bottom line, and it was about that much.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Dr. Froeschke.

26
27 **DR. FROESCHKE:** One thing that we talked about at this is
28 Shannon indicated that, if we had a time series of removals in
29 the past, then you could incorporate that as an additional
30 source to the assessment, and you could try and determine what
31 sort of impact that had. The difficulty is how would you take
32 those estimates now back in time and try to generate a time
33 series of removals, because our understanding of this is
34 probably a new thing, but the problem isn't likely new.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Bosarge.

37
38 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think that conversation does though get to the
39 heart of what Magnuson was originally, which it wasn't Magnuson
40 at that point, created for, and that was to address foreign
41 fishing in U.S. waters, and I know, around this table, we fight
42 amongst ourselves a lot, but I think this is an instance where
43 we need to take this seriously.

44
45 Lieutenant Zanowicz, if I could task you with maybe getting back
46 with your people and seeing if you can get some updated numbers
47 and estimators and whatever else the Science Center might need
48 to take another look at that and see what that trend is looking

1 like and where that's going. That would be very helpful, and
2 thank you, by the way, for all the interdictions. We appreciate
3 it, on this end.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Stunz.

6

7 **DR. STUNZ:** Real quick, to that point, Clay, we can talk about
8 this maybe offline too, because I seem to recall, when that
9 report came out -- Maybe a refresher would be good. There was
10 one that looked like a shotgun plot of what they could see, I
11 guess, in all the type of surveillance methodologies that they
12 do, but those estimates were based on what they were actually
13 catching and not what was really occurring, which is probably a
14 lot more.

15

16 Of course, we have no idea on that, but I guess the real
17 question I would have, and I'm sure other folks would as well,
18 is where are these fish ending up? I mean, even if it's 500,000
19 pounds, or one-and-a-half-million pounds, that is some high-
20 value fish that probably isn't ending up in Mexico.

21

22 It's going to other places, and I am sure it's classified or
23 something, but I would hope that the enforcement agencies are
24 looking into what is happening to those fish once they are
25 caught, or not caught, but once they are entering back into some
26 market in Mexico or something, but, anyway, the broader scale
27 here is what does that mean to us, in terms of assessment and
28 productivity of the stock, and what are we really missing here,
29 and that's some questions that I would have.

30

31 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Porch.

32

33 **DR. PORCH:** Just to answer that point, what the Coast Guard did
34 was actually more sophisticated than that. They looked at the
35 coverage of their aerial surveys and they coverage of their ship
36 times and what fraction of the domain was actually within range
37 where they could detect the Mexican lanchas, and so they
38 extrapolated that out. Now, I can't say that it was done in the
39 best way possible, because we didn't have all the information,
40 but what we reviewed seemed reasonable.

41

42 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

43

44 **MR. RIECHERS:** I think, as we had that presentation last time, I
45 think our ask of the Southeast Center, and obviously you have
46 reviewed it, was is there a way to start thinking about
47 incorporating that. That gets kind of to John's question of was
48 there a way to start thinking about incorporating that

1 extraction in the new and upcoming assessments.
2
3 Even if you may not carry it a long way back in time, but at
4 least be able to think about how you would do that, so that --
5 It obviously does a couple of things. One, it grows the
6 biomass, but it also grows the extraction rates, and we don't
7 know what that means in total stock assessment language, but we
8 were just kind of thinking that that might be important, to
9 actually find some way into the model, at least from a
10 sensitivity perspective, even if nothing else, but I don't know
11 how far you all have come in that dialogue as you all approach
12 the next assessment.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?
15 Lieutenant Zanolwicz.

16
17 **LT. ZANOWICZ:** One point I wanted to make, as far as where these
18 fish are ending up, one thing I wanted to stress was that, as
19 far as the Mexican lanchas we interdict, these aren't people
20 that are subsistence fishing in the Gulf of Mexico. A lot of
21 the people we interdict are tied to the Gulf cartels.

22
23 Now, as far as whether those fish end up in the Mexican the U.S.
24 marketplace, I don't have that answer right now, but these
25 aren't, by any means, fishermen that are just fishing for their
26 families or anything like that.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Porch.

29
30 **DR. PORCH:** We had some conversation with the Coast Guard about
31 trying to go back in time, and I think their capacity to do that
32 is somewhat limited, but I would love to see that dialogue start
33 up again. Maybe we can talk offline about it.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. So noted. Is there further
36 discussion? Ms. Bosarge.

37
38 **MS. BOSARGE:** This is on a different subject. The AP had a
39 motion to recommend that the council explore voluntary angler
40 electronic reporting of harvest and discards and how that
41 information can be incorporated into management decisions and
42 stock assessments.

43
44 It seems like this is one thing that all recreational anglers
45 agree on, that they want better data collection. I feel like
46 the states, to a large part, have already started this. They
47 have laid all the foundation work for a lot of what we would
48 need to do on our end, and I realize there is a huge price tag

1 and a huge burden with trying to collect data from that many
2 individual anglers and to verify it.

3
4 I realize that, but I think if there is anything that I could do
5 to help recreational anglers before I leave this council one
6 day, it would be to improve their data collection. They want to
7 report, and why have we not started to work on that at the
8 federal level? I realize the states have started it, and most
9 of it is geared towards red snapper, but I can look at other
10 species and see where recreational anglers are going to really
11 want that and need that for flexibility for other species that
12 are highly prized to them.

13
14 I mean, it's why we have so much flexibility to do all sorts of
15 different things in the commercial sector, in-season monitoring
16 and sorts of things, because we know what they're doing, and we
17 know when they are coming and going. We know what they are
18 landing, with a high degree of certainty.

19
20 Now, I am not going to make a motion that we start an amendment
21 or anything like that, but what I would like to do, if you all
22 are agreeable, is to ask to have some sort of presentation at
23 the next meeting on what something like that would look like and
24 what are the hurdles that are involved. Can we use some of the
25 work that the states have done to build that foundation and then
26 piggyback on that somehow?

27
28 If we were to go down that path, what would some of the major
29 decision-points be? What is the real information that we need
30 to garner from recreational fishermen to manage them in the way
31 that, at this point in time, it seems like they want to be
32 managed, which is in-season quota monitoring, timely
33 information?

34
35 I would like to see just a presentation on that at our next
36 meeting, and I think we could probably even pull some stuff from
37 the South Atlantic. I think they have some pilot programs going
38 on for things like this, and so maybe we don't have to recreate
39 the wheel.

40
41 Then, after that, once we kind of see what we're really up
42 against, then, as a council, we can make a decision if we want
43 to pursue that or not, and I know there is the price tag, and
44 how are we ever going to pay for it, but I guess the way I work
45 is, if you build it, they will come. If we built something that
46 was a vast improvement over what they have now, and they could
47 see where it would give them more flexibility and lead them down
48 a path that they wanted to go, I feel like that group has enough

1 connections that they could find the right people and we could
2 figure out the price tag part of it, but that's -- I love that
3 motion, and it's something they've been telling us for years,
4 and I just want to get you all's feedback on it.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?

7
8 **DR. CRABTREE:** I mean, it's an interesting thing, because I
9 think, Leann, you said that they want real-time catch estimation
10 and management, but, the majority of the time that I talk to
11 recreational fishermen, that's not at all what they want. They
12 want stable seasons that only change periodically, and I hear
13 that all the time.

14
15 One of the problems we've got is people aren't reconciling what
16 they want to accomplish management-wise with the data collection
17 that goes into it, and you're right that it's extremely
18 expensive to come up with anything that even approaches real-
19 time.

20
21 If that's not how they want to be managed, and if they want
22 stability, then we don't need real-time. I suspect, with the
23 electronic logbooks we're putting in for-hire vessels, we're
24 going to run into this problem, because they're going to be
25 closed with only a few days' notice. They're going to have
26 trips booked, and I don't know that that's what they really
27 want.

28
29 I think we have a lot of things where what we say we want to
30 achieve is completely different than the actions we're taking to
31 get us there, and that's true with red snapper and a whole lot
32 of things, and so I really think the bigger picture is what is
33 it that we're trying to get to.

34
35 I mean, if we want a longer federal red snapper season, then
36 we're doing a lot of things that work against that, the state
37 seasons and artificial reef programs. I am convinced they are
38 dramatically shortening the red snapper season, and so we're
39 doing a lot of things that are working against what we're trying
40 to achieve, and, somewhere, we've got to reconcile all of this,
41 because I think it's a bigger kind of picture.

42
43 I mean, we're spending a lot of money to improve recreational
44 catch estimation, but it's all being done within the context of
45 a scientifically-designed survey, and all of the -- The folks
46 that I talk to about these kinds of things believe that's the
47 way to go and not necessarily just voluntary reporting, and so I
48 think a presentation on all of this would be great, but I think

1 we have much more fundamental issues, in terms of what it is
2 that we're trying to achieve, that we just have never really
3 reconciled.

4
5 **MS. BOSARGE:** Well, and I'm glad you ended it by saying a
6 presentation would be okay, because those are things that we can
7 talk about, if we will ever just get down into the nuts-and-
8 bolts and really get down to it, and so, if you want more
9 stability though, one of the ways to get there is to decrease
10 some uncertainty.

11
12 Once we figure out which way the recreational fishermen want to
13 go, in-season monitoring or stable seasons or whatever, I still
14 think that a data collection system that eventually, eventually,
15 will decrease some uncertainty can get us there. I mean, I look
16 around the table at what all of these states have done, and
17 their recreational anglers have asked them to do that, and
18 they're doing it, and I just don't see why we're not following
19 that lead for all the other species that are going to be
20 important down the line, and so thanks.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

23
24 **MR. BANKS:** Let me just say that I think that you're right that
25 all the states are doing that, and that's why I'm not so sure
26 that it's necessary for the federal government to go on top of
27 that and do it again. I think putting us into state management
28 plans and let us use these tools that we've already developed,
29 that we have already used the money to develop, is the cheapest
30 and easiest way to go.

31
32 **MS. BOSARGE:** But do you have the money to expand that to all of
33 the other species and keep up with it on a long-term basis?

34
35 **MR. BANKS:** It is expensive, and I won't deny that. We spend
36 about \$1.8 million a year on LA Creel. That is almost
37 barebones, and we don't get that -- We don't get very much money
38 from the feds to run that program. The anglers stepped up
39 themselves, a few years ago, and voluntarily allowed -- Well, I
40 say voluntarily, but, through the legislature, the license fee
41 went up.

42
43 It's an expensive program, but what we've put in place deals
44 with all species, even the electronic reporting that we're
45 putting in place. Yes, it's going to be geared towards red
46 snapper for our EFP, but it's built in a platform and such a way
47 that it can be expanded to all species.

48

1 I guess all I'm saying is I agree with the underpinnings of your
2 argument, but what I don't think is necessary is doing it on a
3 federal level when the states have already at least gone a long
4 way down that road and spent a lot of money in that regard, and
5 I think we can go ahead and do that, if we would just get these
6 state management plans pushed through.

7

8 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Swindell.

9

10 **MR. ED SWINDELL:** I have said this, and just since I've been on
11 the council recently, is that you look at the systems that we
12 have now to manage commercial and charter/for-hire and
13 headboats, and they're all by vessel. All the fish we're
14 managing are offshore fish. They're not fishing or caught from
15 shoreside.

16

17 We ought to be managing the recreational people by vessel, and
18 can it be done? Sure it can be done, much easier than going out
19 to each individual fisherman with a rod-and-reel or a license.
20 It needs to be done by vessel, and why not? Can we do it? Sure
21 we can do it. Does MRIP want to do it? No, because it doesn't
22 fit with their history of landings and the way they've done
23 things, but, somewhere along the line, you need to start the
24 program of doing it sensibly by the vessels that are out there
25 fishing.

26

27 They have so many people aboard, and have the vessel operator,
28 however you want to do it, report. Let that be the person, and
29 you've got three or four or five or six or eight or ten people
30 that you are suddenly getting information from from one source
31 each time. I think it is something that we need to continue to
32 explore and see if we can't put it together. It would be much
33 better data, quicker, and more fully attainable. Thank you.

34

35 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Mickle.

36

37 **DR. PAUL MICKLE:** All right. I will try to keep it brief.
38 Everybody wants more fish and more stable seasons, as Roy said,
39 and I agree, and I hear from the people that I talk to.
40 Stability in the fishery and more fish can be accomplished by
41 not just throwing money at landings.

42

43 I am thinking this just economically, which I am not an
44 economist, but I am a scientist, and I see the ability of
45 putting resources towards increasing days and stability of you
46 could take -- To the point that Patrick made, instead of
47 piggybacking projects on top of projects from federal and state
48 and increasing data on landings, you could potentially move

1 resources toward increasing independent sampling data programs
2 to increase the accuracy within the models themselves, and you
3 would probably get a lot more clarity about what's going on with
4 the populations of these species, including -- The recruitment
5 models that I see in the SEDARs are aggravating to me, as I've
6 been through them the past ten years.

7
8 The abilities of these restoration funds to look at abundance
9 with red snapper and that \$10 million that's been put towards
10 the universities to look at that, that is a huge impact factor
11 that is going to change the way the red snapper assessments are
12 going to be done.

13
14 Age-specific mortality, regional variability, right now, SEDARs,
15 at best case, are splitting the Mississippi River east and west,
16 and there is a lot more going on besides a line in the middle of
17 the Gulf, I promise, and so having the bang for your buck to get
18 more fish and stability, I think, in my opinion, and I would
19 love for someone to disagree with me, or agree with me, but I
20 think we could have the impact factor of more fish and stability
21 by getting the stock assessments on a level. The stock
22 assessments are being done perfectly, but it's the data going
23 into them that could provide that stability and more biomass
24 estimates, more accurate biomass estimates. Thank you.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

27
28 **DR. CRABTREE:** The only thing that I would throw into this is
29 that -- I think, Leann, you mentioned reducing uncertainty could
30 get us more fish, and I think that's accurate, and that sounds
31 great, and we all seem like that's what we want, but we should
32 understand though that the path we're going down with regional
33 management of red snapper is going to increase uncertainty, and
34 it's going to make the assessments more uncertain and more
35 difficult, because it's going to disrupt all the landings
36 patterns and all the indices of abundance we use.

37
38 All of these separate, individual state catch estimation
39 programs have calibration issues, and that's going to lead to
40 increased uncertainty, and so, once again, we need to start
41 better reconciling our desire of what we're trying to achieve
42 with the things we're doing, because, often, we're doing things
43 that are going to take us in the opposite direction to what we
44 seem to want.

45
46 It's all tradeoffs, and we talked about this at the AP meeting,
47 Shannon did quite a bit, and it's going to definitely increase
48 the uncertainty in the assessments if we end up with different

1 seasons and different management measures off of each state and
2 different data collection programs.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Dr. Porch.

5
6 **DR. PORCH:** I will just comment on the more spatially-
7 disaggregated assessment models. In other words, instead of
8 just going east and west of the Mississippi, say having it by
9 state or something like that, and the problem we have there is
10 the amount of information that is required increases a great
11 deal.

12
13 You need much more intensive fishery-independent surveys, which
14 cost a lot of money, and we need some of our catch data to be
15 better reported, so we can split it out spatially, and we need
16 to estimate things like how the fish move across those state
17 boundaries, especially for something like king mackerel, which
18 is highly migratory, and so, the smaller scales that you want to
19 get estimates for, actually the more information you need.

20
21 If you think it's tough now, it will be even tougher to do a
22 spatially-disaggregated assessment. Now, as a mathematical
23 modeler, I would love to do that sort of thing. We like
24 complexity, but you have to have the data to match it, and
25 that's expensive.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Mr.
28 Matens.

29
30 **MR. CAMPO MATENS:** Thank you, Mr. Greene. There were some
31 statements made over the last minutes that really peaked my
32 interest, and, rather than waste everybody's time, I am going to
33 just go to the people that made those individually, and maybe I
34 can learn something.

35
36 I do want to say, vis-à-vis the issue of cost, as Patrick
37 mentioned, the Louisiana angler came to the table with -- Here
38 is the word "modest" again, but a seven-dollar-and-fifty-cent
39 increase over the then five-dollar saltwater license to fund LA
40 Creel. As Patrick also said, it wasn't red-snapper specific.
41 It was for a number of species.

42
43 I think that, only speaking for Louisiana, I think that, if
44 there was a demonstrated need for more funds for our department,
45 to move forward with these programs, I think it would be a
46 relatively easy thing for us to do. Let's look at this thing in
47 perspective. To fish for a year, what's another ten-dollars? I
48 mean, the ice for one trip costs more than that. No one really

1 thinks that's a lot of money. While cost is always important,
2 and we always have to be mindful of cost, I think, at least in
3 Louisiana, I think we can solve that problem. Thank you.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. All right. I have kind of allowed
6 this conversation, because it kind of rolls into what we're
7 dealing with for the state management stuff, and I think it's
8 been a very good discussion. However, we do have just one day
9 of Reef Fish today, and so, with that, I am going to go ahead
10 and move on, unless there is any objection. Okay. With that,
11 we will pick up with our State Management Program for
12 Recreational Red Snapper. Dr. Lasseter.

13
14 **STATE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM FOR RECREATIONAL RED SNAPPER**
15 **STATE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM DOCUMENT**
16

17 **DR. LASSETER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have brought you
18 revised versions of the state management documents, and the
19 overview program document is at Tab B, Number 6(a). We have
20 expanded the document and further developed it, and so I will
21 just highlight what's been added to it.

22
23 Chapter 1 is now complete, as we've added the history of
24 management section, and Chapter 2 has added discussions of the
25 actions in the individual state amendments, and I will kind of
26 discuss that, very briefly, when we get to that part. Then
27 we've also added the Chapter 3, the affected environment, to
28 this program document. That is just background, so that you
29 know what is there and what is different.

30
31 Action 1 begins on page 11, and Action 1 addresses the
32 components of the recreational sector to include in the state
33 management programs, and we did receive comments from both the
34 Law Enforcement Committee and the AP, and so I will briefly
35 address those.

36
37 **LETC COMMENTS**
38

39 The Law Enforcement Committee met back in October, and they did
40 express concerns still about how this is going to work and how
41 this is going to affect law enforcement. They also expressed
42 that they did not want to dictate what other states should do,
43 but they did come to a consensus, to an agreement, that they
44 felt that -- I want to catch the wording exactly. They
45 supported consistent management across the Gulf and that both
46 components be managed by the states.

47
48 The AP also had a discussion, and they did touch on the Action

1 2, the allocation, and they did not put this in the motion, but
2 they felt that the state directors should be making that
3 decision. They did not want to make recommendations for that,
4 but the one thing that they did make a motion on was pertaining
5 also to this Action 1, that they did support the states managing
6 both components, and so that would be Alternative 3 from both
7 the LETC and the AP.

8
9 Your current preferred alternative in this action is Preferred
10 Alternative 4, which would allow the states to decide whether to
11 manage the private angling component only or to manage both the
12 private angling and the federal for-hire components. Is there
13 any further discussion on the Action 1? We have brought this to
14 you a couple of times.

15
16 Action 2 begins on page 14, and this is the action that would
17 apportion the recreational ACL among the states, and so, at a
18 recent meeting, you added an alternative to examine the red
19 snapper biomass and recreational trips, and then we provided you
20 the options for the weighting for the two of those.

21
22 As you know, the SSC was going to review this approach that was
23 going to be used to estimate biomass, and the SSC has done that,
24 and we do have Dr. Farmer here to provide a presentation on that
25 approach, and then the SSC recommendations will follow, and then
26 we also have -- Dr. Froeschke put together a really great
27 decision tool, so that you can look at all these different
28 alternatives and what the resulting percentages would be, and so
29 I think we're going to start with Dr. Farmer's presentation,
30 which I believe was emailed out as well.

31
32 **RED SNAPPER BIOMASS ESTIMATES AND RECREATIONAL TRIPS OFF EACH**
33 **STATE**
34

35 **DR. FARMER:** I have got to give a lot of credit to Mandy
36 Karnauskas down at the Southeast Fisheries Science Center. A
37 lot of the work that I am going to show you is her work, and I
38 am just presenting it on her behalf, and so, if you have any
39 questions that I can't answer, I think she is available via
40 chat, and so I will check back on my computer and see if I get
41 any input from her.

42
43 Basically, I wanted to talk with you about that last alternative
44 that was added to the document regarding some sort of way of
45 allocating based on effort and/or biomass. I wanted to talk
46 about effort first, and I wanted to raise some items for you to
47 consider with regards to using recreational trips for
48 allocation, and so, the way that we went through this, we looked

1 at recreational directed trips, and a directed trip is
2 different, in definition, from a targeted trip.

3
4 The anglers in the MRIP survey can indicate that they are
5 targeting a Primary 1 or Primary 2 species. Most of the time,
6 the species that they are answering for that question are the
7 species that they caught. A recreational angler, such as
8 myself, sometimes I don't know what I am going out for, and what
9 I catch is what I was going for, and so it's a little bit
10 confounded, and so we used directed trips instead, and that's
11 basically a trip that has a landing of that species.

12
13 We didn't include discards of the species, because you could
14 catch red snapper outside of the red snapper season, and that
15 would not be a red snapper trip that I think would be
16 appropriate for consideration for allocation.

17
18 Also, another thing to note is that headboat doesn't provide
19 information on targeting, and some of the state surveys don't
20 provide information on targeting, and so this was the best way
21 to pull information from all the different surveys and create
22 one metric. There are still some issues with it, that I will
23 bring up.

24
25 The way we defined a directed trip is that it's a trip landing
26 red snapper in the EEZ, and so that basically serves to limit
27 the effort to federal season effort in federal waters, where
28 landings, but not releases, are credited. Targeting, as I said,
29 might provide some information on trips outside the federal
30 season, which would give additional effort, counts to states
31 with longer, inconsistent seasons. Also, if you included
32 releases in your directed effort, that would also give some
33 additional credit to states with longer seasons than the federal
34 season.

35
36 This is the query that actually we used on the MRIP website, and
37 you can see the different tabs that were filled out, and then we
38 also requested that information from LA Creel, the Southeast
39 Region Headboat Survey, or SRHS, and the Texas Parks and
40 Wildlife Department.

41
42 LA Creel calculated their directed trips by multiplying expanded
43 offshore angler trips by the proportion of red snapper trips,
44 which is similar, but not identical, to the MRIP methodology.
45 The Southeast Region Headboat Survey, we used the sum of anglers
46 on trips targeting red snapper, and we expanded for non-
47 reporting, and then TPWD provided us creel survey directed
48 effort by season, mode, and area.

1
2 Here is our first potential issue, is we're always trying to
3 keep from comparing apples to oranges, but, in this instance, we
4 may be comparing apples, oranges, bananas, and grapes. We've
5 got four different surveys, and, although the metrics are
6 similar, they might not be identical.

7
8 **MR. JOHN SANCHEZ:** I noted, in the previous slide, the years
9 1986 through 2016.

10
11 **DR. FARMER:** Another frustrating thing about doing these queries
12 is you have to pull them one year at a time, and so this was the
13 first of all the thirty-some-odd years of queries that I pulled,
14 and so John's tool will provide you with the ability to pull
15 this query for 1986 through 2016, and I will show you a table
16 and a graphic at the end with that time series.

17
18 These are all computed slightly differently, and so this might
19 not be a fair comparison, but here is the table that you were
20 looking for. It's hard to read, and I don't think the numbers
21 are all that critical right now, but what I want you to note is
22 that, for Texas, we have a red highlighting all the way through,
23 and that's because TPWD, throughout the entire time series, is a
24 different metric for a directed trip.

25
26 Then, when LA Creel shows up, from 2014 down, that is slightly
27 different, and then also, added within all of these, are the
28 Southeast Region Headboat Survey angler trips, which are
29 slightly different from the MRIP ones, and so there are some
30 differences here.

31
32 I wanted to show you a few things on this slide, and so the
33 first is that the graphic on the bottom is the angler trips.
34 It's 100,000 angler trips by year, 1986 through 2016, broken out
35 by the different states of Alabama through Texas, and so you can
36 see that Alabama and Florida are comprising the vast majority of
37 the angler trips, and they change through time, and I made this
38 graphic here, this animation, of the population from the U.S.
39 census from 2000 through 2014.

40
41 You can see, as the heat grows, and this is just showing the
42 population growth, by county, through time, and so you've got an
43 additional influx of people, and they aren't uniformly
44 distributed, and so that could play a role if you were trying to
45 select a time series in order to do this allocation.

46
47 Obviously, the composition of how many anglers are in each of
48 your states has varied through time, and this graphic is

1 intended to show that, both from a total population size
2 estimate as well as just your total angler trips. A few
3 additional items to consider. Robin, did you have a question?
4

5 **MR. RIECHERS:** Before we get away from that, any reason why 2013
6 seems to stand out so much here? Have you all thought about
7 that?
8

9 **DR. FARMER:** You can see there that the two big jumps for 2013
10 are for Alabama and Florida, and these are directed trips for
11 red snapper. We had a little bit longer recreational season for
12 red snapper in 2013, because, as you recall, basically what
13 happened in 2013 is the projections were based on the MRIP back-
14 calculated 2004 through 2012 data, and that first back-
15 calculation did not account for or understand the implications
16 of the APAIS survey redesign, which resulted in much higher
17 catch estimates off of Alabama and Florida.
18

19 The catch rates went up, because the methodology changed, and
20 so, anyway, the season was much longer than probably it would
21 have been, had we understood that, and so you have a lot longer
22 for recreational directed trips to accrue, and the main places
23 where those jumped up were Alabama and Florida.
24

25 Going through, the first question I would pose to you is, is
26 allocating on trips appropriate, given that angler trips are
27 computed differently by these different surveys, and I provide
28 the years, in case you were looking to identify what years might
29 be appropriate for making a comparison.
30

31 This approach might over or underestimate the effort off of
32 Louisiana and Texas, because those surveys do compute the
33 directed trips differently, and there is no calibration factor
34 available to determine what direction that estimate would go.
35

36 Another question that I would submit to you is, is it
37 appropriate to allocate using one metric, which is effort, and
38 then monitor using another, which is landings, especially given
39 that we don't really have a good way of calibrating between
40 those two metrics, and we also don't really have a good way of
41 calibrating between that effort metric between the states.
42

43 Then let's get into biomass, and so there is a paper that Mandy
44 and her colleagues at the Southeast Fisheries Science Center
45 published in *Marine and Coastal Fisheries*, which is really an
46 excellent paper, talking about red snapper distribution on
47 natural habitats and artificial structures in the northern Gulf
48 of Mexico.

1
2 Here is a simple look at kind of how the methods work. She
3 looks at the area of the habitat and the catch rate on the
4 habitat to compute the relative abundance on a habitat of red
5 snapper, and then she sums across all habitats and plots for
6 each grid cell, and so, basically, what you're looking at is red
7 snapper catch rates are different on artificial versus natural
8 structures, and you can use that information, along with
9 information on the composition of the natural habitat, such as
10 sediment type and where they are located in the Gulf of Mexico,
11 in order to create a map of relative abundance of red snapper.

12
13 A few things you can take home from this map is, as we see with
14 the stock assessment, the red snapper relative abundance appears
15 to be higher in the western Gulf of Mexico than in the eastern
16 Gulf of Mexico, and there is also quite a bit of area off the
17 Florida shelf that is suitable habitat and has some red snapper
18 on it.

19
20 The results of this output are heavily dependent on the relative
21 catch rates, and so I want you to note this graphic here. These
22 are relative catch rates, and they are broken out by ages of red
23 snapper. The blue is platforms relative to natural habitat, and
24 then artificial reefs relative to natural habitat is in gold,
25 and you can see, basically, that the artificial reef catch rates
26 for the fish from age-three up are much, much higher.

27
28 There is some caveats and assumptions relative to using this
29 biomass method, and so the first thing is that the information
30 used to drive the paper and develop this relative abundance map
31 is based on platform or artificial reef sampling from a
32 relatively small area. It's from the Alabama artificial reef
33 zone, and so you're extrapolating those catch rates to the rest
34 of the Gulf of Mexico's artificial structures, which may or may
35 not be a valid assumption.

36
37 You are also assuming that handline gear has the same
38 catchability amongst habitats, and so, if you go out with a
39 handline in one habitat and you go out with a handline in the
40 other habitat, you are going to catch the same catch composition
41 of red snapper, if all things are equal.

42
43 It also relies upon state-provided databases of artificial reefs
44 and platforms, and those databases, while they are
45 comprehensive, may not contain all of the artificial habitats
46 for red snapper. I know, having lived on Key Biscayne, off of
47 Miami, that there were new artificial habitats being introduced
48 to the water all the time before lobster season, and they

1 probably weren't known to state officials immediately.
2
3 There is an area of influence that is assumed to be constant
4 across the surrounding area, and that's assumed to be the same
5 for the artificial structures, and, also, this data is driven
6 primarily from 2011, when there was a large sampling program for
7 red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico, and there is a platform
8 survey that was done in a previous year, in 2007, that is also
9 used to seed some of the data, and so, long story short, it's
10 only a relative abundance map, and it does have a few
11 limitations.
12
13 In order to apply this map to our question at hand, what Mandy
14 looked at is the Reef Fish 39 delineations of state boundaries
15 extending to the EEZ line, and so one thing that you will
16 notice, really quickly, is Mississippi and Alabama, the area
17 overall, is relatively limited.
18
19 As we move into the next slide, as you calculate your relative
20 biomass by state, you are summing all of these relative
21 abundance cells within the polygon that indicates that state's
22 area, and so you've got Texas here and Louisiana and so on, and
23 then this is the breakout of the biomass from Texas over to
24 Florida.
25
26 One thing you will note is that, although you have a hot zone
27 here off of Alabama of a relatively high relative abundance of
28 red snapper, which is driven primarily by the artificial reef
29 structures, the overall biomass off of Alabama is relatively
30 low, because the area is relatively low, whereas Florida,
31 although you don't have nearly as many hot spots, has a much
32 larger shelf area, and, therefore, the total biomass is higher.
33
34 Something to note is that this is a snapshot based on 2011.
35 From the SEDAR 31 stock assessment, you can see the biomass
36 changes through time, and the west has always been larger than
37 the east, and this is kind of a zoomed-in picture of 1991
38 through 2014, which were the years of assessment-estimated
39 biomass, and you can see that the west grows more rapidly than
40 the east, and the east actually sort of falls off a little bit
41 towards the end.
42
43 Then I developed this animation of commercial handline CPUE
44 through time, just so you could see this basically repopulation
45 of the eastern Gulf of Mexico, as indicated by catch per unit
46 effort from the commercial fleet through time, and so we'll
47 start out, as it winds back to 1991, and you will see the CPUE
48 concentrated primarily in the western Gulf of Mexico, and then

1 you will see the heat sort of spreading towards the east, as the
2 stock is rebuilding, and some of that western biomass is coming
3 over to the east.

4
5 The take-home message from that is a snapshot of 2011, an
6 appropriate metric for biomass, and is there a way of accounting
7 for the time dynamic here, and then just a few final thoughts.
8 Could we incorporate information regarding larval connectivity
9 amongst the states? We're looking at managing these states
10 potentially in separate ways, but I think it's an important
11 message that you all realize that the red snapper stock in the
12 Gulf of Mexico is all very connected.

13
14 This is output from the connectivity modeling system, which is a
15 spatially-explicit modeling system that accounts for when and
16 where red snapper spawn in the Gulf of Mexico and the movement
17 of those recruits to different habitats and whether or not they
18 recruit successfully to those habitats based on oceanographic
19 currents at the time of spawning.

20
21 What you can see here is this moves from east to west, and this
22 is basically the log scale of the number of successful recruits,
23 and so hot is good, and cold is bad, and so you have more
24 successful recruits where it gets hot, and what you will note
25 here is that there is a lot of transfer from source nodes, and
26 so say Texas over to receiving nodes in Louisiana, and from
27 Alabama sources to Florida.

28
29 Just to break it out in a little bit easier way of visualizing
30 it, these are the proportion of settling larvae originating from
31 a given state-water boundary, and, basically, if you spend some
32 time mulling over this graphic, what it's telling you is that
33 these states are very heavily connected, and so what one state
34 does, in terms of the harvest of red snapper, is going to impact
35 the recruitment of red snapper to the other states.

36
37 The states that are closest to you are going to be the ones that
38 influence you the most, and so, for example, Florida and Alabama
39 are heavily dependent on each other for red snapper recruitment.
40 I will leave you with questions.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Are there questions? Mr.
43 Swindell.

44
45 **MR. SWINDELL:** In movement of red snapper, how have you
46 determined this? Have there been any hard data on tagging
47 studies of anything showing, over the years, showing how red
48 snapper move across the Gulf or within certain ranges of the

1 Gulf?

2

3 **DR. FARMER:** I think Dr. Porch probably knows more about it than
4 I do, but, red snapper tagging studies in the Gulf of Mexico, I
5 know that Mote Marine Lab had a relatively large tagging study
6 that was conducted for many years, with thousands of fish
7 tagged, and I think that a lot of what was seen is that red
8 snapper tend to be relatively high-site-fidelity fish, but there
9 is some movement and transfer, but the main thing that you will
10 note, from the red snapper connectivity modeling, is that it's
11 really the larvae that are doing a lot of the movement with
12 spawning.

13

14 I know Stephen Szedlmayer's group in Alabama has done quite a
15 bit of tagging on artificial reefs, and I believe that those
16 results have also shown that the vast majority of red snapper
17 have relatively high site fidelity, but you do get individuals
18 that can move long distances.

19

20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?
21 Seeing no further discussion, we will move on. Dr. Lasseter.

22

23 **DR. LASSETER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we have Dr.
24 Froeschke is going to review the decision tool.

25

26 **ALLOCATION DECISION TOOL**

27

28 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Good morning. What I am going to show you here
29 will be brief, and hopefully intuitive, and what I am trying to
30 do is develop a tool that will allow interactive consideration
31 of sort of the options that you have before you regarding
32 allocation of red snapper among the states, and I wanted to
33 build something that was available to you all as well as the
34 public, that everyone could look at the data and the options
35 before you on a level playing field.

36

37 It hopefully would be responsive to what you have before you now
38 and if you wanted to make changes, and so the tool is available
39 on our portal site, portal.gulfcouncil.org, and you can link
40 there, or search for red snapper decision support tool, and what
41 I was going to do was just quickly step through some of the
42 ideas of what you could do. The page is up here.

43

44 It's a government website, supposedly, and so we put a
45 disclaimer on there, so you could see that, and then really just
46 a little bit of background and information about why you're
47 here, and there is a hyperlink down there for the public, if
48 they want to submit public comments regarding this issue.

1
2 The layout of the tool mirrors Action 2 in the aggregate
3 document. Across the top, you will see there are the six
4 alternatives, which mirror exactly what you have in the
5 document, and the panels, the way each of these are set up, for
6 example, for a particular alternative, there is some text that
7 describes what that alternative is, and then there are what I
8 call these radio buttons, in which you could toggle through the
9 various options.

10
11 What you see in the right panels are the data, and these are the
12 data that Nick Farmer just described to you. In this case, it's
13 the landings data, and so what you can see are the actual
14 landings data that are used in the calculations for both the
15 private and the recreational components, and then -- For
16 example, in this one, we have selected Alternative 2, which
17 would select 1996 through 2015, and the data for each of the
18 individual states is represented on the panels on the right.

19
20 You will notice that there is an "X", which indicates that the
21 2010 data were not included, because of the impacts of the oil
22 spill. Then, in these bottom panels, what you might be most
23 interested in are the allocation to each state based on the
24 option that you have, and so, obviously, if you change the
25 option, the data will update on the right, so you can see what
26 you are getting, and the answer on the bottom will update as
27 well.

28
29 For example, Alternative 3 builds on these same options. The
30 years are different, and so it gives you a few different options
31 on that, and it's primarily the end year, and so Alternative 2
32 ended in 2015, and Alternative 3 is 2009. Obviously the 2010
33 doesn't apply, and then this Alternative 3d is the same as 2d,
34 but it's this weighted average, which considers both the long
35 time series of 1986 through 2009 and then a heavier weighting on
36 the most recent period of 2006 through 2009. Again, you can see
37 the full time series of landings on the right, and the
38 allocations that result are on the bottom.

39
40 Again, there is no advice, but it's just a different way of
41 visualizing what you have before you, and Alternative 4 is a
42 little bit different in layout, but the idea is that, much like
43 Alternatives 2 and 3, you can select a start year, 1986, and
44 then an end year would either be the 2009 or the 2015 that
45 matches the Alternative 2 or 3. Then, the bottom years -- I am
46 going to go to the longer time series. Here, it gives you some
47 options to exclude particular years, for example 2006, 2010,
48 2014, and 2015. These match some rationale in the document, and

1 I won't bore you with those, but they are in there.
2
3 You will notice that 2010 is both an option, but it's already in
4 the document, because of the oil spill, but I did try to
5 replicate what we have, to match it, and then, again, you will
6 see the resulting allocations, if you scroll down, on the
7 bottom, and so I tried do that consistently, as best I could.
8
9 Alternative 5, I will just point out, quickly, a couple of
10 things that are different. This alternative is different in
11 structure from Alternatives 2, 3, and 4. Alternatives 2, 3, and
12 4, a fixed time series is selected for the five states.
13 Alternative 5 sort of turns that on its head and says, for each
14 state, a fixed number of years, in this case ten, and each state
15 could select the ten years of highest landings in those states.
16 From those, a sum of each state's landings was computed, and
17 then it had a grand sum of all of that, and then the percentages
18 were calculated off of that.
19
20 That is a different mechanism than is used for Alternatives 2,
21 3, and 4, just for your information, and, if you were to do this
22 method for the other alternatives, you would get a slightly
23 different percentage.
24
25 Sort of as an analyst, I was curious about the effect of -- Ten
26 is a round number, but is it the only number, and so there is a
27 slider that you could query and say, well, what if we used the
28 top eight years or the top twelve years, and what if we change
29 the min/max years, and, in my examination of this, for good or
30 bad, it's fairly consistent across there, and so the
31 calculations don't appear to be particular sensitive to minor
32 changes in those, which is fairly useful.
33
34 On this plot, there is one difference, and so I have, again,
35 plotted the landings of each state and the respective time
36 series that is selected. You will see, on these, that there are
37 some markers displayed, and what that indicates is, because it's
38 not a linear time series for each of these -- The markers
39 reflect the years of individual data for each state that were
40 selected, and so each state might have a different time series,
41 and, in fact, in most cases, they do, but I tried to be as
42 transparent with the information as I could.
43
44 Alternative 6 is a little more complicated, and there are some
45 additional complications, when you actually try to calculate the
46 numbers, that aren't fully fleshed out in the document. One
47 thing, in the document, is it's not currently split into
48 components, meaning the private and the for-hire, and the idea

1 of time series selected for the trips and/or landings, however
2 you wanted to do that, wasn't specified, as it is in
3 Alternatives 2, 3, and 4.

4
5 What I tried to do was split those out, as best I could, and I
6 have provided some options, and so these little buttons on the
7 top left -- You can select them, for example, if you wanted to
8 consider the private. Again, just as we've done for the other
9 ones, you can select a time series, and this table down here is
10 sort of what was the genesis of this whole project.

11
12 This is basically the information that Nick has just described.
13 This top row on the table is the biomass, which describes the
14 biomass in each state, as we understand it, based on the paper
15 that Mandy Karnauskas and colleagues produced, and so that
16 information is there, and the trips, again, is the same
17 information that Nick has provided for each state and then the
18 private landings.

19
20 That part is fairly straightforward, and the opportunity, I
21 guess, is that you could select a weighting for each of these
22 and base your allocation as a factor of these various weights,
23 and so I have provided these little green boxes here that you
24 can upweight the biomass, and you could downweight the landings
25 or something. Just as long as you can add up to 100, you're
26 good.

27
28 These numbers don't change unless you change the time series,
29 which you can do, but the end result would be these numbers on
30 the bottom, and so, if you were to weight, for example, 100
31 percent biomass, your numbers would match the biomass, and
32 that's the variable that is not time dynamic. You can change,
33 for example, the number of years you want to base the trips or
34 landings on, if you wanted to do that.

35
36 In the document, there are also three options that were
37 presented, and so I put these little buttons on here, which will
38 basically preconfigure the results to match those, and then,
39 lastly, there is a little save button, if you found something
40 that you just thought was really terrific and you wanted to
41 share that. You could copy-and-paste that to a friend and make
42 it available, and they could see what you see.

43
44 Really, that's what I sort of have before you. It's a website,
45 and so, if I have to explain it too much, then I sort of missed
46 the point, but I am happy to take any feedback or questions, and
47 I hope that you will find it useful in your decision-making.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Good job, John. Any questions or
2 comments? Mr. Anson.
3
4 **MR. ANSON:** Just, Dr. Froeschke, just kudos to the work that you
5 put into this. This is very informative and very easy to
6 understand, I guess. I am just curious, on a side note, but is
7 this all through R? Did you do this through R?
8
9 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Yes, it's mostly an R thing. There are some
10 flavors of other aspect in there, but it's an R shell.
11
12 **MR. ANSON:** Thank you.
13
14 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DOUG GREGORY:** He dreams in R.
15
16 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Dr.
17 Stunz.
18
19 **DR. STUNZ:** Thanks, John. This is good. I was just trying to -
20 - I missed the first part, and so it's available right now? I
21 am trying to search the council webpage now to find it, and how
22 exactly do we --
23
24 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Go to portal.gulfcouncil.org, and it runs on a
25 separate server, such that I don't pollute the main Gulf Council
26 site.
27
28 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Lasseter.
29
30 **DR. LASSETER:** Also, in the Ad Hoc Private Recreational Red
31 Snapper AP Report, the hyperlink is right there, too.
32
33 **MS. BOSARGE:** Chairman Greene and I were talking, and we're
34 going to go ahead and take the fifteen-minute break, and so
35 we'll come back and start back up at 10:20.
36
37 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)
38
39 **MS. BOSARGE:** I just wanted to recognize that we do have the
40 Chair of our Private Angler AP, Mr. Charlie Caplinger. He is
41 here with us, and so, if we have any questions as we go through
42 our discussions for the rest of the day, he is there to answer
43 any questions we may have. Thank you, sir, for being with us.
44 All right, Chairman Greene. The floor is yours.
45
46 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you, Madam Chair Bosarge. With that, I
47 will turn it back over to Dr. Lasseter for direction on where
48 we're going to go from here.

1
2 **DR. LASSETER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe the SSC
3 comments, in regard to the alternative for estimating biomass
4 off of the states, is next, and that's Dr. Lorenzen.

5
6 **SSC COMMENTS ON RED SNAPPER BIOMASS ESTIMATES AND RECREATIONAL**
7 **TRIPS OFF EACH STATE**
8

9 **DR. KAI LORENZEN:** Thank you. The SSC was asked to comment on
10 the red snapper biomass estimates and the recreational trips off
11 of each state, and I wanted to provide you with a little bit
12 more detail of the deliberations we had about that than is
13 necessarily evident from the report on that webinar where this
14 was discussed.

15
16 Essentially, the SSC felt that the biomass distribution and
17 recreational trip estimates have been carefully calculated and
18 also that the issues relating and caveats relating to this
19 information have been well characterized in the presentation,
20 and you remember the issue of lack of calibration between the
21 different states and so on, and so that has been well
22 characterized.

23
24 There were extended discussions in the SSC about issues of
25 bridging between the natural and artificial habitats and the
26 biomass estimation and also, again, about the lack of
27 calibration between some of the surveys on which the
28 recreational trip estimates are based.

29
30 We did not come up with any improvements to the methodologies,
31 and, overall, the committee felt that the data that we were
32 provided represent the best scientific information available on
33 the red snapper biomass distribution and the fishing effort
34 distribution. We did not vote on this, but I think this is a
35 fair statement on the committee consensus, given certain issues
36 that we know are there, but this is the best information
37 available, really.

38
39 We then went into the question of how to use this information,
40 and, at the time, I think that the council was sort of looking
41 for advice as to how to combine this information of whether
42 certain sources of information should be prioritized over
43 others, and the committee felt strongly that all three, the
44 biomass, resource distribution, fishing effort distribution, the
45 landing distributions, are all acceptable criteria for use in
46 allocation decisions, and there is really no scientific case for
47 prioritizing one over the other or to come up with a particular
48 combination, and so there is no theory that tells us that two-

1 times the biomass plus the square root of the trips gives us the
2 correct allocation.

3
4 The scientific information that you have in front of you are the
5 estimates of those distributions, and that's where the science
6 stops, and you can use these in whatever way you see fit for
7 your negotiations and deliberations about the allocation.

8
9 Finally, the SSC commended the development of the allocation
10 tool, which you have just seen, which really allows council
11 members and others to explore the implications of different
12 combinations of criteria that you might choose, and that's it.
13 Thank you.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Are there questions or discussion
16 by the committee? I don't see any. Thank you, Dr. Lorenzen.

17
18 **DISCUSSION OF STATE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM DOCUMENT**

19
20 **DR. LASSETER:** If we could go back to the action in the
21 amendment again, and, again, it's Action 2, on page 14. Again,
22 we're in the document that's Tab B, Number 6(a). I guess Dr.
23 Farmer raised some of the issues with the trip data for the
24 Alternative 6, and I just wanted to ask the committee if there
25 is any interest, is there continued interest, in using trips, or
26 did you want to consider using landings instead, given the
27 issues that Dr. Farmer raised?

28
29 Extending on that also, whether we use trips or landings, staff
30 would like some guidance as far as what years should be
31 considered, and so you can see, of course, in the other
32 alternatives, we have years, and what time series should we use
33 for either of those metrics?

34
35 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Matens.

36
37 **MR. MATENS:** Thank you, Captain Greene. I would like to hear
38 some discussion about using landings.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Mr. Banks.

41
42 **MR. BANKS:** I would recommend that we use the same time series
43 that we've been using for a lot of these calculations, 1986
44 through 2015.

45
46 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Ms. Guyas.

47
48 **MS. MARTHA GUYAS:** I am good with looking at landings, but I am

1 not really ready to throw out some of the other metrics that
2 we've been talking about. I am really glad that we have this
3 decision tool and that we are finally starting to flesh out some
4 options here. I realize there are some issues that we will need
5 to work through if we want to consider them, but I am ready to
6 look at those, and I don't want to toss them out at this point,
7 now that we finally have them and have an opportunity to digest
8 them and kind of tinker with the numbers a little bit.

9

10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

11

12 **MR. ANSON:** Dr. Lasseter, you had requested for some clarity, I
13 guess, on the years, and you got one response from Mr. Banks,
14 but you're asking that in relationship to trying to clean up the
15 document, I guess, a little bit more, and so, in the past, we've
16 also talked about excluding like 2010, because of the oil spill
17 and hurricane years and that type of thing, and so is that what
18 your request is?

19

20 **DR. LASSETER:** You have my next request as well, which is about
21 2010, but, specifically here in Alternative 6, we don't have,
22 incorporating any alternative yet, what years to use. To even
23 flesh out this one alternative, we need guidance for which years
24 to use, and I will express that I sure hope that it's not going
25 to be all of Alternative 2 and 3.

26

27 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

28

29 **MR. RIECHERS:** I understand the need to try to decide on the
30 years and maybe try to cut this down, but part of the
31 alternatives here are looking at different years, for various
32 different reasons, and Kevin just mentioned pulling out certain
33 years because of the hurricanes and the oil spill, and we've
34 done that as we've had some deliberations on these issues in the
35 past. We also have Alternative 3, which basically truncates
36 this time series and ignores the point in time when we started
37 shrinking down the seasons so much.

38

39 As Martha suggests, we've got the possibility of an Alternative
40 6 here that would include some sort of biomass, trips, possibly
41 even a landings sort of equation that we haven't necessarily
42 figured out here, and landings are not included in this one yet,
43 but there could be a combination of weighting that would get us
44 to an appropriate kind of approach.

45

46 I think we may be premature in trying to pull this down at this
47 moment in time, because we're still trying to figure out what
48 some of these numbers may mean to us and look at those. One

1 question though. For Alternative 6, you do have a table in
2 here, and it doesn't label whether it's 6a or 6b or 6c or
3 something different than all of those sub-alternatives there,
4 and I just want clarification on what that table actually is, as
5 well.

6
7 **DR. LASSETER:** Specifically, for this alternative, we are not
8 trying to pare it down. It actually needs to be defined. We
9 don't have any landings yet, and so, when we look at that table,
10 it only has biomass, and it's at the very top of page 19. This
11 is Table 2.2.6.

12
13 We can only calculate for you right now the red snapper biomass,
14 because we didn't know what years to use for trips, and so I'm
15 not trying to pare it down, but we just need to know what you
16 would like us to even add to that alternative, and my only
17 paring down part was I just hope it's not going to make the
18 alternatives twice as long, but, if you do want us to look at
19 that, we could definitely, absolutely do so.

20
21 **MR. RIECHERS:** I think some of it -- When we were thinking about
22 paring it down, because I think you first asked about
23 Alternative 1, and were wondering what years we wanted to use,
24 and I think you're correct. If we could come to grips with
25 that, we could help in educating, possibly, a further
26 alternative down in Alternative 6. Again, you have answered my
27 question. It's just completely the biomass in the table, and,
28 for us to do any weighting of those things, we would have to
29 create a combination of scenarios here.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Guyas.

32
33 **MS. GUYAS:** Ava, you did, or somebody raised the question of, at
34 least for landings, did we look at Alternative 2 or Alternative
35 3, and, in my mind, if we were going to remove one of those, I
36 think it would be Alternative 3. That's the one that stops at
37 2009.

38
39 I mean, we have nine years of landings, or we will have nine
40 years of landings, after that, and that's a -- 2009 was kind of
41 a key point in the fishery, in which, all of a sudden, we really
42 started to see the benefits of rebuilding, especially in the
43 eastern Gulf of Mexico, and I think to stop looking at landings
44 after that point and stop considering what's happened after 2009
45 would be a pretty grave mistake, and so, in my mind, I think we
46 could drop Alternative 3.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Ms.

1 Levy.

2
3 **MS. MARA LEVY:** Just a question. Drop it for what purpose? I
4 think what Ava was asking is, for Alternative 6, when you're
5 evaluating the years for trips, is the council's intent to look
6 at all the year sequences in Alternative 2 and 3 that you're now
7 looking at for landings and to look at those for trips as well,
8 or are there certain year sequences that we have for 2 and 3
9 that are about landings that you want to then be specific about
10 trips?

11
12 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Guyas.

13
14 **MS. GUYAS:** In my mind, I don't know that you would want to
15 consider Alternative 3 as it is or use the years there as an
16 option for Alternative 6. That's what I am saying. If we're
17 trying to cut stuff, which I think is what Ava wants us to do --
18 Is that right? You want guidance on what years to use for
19 Alternative 6, but you also are -- I am also hearing, and maybe
20 I'm just making this up, that this is getting really cumbersome
21 and it's a lot, and, if we could round some things down, that
22 would be helpful to you.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

25
26 **MR. RIECHERS:** Martha, you know I'm going to at least disagree,
27 from the perspective of keeping it in the document. I think we
28 have talked around this issue a lot, but, as that fishery and
29 the days reduced, given the weather in the western Gulf and
30 other issues, and I fully understand your point. As the fishery
31 rebuilt, it rebuilt into areas in Florida that it wasn't before,
32 but I think we at least owe a look here.

33
34 Whether or not we end up including it in the preferred options
35 and whether or not it ends up being the preferred time series to
36 think about with a biomass different sort of weighting, even if
37 we go down the biomass road, which we haven't decided yet, that
38 spreadsheet will do a lot of work for us.

39
40 While I think it does make the document a little more
41 cumbersome, the mathematical, behind-the-scenes portion of
42 calculating that, I think we can get it done in a way, and
43 certainly John has done it in a way, where we can look at some
44 of those things and at least understand how those numbers shift,
45 and that would be my goal, so that we at least keep it in there,
46 so we understand that a little bit.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Lasseter.

1
2 **DR. LASSETER:** I apologize. I am probably not being entirely
3 clear today, because I am a little under the weather. The only
4 alternative that I was hoping that could potentially be removed
5 at this time would be for the 2010 landings, and that is
6 specific to issues with the data.

7
8 I think I was confusing when I was trying to express, in terms
9 of Alternative 6, but it would be nice for staff to not have the
10 full range of years that you're considering for these other
11 landings also appended within Alternative 6. That could be one
12 heck of an alternative, but, if you do want to look at that
13 extensive range of landings, then, of course, we would do so,
14 and so that's what I was talking about paring down. It's just
15 what years do you want to consider for trips and/or landings
16 within Alternative 6 to look at alongside biomass, and then
17 we'll come back to the 2010 in a bit.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Mr.
20 Banks.

21
22 **MR. BANKS:** I think I hear what you're saying, Ava. **How about a**
23 **motion to remove 2010 from all calculations under all of the**
24 **alternatives in Action 2, if I can get a second.**

25
26 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have a motion, and it's been seconded by
27 Dr. Shipp. We'll get it on the board here in just a second.
28 Mr. Diaz.

29
30 **MR. DIAZ:** What are the issues with the data, Ava, if you don't
31 mind?

32
33 **DR. LASSETER:** I would love to ask Dr. Farmer to come up,
34 because he is the one that provided it to me, with a bunch of
35 caveats, and since we have him here.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay, and so, before he comes up here, we have
38 a motion on the floor. Is there any opposition to that? Mr.
39 Diaz.

40
41 **MR. DIAZ:** I think maybe his response might be important to this
42 motion. In 2010, areas of the Gulf were shut down, and not all
43 areas of the Gulf were shut down for the same amount of time,
44 and so some areas were more disadvantaged than others, or maybe
45 some areas were more advantaged than others in 2010, and it
46 depends on how you look at it, but it really wasn't a level
47 playing field, and so if we could exclude 2010, and, in my mind,
48 there is a lot of justification to do that.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you for that. I was getting a little
3 ahead of myself there. Ms. Levy.

4
5 **MS. LEVY:** Just to clarify. There is currently an Alternative 4
6 that has excluding certain years from the time series in
7 Alternative 2 and 3, one of the options being 2010, but this
8 alternative, I guess, does not currently apply to Alternative 6,
9 because it's specific to 2 and 3, and so is this motion to
10 select 4b as an alternative, as the preferred, or is it to
11 somehow just get rid of 2010 out of everything automatically? I
12 guess I'm just confused about what we're doing.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Shipp.

15
16 **DR. BOB SHIPP:** My second was intended to reinforce Patrick's
17 idea that 2010 should be removed from everything, because, as
18 Dale said, it was just a totally atypical year, and the
19 differential exclusion of certain parts of the Gulf just make it
20 inappropriate for any further calculation, and so that was my
21 intent, Patrick, is to just remove it from everything.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay, and so, with that, let's go to Dr.
24 Farmer here, and he's going to lead us out of this.

25
26 **DR. FARMER:** Can you give me a little context for the question?
27 Sorry. I was working on something else, but, 2010, I couldn't
28 state it any more eloquently than Dale already has. Mr. Diaz
29 said it very well. I mean, we had fishery closures in the Gulf
30 of Mexico, primarily impacting the northern Gulf states, and
31 those states were closed during the peak of red snapper season,
32 and they didn't have the same fishing opportunities.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Mr. Riechers.

35
36 **MR. RIECHERS:** Let me try to help this out a little bit. **Let me**
37 **move a substitute motion that creates Alternative 4b as the**
38 **preferred and changes the caption for Alternative 4 in**
39 **calculating state apportionments under alternatives in Action 2,**
40 **excluded from the selected time series, as appropriate.**

41
42 If I get a second -- I think it's trying to do what Dr. Shipp
43 and Patrick were trying to do, but it cleans up the top portion
44 as well. If I get a second, then I will also have a moment of
45 discussion.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** It's seconded by Dr. Frazer. Okay, Robin.

1 **MR. RIECHERS:** We are trying to get the language up there, and I
2 will say this. I am all in favor of this, and I think we've
3 talked about this before when we've had these time series,
4 though I will say I think what we also are a little bit myopic
5 about in this is that we're focusing on the more recent events,
6 when these sort of catastrophic, episodic events occurred, and I
7 don't know that we didn't have these situations in that time
8 series dating back further, where it impacted one portion of the
9 Gulf or the other, but we're seemingly weighting it, because, of
10 course, our current memory suggests oil spills and hurricanes
11 and, of course, we're in the midst of another hurricane recovery
12 in certain parts of the Gulf.

13
14 I think one of the notions is whether we really try to go back
15 and look at where events occurred throughout the entire time
16 series or whether we think just averaging it out over a long
17 time series and letting some of those events just play
18 themselves out there might be a more appropriate way, and I
19 think that's a consideration, as we move forward, that we really
20 need to think about too, because we really haven't gone past
21 kind of that 2000 timeframe in thinking about how hurricanes
22 could have impacted other parts of the Gulf as we've gone
23 through this, and so just a thought.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Guyas.

26
27 **MS. GUYAS:** I think they're working on it now, but I was going
28 to make sure that we got Robin's complete motion on the board.
29 Right now, it's just the preferred part, but I think we're
30 missing the rewording of the Alternative 4 itself.

31
32 **MR. RIECHERS:** Yes, and that should read: In calculating state
33 apportionments under Action 2, exclude from the selected time
34 series. That way, you just cover -- If we're going to do it,
35 we're going to just remove it from all of them, which even
36 removes it from what could be a possible high set of landings
37 for any given state in 2010, if they were trying to group their
38 best ten years, but, under this scenario, it would remove it
39 from all of them.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Mr.
42 Riechers, is the motion on the board correct? All right. Any
43 further discussion on the motion? **Is there any opposition to**
44 **the motion on the floor before you? One in opposition, and the**
45 **motion carries.** Mr. Anson.

46
47 **MR. ANSON:** While Dr. Farmer is at the podium, going back to the
48 description of trips, Dr. Farmer, how would a state that had

1 state waters open, but no federal waters open, how would that be
2 captured in the calculus for determining the number of trips?

3
4 **DR. FARMER:** In order to do my best at keeping the playing field
5 as level as we could, given the differences in the data
6 collection that we've already discussed, I only looked at
7 directed trips, which would be trips that landed red snapper,
8 and only directed trips from the EEZ, and so from federal
9 waters.

10
11 There is a bit of an issue with that in the very most recent
12 years, due to the jurisdictional extension in the northern Gulf
13 of Mexico for red snapper, and it's not clear to me, because
14 MRIP's question hasn't been modified yet, whether anglers are
15 reporting those fishing trips for red snapper as being in the
16 EEZ when they might actually be in state waters, due to the
17 jurisdictional extension, but it's a pretty subtle nuance
18 relative to some of the other differences that I already
19 discussed.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?
22 Anything else for Dr. Farmer? Okay, Dr. Farmer. Thank you.
23 All right. Any further discussion? Mr. Anson.

24
25 **MR. ANSON:** Ava, I apologize for earlier, asking about 2010
26 prematurely, and I don't have a cold, and so I don't have an
27 excuse, and I'm sorry. **I guess I would like to make a motion to**
28 **include the time series that are listed under Alternative 3,**
29 **Option 3a, 3b, and 3c, as the time series to use for trips in**
30 **Alternative 6.**

31
32 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have a motion on the board. I believe it's
33 correct. Kevin, is that it?

34
35 **MR. ANSON:** As long as it's in reference to trips in Alternative
36 6. It's to include, in Alternative 6, the four options under
37 Alternative 3 for the time series to use for calculating the
38 number of trips. Then if you can add, after that, "for
39 calculating number of trips".

40
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. We have a motion on the floor. It is
42 correct as written, Kevin? Okay. Is there a second for the
43 motion on the floor? It's seconded for discussion by Ms.
44 Bosarge. Dr. Crabtree.

45
46 **DR. CRABTREE:** I guess my concern would be cutting things off at
47 2009, and I understand not using 2010, but it seems like we're
48 ignoring the actual patterns that are happening in the fishery

1 now, and it's not clear to me why that would be justified,
2 entirely.

3

4 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

5

6 **MR. RIECHERS:** I think we just covered this, and, of course,
7 Roy, you and I had this conversation at the last council
8 meeting, kind of as a sidebar, as well. I think part of the
9 justification is we started really narrowing those seasons, and
10 we have kind of artificially changed what was going on across
11 the Gulf, in some respects, as well.

12

13 Again, this is just putting it in as an option, to look at what
14 it might do, and with the notion that we might finally be at a
15 place where we are considering biomass, which many people around
16 the table have talked about that and having that desire to do
17 for a very long time. This isn't choosing it as a preferred,
18 but this is just trying to get the information to understand how
19 that moves this picture around a little bit with a biomass kind
20 of weighting as well.

21

22 **DR. CRABTREE:** Yes, and I get the desire to bring the biomass
23 in, but then this leaves us with, I think, the only alternative
24 we have that considers the biomass doesn't look at effort at all
25 past 2009. I mean, the problem you've got is there have been
26 huge changes in the red snapper fishery over the past thirty
27 years, a lot of which are caused by the rebuilding of the stock
28 and the changes, and so that's really the issue.

29

30 The more you focus on the past, it favors the western Gulf, but,
31 in more recent years, because the eastern Gulf had a big
32 recovery, if you use more recent times, it pushes this to the
33 eastern Gulf, and it's tricky to figure out how to tease those
34 things out.

35

36 I get the desire to look at biomass. In essence, right now, the
37 western Gulf is subsidizing the east, and this came up at the AP
38 meeting. The western Gulf is probably rebuilt. When we rebuild
39 red snapper, the eastern Gulf, at least the last projections I
40 saw, never gets to 26 percent SPR, and the so the west goes up
41 to like 35 percent, to balance that out, and so you've got a lot
42 of dissatisfaction in the west that they're paying the price for
43 the catches in the east, and that's understandable.

44

45 If you saw the figure they put up with the catch rates on it,
46 you've got artificial reef zones with catch rates ten to twenty
47 times what it would be over natural bottom, and you've got a
48 situation where my guesstimate is about 200 miles of coast

1 between Alabama over to Panama City is probably catching 80
2 percent of the recreational harvest, but they have nowhere close
3 to 80 percent of the biomass off of that area, and so we've got
4 all these weird things happening, and I think that's part of how
5 we're struggling so bad to come up with some way to allocate,
6 but it does worry me a little bit that the only option we're
7 considering that pulls in the biomass piece truncates the trips
8 off at 2009 and ignores everything since then.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

11
12 **MR. ANSON:** Based on Dr. Farmer's description of how the trips
13 were calculated, I was trying to do two things. One was to put
14 some years in there to help staff try to come back with some
15 analysis, but also in that roughly around 2009, actually 2010 or
16 2011, that's when state seasons started to increase, and so,
17 coupled with around 2013 and 2014, we had restrictions in other
18 species that are quite popular among recreational anglers.

19
20 The choice in fishing opportunities, I think, changed in roughly
21 around that 2010 period, in that their motivations to go fishing
22 changed pretty drastically prior to 2010 and after 2010, and it
23 ended up resulting, because state waters were open so much, that
24 they decided to take their fishing trips and target the one
25 species that was available to them, at least here in the last
26 several years.

27
28 That's all I was trying to do, was to kind of -- Although Dr.
29 Farmer said that they're looking at federal trips, there is a
30 change in fishing behavior, or pattern, I believe, based on
31 information that we've collected in Alabama, that is not quite
32 apples to apples when you look at it prior to 2010, when we had
33 multiple species open in federal waters for extended periods of
34 time, and so I was just trying to get to a point that would be
35 most representative of fishing, and, if you combine the two, I
36 think it muddies the water more than it needs to, and that's
37 all.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

40
41 **MR. BANKS:** I can appreciate Kevin wanting to capture something
42 that is most representative, and I think the only fair way to do
43 that is to try to capture as many years as possible. We will
44 always have changes in fishing behavior, based on regulations,
45 and so I would think that, with really any sets of years, you
46 could probably make that same argument, and so that's why it
47 seems to me that 1986 through 2015 is the most fair way to do
48 it, but I do recognize the desire of some states that say, yes,

1 but our general fishing situation was different during the first
2 half of that time series, and the other states say, well, our
3 fishing has been much different during the second half, and
4 that's why I think that 50/50 historical landings versus recent
5 landings is appropriate.

6
7 **I would like to make a substitute motion to consider Option 3a**
8 **and 3d only for trips in Alternative 6, excluding 2010, which I**
9 **think we already accomplished.**

10
11 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

12
13 **MR. RIECHERS:** If I am counting correctly, we've got room on the
14 board. If I'm counting correctly, we only have a motion and a
15 substitute motion and we have room on the board for another
16 substitute or an amendment.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We don't have a second yet. I was letting
19 them get the motion on the board. It's seconded by Mr. Matens.
20 Ms. Levy, did you have your hand up? Is it to this point, or do
21 you want to wait a minute? I am just trying to get the motion
22 up.

23
24 **MS. BOSARGE:** Let's just give staff just a minute to get the
25 motion all the way on the board, or we will probably really
26 confuse ourselves. Just hang on just a sec.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

29
30 **MR. ANSON:** Just a point of clarification, Patrick. You want
31 these dates to apply to both biomass and trips calculation, or
32 just biomass?

33
34 **MR. BANKS:** Just trips. I mean, I don't think they were
35 calculating biomass at the range of dates to begin with. I
36 think they were only doing it for trips anyway.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Do you have a point of clarification at this
39 point? I just want to get this motion on the board first, Mr.
40 Riechers. Mr. Banks is nodding that the motion on the board is
41 correct. Is there discussion? Mr. Riechers.

42
43 **MR. RIECHERS:** I am going to try here. **I will offer a second**
44 **substitute motion that includes Option 2a, 2d, 3a, and 3d.** If I
45 get a second, I will then try to explain that it's similar
46 rationale that Patrick was trying to work through as well as
47 Kevin.

1 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** It's been seconded by Mr. Anson, and we'll
2 give them just a moment to get the motion up on the board, so
3 that we all understand what it is that we will be voting on.
4 While they're trying to get it up there, why don't you go ahead
5 with a little discussion, Mr. Riechers?
6

7 **MR. RIECHERS:** It really follows the same logic that Kevin laid
8 out by trying to keep in the 2009 truncation at that point in
9 time in the time series, as well as Patrick brings up the point
10 that, in some of these discussions, this may come out in the
11 wash, and, if we just take the longer time periods, as well as
12 weighting to the backend and the frontend, we may get there as
13 well, as well as staff's concern that we have too many options
14 here.
15

16 This basically cut out the 2b, 2c, 3b, and 3c, and it gives you
17 only four alternatives to lay in here to the options in
18 Alternative 6, and it reduces some of the workload in doing
19 that, but it should give you a range of what those really will
20 look like in compilation to the biomass estimate, and then we
21 always have the option of choosing in between, as we go forward
22 in the document, if we see that there is a better sweet spot
23 there, but this will get the first analysis done, where we can
24 take a good look at that and really see those impacts, if there
25 are any, and there may not be, and that will come to light.
26

27 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you for that, Mr. Riechers. Mr.
28 Riechers, let's review the motion on the board and make sure
29 that it's correct.
30

31 **MR. RIECHERS:** Yes, that's correct.
32

33 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Any further discussion? Ms. Guyas.
34

35 **MS. GUYAS:** It would seem to me, if we're going to go for the
36 long time series in each of these and the shorter, we probably
37 should also include the shorter, because you're essentially
38 going to have to do that analysis work anyway, and we're going
39 to need to understand what happened during that shorter time
40 period, the more recent ones, and I think it's 2006 to 2009 in
41 the Alternative 3 and then 2006 to 2015 in options related to
42 Alternative 2, but we're at the point where we can't add more to
43 this stack of motions, and so I will just put that out there.
44

45 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?
46 Okay. I will give everybody a minute here to kind of think
47 about it and make sure you're up to speed with what we're doing
48 here. All right. Listen to me. **By a show of hands, all of**

1 those in favor of the motion before you, please signify by
2 raising your hand; all those opposed, like sign.

3
4 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Six. The motion passes eight to
5 six.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** The motion carries eight to six. Okay. Let's
8 move on. Any further discussion before we leave this? Okay.
9 Dr. Lasseter.

10
11 **DRAFT AMENDMENTS FOR INDIVIDUAL STATES**
12 **LOUISIANA**
13

14 **DR. LASSETER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is the last action
15 for this amendment, but I did want to point out that you will
16 see that there is a Section 2.3 and a 2.4, and so, the way staff
17 is approaching this document, this will be the master document
18 that will have a complete analysis of all of the permutations
19 that are possible under the individual state amendments as well.

20
21 It's just a discussion here, and then, in the Chapter 4, once
22 you direct us to go forward with a public hearing draft, we will
23 then be able to analyze those actions into separate amendments
24 within this document as well, and so I just wanted to point out
25 that these sections are here and why they are there, but we're
26 going to actually go through those actions in the individual
27 state amendments, which we can turn over to. We will use
28 Louisiana's, since we have preferreds there. Louisiana's
29 management for recreational red snapper amendment is at Tab B,
30 Number 6(e)-1.

31
32 You have two actions in this amendment, and the first one
33 addresses the authority structure. As I just noted, for
34 Louisiana, we have a preferred alternative, Preferred
35 Alternative 2, which is for delegation, and the other four
36 individual state amendments do not have a preferred selected at
37 this time.

38
39 At the last council meeting, you directed -- The council sent a
40 letter to each of the state directors requesting further
41 clarification as to what this full delegation idea was, and we
42 did receive letters from three states now, and we have
43 Louisiana, Florida, and Mississippi, each of which have outlined
44 the items that they would like considered in delegation, and I
45 guess I'm not really sure how much detail to -- Has everybody
46 reviewed the amendments? I am not really sure how to approach
47 this discussion, and I think I would like to just turn it over
48 to the committee to discuss these items and help staff flesh out

1 what you mean by full delegation.

2

3 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

4

5 **MR. RIECHERS:** A comment and a question. This is the question
6 part of it. Ava, those letters came in, and I assumed, and you
7 probably haven't had time, but the thought, I think, as we left
8 the last meeting was there was going to be a twofold process.

9

10 In fact, that wasn't part of the process that I was aware of,
11 but so you have not incorporated -- Let me just ask this first.
12 You have not incorporated any of those state delegation
13 questions either in the document we just went past nor in each
14 of these state documents, and is that correct?

15

16 **DR. LASSETER:** They would only apply to these individual state
17 amendments. This is where the action is, and so it's in this
18 Action 1. Right now, we have two alternatives. We have this
19 alternative for delegation and then another full delegation
20 authority, which is what we were wanting to flesh out. Then we
21 have just received the letters. I think one of them even came
22 in late yesterday, and so, no, there has been no incorporation
23 by staff.

24

25 We are also not sure -- We wanted to bring the letters to you
26 and have discussion. Some of the items in some of the letters
27 are even already included in delegation, modifying the bag
28 limit, and so that's pretty much understood. It's my
29 understanding that NMFS is working with the states, potentially.
30 The idea of having to manage the ACT, I don't think, is set in
31 stone. I think there is some discussion about modifying the
32 buffers.

33

34 Other items in here are the carryover provision, and I believe
35 we have an amendment that we're working on for that, and so I'm
36 not sure whether or not that's feasible, but I would kind of
37 like NMFS to chime in on this one.

38

39 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

40

41 **MR. RIECHERS:** That tells me where we are in regard to the state
42 letters. I think, as we left the meeting though, there was also
43 a discussion about -- As we left this topic last time, there was
44 a discussion about National Marine Fisheries Service kind of
45 going back and looking at -- Either sending a letter or coming
46 prepared to talk about what they thought they could delegate
47 versus what they just absolutely knew they could not delegate as
48 well.

1
2 Maybe I missed it in the interim, but I didn't see it then, and
3 maybe they can address it now, or maybe they're not prepared to,
4 but I was just wondering if we had a chance to go back to that
5 notion as well, and I think that kind of changed as -- Like I
6 said, it was a little different than us getting a letter saying
7 what we wanted, because I thought they were going to basically
8 provide what they thought they could delegate or not.

9
10 **DR. LASSETER:** If I could respond to that, I do believe that
11 that is in the document, that there's a section on things that
12 cannot be delegated, and am I mistaken?

13
14 **MR. RIECHERS:** Am I recalling this wrong? I thought there was a
15 discussion about them looking back at both those things as well
16 as digging a little deeper at the last meeting, and maybe I am
17 not recalling correctly. I can go back and check the minutes,
18 but I thought there was something in that regard.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Levy.

21
22 **MS. LEVY:** I mean, we did discuss that, but I think the way that
23 we tried to accomplish that was in the letter to the states
24 asking for your input about what you wanted delegated. There
25 was a portion at the end of that that basically said these are
26 the things that can't be delegated, because they are required by
27 -- They are required to be in the FMP, or they just don't apply
28 just to the recreational sector, and so things like setting the
29 ACLs and reporting requirements for the for-hire fleet that is
30 linked to the permit and stuff like that, permitting
31 requirements, and so we did provide a list of those things that
32 we didn't think could be delegated in that letter from the
33 council, and then we're looking for feedback from the states
34 about what you really want delegated, based on that information.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

37
38 **MR. BANKS:** Ms. Levy got it. I was going to reference that
39 letter that we all received from the Gulf Council that stated
40 all of that.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Dr.
43 Crabtree.

44
45 **DR. CRABTREE:** It seems to me that you ought to think about what
46 are the things you would want to customize to your state, and it
47 seems clear to me the season, first and foremost, and I guess
48 the bag limit and possibly the size limit, although understand,

1 if we have varying size limits all over the Gulf, that will make
2 it more difficult to figure out the selectivities and do the
3 assessment, but it seems to me the main things are the bag limit
4 and the season.

5
6 Part of why we're struggling so much to get anywhere with this
7 is we're having a very difficult time refining this down and
8 making decisions, but it's not -- Anything that has to do with
9 setting allocations and setting the ACLs and those kinds of
10 things, they need to remain at the council level.

11
12 I think, for the carryover provision, we're working on an
13 amendment now, and so it seems to me that would take care of
14 that, and I'm not sure what else, Ava, there seemed to be
15 confusions or issues about, but, to me, the -- I know there is
16 the desire for all this flexibility, but, realistically, the
17 more we narrow this down and focus on what are really the things
18 you need, the better off we would be and the more chance we
19 would have of getting this done.

20

21 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

22

23 **MR. BANKS:** I would agree with that, Roy. In our letter back to
24 the Gulf Council, we identified four things, two of which we
25 already have in our state plan, and I guess, Ava, I need some
26 direction from you on how best to add the other two, and does
27 that complicate things?

28

29 **DR. LASSETER:** We haven't really had a discussion -- I haven't
30 had a broader discussion, and so I would feel more comfortable
31 speaking with NMFS and working with the IPT as to how we would
32 move forward, but, in looking at your letter, the ACT issue, I
33 think we've already kind of addressed that NMFS is working with
34 you on that.

35

36 Again, the bag limits, that's already in there, and your only
37 other one is the carryover provision, which Dr. Crabtree just
38 mentioned that we are working on amendment, and so that might be
39 an issue for this committee to take up, moving forward with
40 that, and I'm not really sure how to reconcile that you have
41 that as a separate amendment. Can that be worked into here? I
42 would need some kind of direction about that.

43

44 **DR. CRABTREE:** The carryover has implications with regard to
45 whether we're exceeding the ABC or not and the control rule, and
46 so I think that needs to be done at the council level, and it
47 needs to be applied consistently, and so that's in the works,
48 and, based on everything I have seen, the carryover amendment is

1 likely to be done long before this one gets done, but I think
2 that needs to be done consistently and through the control
3 rules. Otherwise, we could end up in a place where a state
4 carries a bunch of fish over and, all of a sudden, the sum of
5 the state catch levels exceed the ABC, and that's not allowed.

6

7 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Guyas.

8

9 **MS. GUYAS:** We submitted a letter that had a list of ideas or
10 things that we would like to have the flexibility to use the
11 manage the fishery, and, a lot of them, we've already talked
12 about, but, again, I guess where I am is, is this list
13 acceptable?

14

15 Based on what Roy is saying, it sounds like we're still working
16 on the ACL/ACT issue, and then one of the things that is on our
17 list that I suspect would have to stay with the council would be
18 the ability to establish multiyear ACLs, since that's another
19 thing that comes back to the ABC, but, again, if there is a
20 problem with any of these, I think we need to answer that first,
21 before we start adding them to the document, and it sounds like
22 maybe we can have that discussion today, but maybe not. It
23 sounds like there hasn't been the internal discussion among
24 staffs yet.

25

26 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

27

28 **DR. CRABTREE:** If I understand the ACL/ACT issue, it seems to me
29 that the issue is when the council, in this FMP, allocates the
30 fish out to each state, are we allocating out the ACT or the
31 ACL, and we need to decide that.

32

33 If we allocate out the ACL, then it's going to be up to the
34 states to figure what buffer they need to use to make sure they
35 stay under, and that's putting more of the responsibility on the
36 states. If we allocate out at the ACT, then the states could
37 manage to what they get, but I think that's just something the
38 council needs to decide how they want to do it.

39

40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

41

42 **MR. ANSON:** It might not be the appropriate time, but I guess,
43 at least looking ahead to Alabama's amendment, Ava, part of the
44 confusion, I think -- Robin mentioned that we talked about what
45 NOAA would be responsible for and would not be included in
46 delegation and that type of thing, and I do recall a brief
47 conversation about that.

48

1 The way the alternatives are structured, it kind of is vague as
2 to what is delegation, and delegation is not equal in two
3 different sets of eyes, and so maybe something to consider is
4 that, in the amendments, is that we remove one of the
5 alternatives and just simply remove the preferred alternative
6 for Louisiana, for instance, since we're on that amendment.

7
8 Remove the Preferred Alternative 2 and just simply have an
9 Alternative 3 then that says establish a management program that
10 delegates management authority in federal waters to Louisiana,
11 and the scope of the authority is to be included in something
12 that's going to be defined, and it will be defined during a
13 deliberative process that we have.

14
15 Whether it's the ACT or not the ACT, we can deliberate that at
16 the council, and so -- I was kind of in the same boat as Robin.
17 What is some delegation and what is full delegation, if you're
18 defining them in both instances, and so maybe that might be
19 something just to help kind of understand where we're going with
20 the document and such.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** To that point, Dr. Crabtree?

23
24 **DR. CRABTREE:** I don't like the words "full delegation", and the
25 question is what are you delegating? If it's the season, then
26 you're delegating the season. If it's the season and the bag
27 limit, then that's what you're delegating, and that means the
28 state can set the season and the bag limit the way they think is
29 appropriate, but they've got to stay under their share of the
30 fish, and they've got to comply with the Magnuson Act.

31
32 We're not going to come in and approve everything they do in
33 every decision, and it's delegated to them, and it's their
34 responsibility, and they're going to do it. Now, if they fail
35 and we have overruns, then we would end up in a situation where
36 we would have to consider withdrawing the delegation and pulling
37 it back, and so it's not full or partial.

38
39 If full means delegate everything, that's not going to happen.
40 That would mean -- To do that, we would have to take red snapper
41 out of the FMP and turn it all over, and so it's more what
42 specific things do you want to delegate.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Sanchez.

45
46 **MR. SANCHEZ:** I have a question, a hypothetical. If you have
47 one state that is going forward with their plan, and they do
48 have something that turns out to be a gross overrun, then the

1 federal government has to go back and assess this, and what is
2 the implication to the remaining states that essentially played
3 by the rules and didn't have a gross overrun? Will they be
4 impacted by the state that breaks ranks, so to speak?

5
6 **DR. CRABTREE:** My guess is, if a state had an overrun, we would
7 ask the state to -- Realistically, I think how this works is the
8 council is going to watch all of this, and the states are all on
9 the council. If a state goes over, the council is going to say
10 what happened, and we would expect, I think, the state to take
11 appropriate measures to deal with that.

12
13 If they did that and it was a one-time overrun, okay. I don't
14 think a one-time overrun by one state shoots the whole thing
15 down. Now, would it affect the other states? Ultimately, when
16 we do the new assessments, the catches go into it, and, if we
17 caught too many fish, that is going to get factored into it, but
18 it's hard to say what impact it would do.

19
20 I guess it's conceivable, if one state consistently didn't do
21 what it was supposed to do, we could pull the delegation away
22 from that state and set a default season off of that state and
23 still have delegations for the other four states, but that will
24 get tricky, I think, to deal with.

25
26 In my view, what we ought to do is combine all of these
27 amendments into one, and we ought to view this as it's all or
28 none and that we're going to be consistent about what we're
29 delegating across-the-board and how we're doing it.

30
31 I don't like having these separate amendments and this hodge-
32 podge of everything. I think, in the end, it will slow everyone
33 down, and I am skeptical that we would ever do this for just one
34 state and not the others, and so that's kind of my two-cents on
35 this.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Levy.

38
39 **MS. LEVY:** I will just add that the provision in the Magnuson
40 Act that allows for the delegation -- There is an obligation for
41 the Secretary to make sure that the state regulations are
42 consistent with the fishery management plan, and so, if you have
43 an overrun, then that's not consistent with the plan, and the
44 Secretary is supposed to notify the state, and the state is
45 supposed to rectify the inconsistency.

46
47 If the state doesn't rectify the inconsistency, then the
48 Secretary can sort of revoke the delegation, and so there is a

1 process in there where there is a requirement to monitor what
2 the states are doing and make sure that the regulations are
3 consistent with the plan.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Mr.
6 Diaz.

7
8 **MR. DIAZ:** I am backing up just a little bit to something that
9 Dr. Crabtree said a minute ago. He was talking about whether to
10 put ACLs and let the states manage to an ACL or an ACT, and,
11 when I think about that, I wanted to -- At some point during
12 this meeting, I wanted to congratulate Mr. Banks and the State
13 of Louisiana for recently getting LA Creel certified by National
14 Marine Fisheries Service and MRIP. I think that's a big
15 accomplishment, and I applaud you all for that.

16
17 When I think about this document and how we're going to manage
18 this, it's giving the states the ACLs. I believe the State of
19 Louisiana, with LA Creel, I believe you all can get numbers
20 every few days, like every three or four days, and they can
21 manage with a lot less than a 20 percent buffer.

22
23 I don't know what their number will be, but I'm confident that
24 it can be a lot better than that, and, with their data
25 collection system, I would like for them to be able to choose
26 that number and be responsible if they go over their ACL, but
27 for them to be able to choose that number, and so I just wanted
28 to put on the record how I was thinking towards moving this
29 along in regard to ACLs. Thank you.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?
32 Lieutenant.

33
34 **LT. ZANOWICZ:** Good morning. I just wanted to chime in from an
35 enforcement perspective. I still think there is some confusion
36 as to who exactly will be enforcing the regulations developed by
37 the states, once they are delegated management authority, if
38 it's going to be federal agencies or that responsibility is
39 solely going to fall on the state agencies.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

42
43 **MR. BANKS:** Our staff, as well as our enforcement staff, has
44 come and met with the Coast Guard on this issue, and, from
45 everything I have gathered from those meetings, the Coast Guard
46 and our enforcement staff are on the same page as to how this
47 would work, and it would continue to work the way it's been
48 working.

1
2 I am not so sure where this continued confusion came from, and I
3 heard it at the last meeting, and so we specifically went to the
4 Coast Guard with our enforcement guys, who are completely
5 onboard with these plans, and tried to make sure that everybody
6 was understanding and onboard. We left those meetings that
7 everybody was not confused, and so I am a little taken aback
8 that there seems to still be some confusion, because there
9 certainly wasn't when we left those meetings.

10
11 **LT. ZANOWICZ:** I am not sure -- Well, let me back off.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. Is there further
14 discussion? Dr. Crabtree.

15
16 **DR. CRABTREE:** I can give you my two-cents on this, and I have
17 sat and talked with NOAA Law Enforcement about this. Let me
18 start by saying, right now, what we have is a very difficult
19 enforcement situation, because we are trying to police a line
20 nine miles off of each state, and we have different seasons on
21 one side than on the other.

22
23 To police that adequately requires at-sea enforcement, which we
24 don't really have the resources to do very much, and it creates
25 a problem with enforcement at the dock, because, if you find a
26 guy with a red snapper and state waters are open and federal
27 waters are closed, if he says that I caught it in state waters,
28 I don't think you have a case, and so that's a problem.

29
30 Now, this structure solves that problem, to some extent, because
31 we won't have this line out in the ocean that we're trying to
32 police, and so, if a state's fishery is open and has some
33 certain bag limit, then, when you go to the dock and check a guy
34 if he has a fish and the state is closed, he is in violation,
35 and it doesn't matter where he caught them.

36
37 What I think happens here is the reliance is going to be on at-
38 the-dock enforcement for recreational fisheries, and I think,
39 realistically, that's the way recreational fishery enforcement
40 usually is done anyway, and it will make at-sea enforcement
41 difficult, because, if you stop a vessel at-sea, what rules he
42 is supposed to follow is going to depend on where he is landing,
43 and so, if you've got a boat that is off of Mississippi, he
44 might be five miles from Louisiana and five miles from
45 Mississippi, and maybe he has got a Louisiana license and a
46 Mississippi license, and I can see how that's a difficult sort
47 of situation.

48

1 Now, I view this as the majority of the enforcement that will
2 occur here will be done by the states, and we have JEAs with all
3 of the Gulf states, and most of the dockside enforcement of
4 recreational fisheries, and most times, when somebody gets a
5 ticket for being one over the bag limit or those kinds of
6 things, it's usually a state agency that makes the cases on it.

7
8 Now, we may have bounds on the delegation of the bag limit is
9 such that it can't be more than this, and so, if you find
10 someone in the EEZ who is recreational and has a hundred fish,
11 he would be in violation of that, and so there probably should
12 be some bounds on it.

13
14 There could be times when no state is open and everybody is
15 closed, and, if you find a guy who has got fish in the EEZ, that
16 could potentially be a violation of things, but I think, for the
17 most part, we're going to look at this to be enforced at the
18 dock and to be enforced by the state agencies.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Mickle.

21
22 **DR. MICKLE:** To that point, Roy, off the State of Mississippi,
23 the angler being stopped, if he or she had embarked from the
24 State of Mississippi, they would have had a pre-trip number
25 onboard, and so federal or state law enforcement stopping them
26 would know what regulations to follow if they had a Mississippi
27 trip number preauthorized by our system, and so the access of
28 that system is obviously very easy to offer to federal and state
29 law enforcement officials. They are already all on the state
30 side, and the federal side could be very easy, once the
31 certification occurs of the Tails n' Scales system.

32
33 That encapsulates the ability of Mississippi to handle
34 delegation very well and be able to follow all the delegation
35 requests that were submitted in the letter that we gave to the
36 Gulf Council. Thank you.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

39
40 **DR. CRABTREE:** But I can envision a situation where a vessel is
41 a Mississippi-registered vessel, but has an out-of-state
42 Louisiana license, or an out-of-state Alabama license, and he
43 left the dock and trailered into one of those states and went
44 out from there.

45
46 It's easy to imagine someone who lives five miles from the
47 Alabama/Mississippi line -- Mississippi is open, and Alabama is
48 closed, or, more likely, the Florida/Alabama line, and Florida

1 is closed and Alabama is open, and, okay, I will trailer my boat
2 over to Alabama and put in at a boat ramp. I've got an out-of-
3 state license, and I will go fish and come back in and then go
4 home. That could happen.

5
6 Even with that, it still seems to me, if you have a vessel that
7 has got an out-of-state license and all of that, it's not
8 straightforward exactly to know where they are going to land,
9 and so maybe that can all be worked out, or maybe I just don't
10 understand, but it does seem to allow the potential for people
11 to trailer into adjacent states and fish when their home state
12 is closed.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Guyas.

15
16 **MS. GUYAS:** I think there are things that -- There will have to
17 be an unprecedented, I guess, amount of coordination across the
18 states, in terms of law enforcement on this, because, at least
19 for Florida, I am here to tell you that on-the-water enforcement
20 is not going to stop recreational fisheries or fisheries.

21
22 We have other fisheries other than red snapper, and people are
23 still going to get stopped, and, if we go down this road, our
24 enforcement is not only going to have to understand what is
25 going on in Florida, but in Alabama and Mississippi, and
26 potentially Louisiana, because you can transit to all of those
27 places pretty reasonably, depending on where you're starting in
28 Florida.

29
30 It's going to be a lot to keep up with for an officer, probably,
31 and so I hear what you're saying, that there are certainly some
32 things that we don't necessarily think about around this table
33 that law enforcement is going to have to consider, and so, if we
34 go down this road, we're just going to have to coordinate, and
35 that's going to be how this goes, and it is -- I think just
36 doing dockside enforcement here is unreasonable, and, yes, there
37 is going to be dockside enforcement, but there is going to be
38 on-the-water as well. That doesn't go away.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Is there further discussion? Okay.
41 Seeing no further discussion, Dr. Lasseter.

42
43 **DR. LASSETER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We only have one more
44 action in this amendment, and that would be starting on page 13,
45 Action 2, post-season accountability measures. Again, in the
46 Louisiana document, we have a preferred selected, which would
47 apply the overage adjustment, in the event that there is one, to
48 the particular state, Louisiana in this case, that exceeds its

1 portion of the recreational sector ACL, and they also have the
2 preferred option selected to apply the overage adjustment only
3 to the components that exceeded its applicable ACL.

4
5 Again, the overage adjustment only applies when red snapper is
6 overfished, based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries
7 Report to Congress, and so that's actually all that we have in
8 this document. You have seen this action a couple of times now,
9 if there is any further discussion, or I can just turn it back
10 over to you, Mr. Chairman.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion by the committee?
13 Ms. Bosarge.

14
15 **MS. BOSARGE:** Then what is the incentive to stay under the
16 quota, if it doesn't matter until you get to the point where you
17 fish it down to 50 percent of BMSY? What is the accountability
18 mechanism?

19
20 **DR. CRABTREE:** Well, I don't see the 50 percent BMSY has
21 anything to do with it. If we exceed the ABC, then we're
22 violating the terms of the amendment and all, and the state will
23 have to rectify that or lose the delegation, ultimately, and the
24 more likely control is, if we're overfishing, that's not
25 allowed, and we would have to deal with it, and so I don't think
26 there's a connection to 50 percent BMSY.

27
28 It has to do with the fact that we have an annual catch limit,
29 and we have the provision in 407(d), and, if we don't do a
30 reasonable job of staying under that, this will fall apart and
31 won't happen. That doesn't mean, on occasion, someone can't go
32 over, but we would have to do a reasonably good job of staying
33 below the quotas.

34
35 **MS. BOSARGE:** That's what I'm getting at though. How do you
36 accomplish that if you have five states managing and they're
37 trying to manage for the best of their individual anglers in
38 their state?

39
40 Do you not end up in the similar situation that we did with
41 noncompliance, where, because there was no specific -- You know,
42 if you overshoot yours in one state, eventually it's going to
43 come off the overall quota, once you fish it too far, and there
44 has got to be some accountability per state to stay within your
45 quota. Otherwise, it's almost like, well, they overran theirs,
46 and so we need to overrun ours, and we're back in the same
47 situation, and I guess I don't understand.

48

1 **DR. CRABTREE:** Well, if you're asking me if this is a perfect
2 scenario that fixes everything, no, but what we have right now
3 is clearly not working either. Look at the overrun that we had
4 last year, and we have had overruns at various times. We have
5 all of these jurisdictional problems, and, essentially, we're in
6 a terrible situation, and so the real question I ask is does
7 this have the potential to be better than what we're currently
8 doing?

9
10 Now, if I had a way to just snap my fingers and make everybody
11 comply and make every fisherman happy and the world free of
12 crime, I would do that, but I think, really, the question is
13 does this have the potential to solve some of the problems we
14 have now and get us to a little bit better place, but the
15 consequence, if we run over -- So, easily, one state could go
16 over, but we may not be over the overall ACL, because it may be
17 that some other state turns out to be under.

18
19 Remember the data is not real-time, and so that could happen.
20 The real issue is did we go over the overall Gulf ACL, and I
21 think the states have an incentive to comply with this, because,
22 if they don't comply with it, the delegation is not going to
23 last, and it's going to be pulled back, and then they're going
24 to have a very short season off of that state, or you could
25 write this that says, if a state goes over and is notified and
26 doesn't make the proper correction, it gets no season off of
27 that state, and I don't know, something like that.

28
29 I think that's the way to look at it, Leann, is does this have
30 the potential to be better than what we're currently doing, and,
31 currently, we could get very close to where we close the EEZ
32 completely, and we still go over the quota, because the fish are
33 all being caught up in state waters, and I don't have a very
34 good, clean solution to that, but I do think the states have
35 some incentive to make this work, because I don't think any
36 state wants to be the bad guy on all of this, and, ultimately,
37 that means what their anglers are telling them they want, which
38 is more state control, is going to be lost.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

41
42 **MR. BANKS:** I agree with you, Roy. We have the accountability
43 measures within our plans, such that, if we do something bad
44 this year, we have to pay for it next year, and I think that's
45 what probably all states are going to want to do.

46
47 We have got to get out of a situation like Louisiana was in this
48 year, where we constrained our harvest to what we believe is our

1 historical catch, and so we weren't part of the 112 percent or
2 whatever overage. We were actually under that historical, and
3 we constrained our harvest.

4
5 Whatever the reason we were up around 212 percent Gulf-wide was
6 not because of Louisiana, and we don't feel like then the
7 following year that we should have to pay for that. We feel
8 like we should still have our set amount of allocation, and
9 that's why I think that going down this road is appropriate in
10 keeping them separate.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** To that point, Dr. Crabtree?

13
14 **DR. CRABTREE:** I hear what you're saying, but surely you see the
15 problem with each state just carving out their own historical
16 share, because then, when you add up the historical shares, it
17 will add up to way more than the quota, and so that's really the
18 problem.

19
20 Yes, you have a historical share, but it's not a historical
21 share that has ever been ratified by the council, and I don't --
22 Based on our discussion of allocations, it's not clear to me
23 that we're that much closer to it now than we were two years
24 ago, but maybe we are, but I am not criticizing Louisiana. I
25 mean, I give Louisiana a lot of credit.

26
27 If you asked me which state can you at least say that you
28 understand the basis for their management and their season,
29 clearly it's Louisiana. They've got an amount of fish, and
30 that's what they're trying to catch. If you asked me to explain
31 the basis for the seasons off of any of the other states, I
32 would struggle to come up with any rationale as to where those
33 number of days came from, and so, for that, I give Louisiana
34 credit. At least I can tell what's going on there.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? All right. I'm
37 trying to give everybody -- We are getting fairly close to lunch
38 here, and I'm just trying to give everybody a minute to make
39 sure we're good. Dr. Lasseter, do we still have to run through
40 the rest of the states on the agenda, or where were you going to
41 go from here?

42
43 **DR. LASSETER:** I feel I'm done. All five of the individual
44 state amendments are identical right now, except Louisiana has
45 preferreds selected for the two. Hopefully we can take up these
46 delegation letters, potentially, at Full Council and discuss
47 them further, and, as staff, we're not really clear on what to
48 do or how to incorporate these, although we did just receive

1 them, and so I will just leave it there for now.

2

3 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

4

5 **DR. CRABTREE:** I do, though, encourage you to give some real
6 consideration to merging these into a single amendment. I think
7 it will get done faster, and it just doesn't make sense, to me,
8 to have all of these separate amendments, and I really think, if
9 we go down the path of differences for every state and how we're
10 doing it -- Maybe that will work, but it's going to be
11 significantly more complicated, and I think, in terms of staff's
12 ability to get this done and pull it together, they would be
13 able to work much more efficiently if we merged these back into
14 one amendment and got it moving, but, ultimately, we're going to
15 have to come to some decisions, and it seems to me that there
16 are three big decisions.

17

18 One is what is the allocation, and two is what are we doing with
19 the for-hire vessels, and three is what specifically are we
20 delegating, and, until we can come to some decisions on those, I
21 don't know how to get this done, and I think, if we can come to
22 decisions on those, then this is pretty straightforward at that
23 point and we can make it happen.

24

25 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

26

27 **MR. BANKS:** Roy, I certainly agree with you that we've got to
28 come to an agreement on allocation, and I actually think that's
29 the only agreement that we've got to come to, and I would argue
30 that you don't even have to come to that agreement. You just
31 need to come to the agreement on what our allocation is going to
32 be.

33

34 Once you come to that agreement, in my opinion, it doesn't
35 matter what Robin does or Paul. As long as they don't exceed
36 their allocation, I don't care whether they have aliens in the
37 plan or charter boats or recs or whatever, just as long as they
38 don't exceed their allocation. I think that's the only decision
39 we've got to come to around this table, and then I think all of
40 these can move forward.

41

42 I respect what Florida wants to do and what Texas wants to do
43 and what Mississippi wants to do, however they want to do it,
44 and we just know that in Louisiana, we're not going to overrun
45 that allocation, or that quota, and we can choose to prosecute
46 it however we do it.

47

48 I think those are the -- I don't know that, with delegation, we

1 have to understand all of what Paul wants to do. I am not even
2 so sure that I care. I respect that he wants to prosecute it
3 however he wants to do it, and so I think, if we can just come
4 to an allocation decision, and you guys give the -- Let's give
5 it a try. Let's give it a try for three years, and, if we come
6 back in three years and Martha says, no, that allocation just
7 didn't work for us, then we look at it again and try to figure
8 it out. Unless we give it a try, we're going to be forced into
9 something that maybe is not good for anybody.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Shipp.

12
13 **DR. SHIPP:** I agree 100 percent with Patrick that allocation is
14 the only issue. I was off the council for three years, and I
15 can tell you that this conversation is almost identical to one
16 we had four years ago, and allocation is the issue. Patrick is
17 right that, once you get that done, who cares what the rest of
18 the states do?

19
20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

21
22 **MR. ANSON:** I don't want to put Dr. Lasseter on the spot, but,
23 Ava, can you quickly go through what the states have asked for,
24 as far as -- Is there similarities, or is there -- What is
25 different, I guess, speaking to the notion of trying to combine
26 these into one? The state management agencies have similar
27 concerns, and usually similar goals, and so I don't know if we
28 need -- I don't know if Robin and I need to write a letter, as
29 far as getting the document maybe moving down the road a little
30 bit quicker.

31
32 **DR. LASSETER:** We could even potentially go to that next agenda
33 item, and I could make a little spreadsheet real quick and pull
34 -- There is a lot of overlap there, and so maybe, if you just
35 give me five minutes, I will compile a table real quick.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

38
39 **DR. CRABTREE:** While there is a lull, just as an example, if we
40 did Louisiana and gave charter vessels to Louisiana and no one
41 else, then we would have a federal for-hire season in the EEZ.
42 Now, if we used the Amendment 40 timeframe, you would be
43 allocating more for-hire pounds to Louisiana than they have
44 caught in recent years, and so, by doing it that way, you would
45 take days away from the federal for-hire season and essentially
46 shorten their season.

47
48 Depending on those allocation decisions, you could shorten it a

1 fair amount, and so that's why I am saying that these things are
2 connected, and particularly with the for-hire issue. How you
3 allocate it and which states do it can have impacts on what
4 happens in the other states.

5
6 Now, if everybody wants to take the for-hire vessels in this,
7 then it's just an allocation decision, but, if we end up in a
8 situation where we have a federal for-hire season and some
9 states have their for-hire vessels, then the allocations
10 decisions you make for those states will affect how many days
11 everybody else gets, and so it's like everyone is independent
12 here, ultimately.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** John Sanchez.

15
16 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Thank you. You bring up an interesting point,
17 because I've been thinking along those lines. It seems like we
18 have our -- I don't know how to say this, but our federal
19 identity that we preserve throughout this, and then we're
20 delegating certain things yet to be agreed upon for state
21 management.

22
23 Now, in that, and before all of this, we have Amendment 40,
24 which divided up these sectors and separated them, and so I want
25 to fully understand the implication that you just, I guess,
26 scratched the surface of and how these charter boats are going
27 to be -- Are they going to be in these state plans, or are they
28 going to be out, since there is kind of that federal identity
29 there, and they're kind of married to that, and they have chosen
30 to be married to that, and so I'm kind of -- I need to get my
31 arms around that.

32
33 **DR. CRABTREE:** Well, it's difficult to, because it's not clear
34 to me what we're doing, and, if we do this and the federal
35 vessels aren't part of it, then Amendment 40 is there, and
36 that's the allocation, but, if some states are delegated the
37 private and the for-hire vessels, then are we saying that state
38 has to maintain the Amendment 40 split, or are we giving them
39 the flexibility to decide that? I just don't think we have ever
40 decided any of that at this point, but those are important
41 decisions that will affect everybody.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

44
45 **MR. BANKS:** I agree, Roy, but I think Amendment 40 is the rule
46 of the land. I think we would have no choice but to implement
47 that, unless Amendment 40 were to be changed by the council, and
48 then we would implement it some other way in Louisiana. We want

1 to keep our charter boats in. We feel strongly that we can
2 manage them, and they want to be in, and I think it comes down
3 to whatever -- If you guys would use the same calculation to
4 determine the overall federal for-hire days as we used to
5 determine the allocation, whatever that ends up being, then it
6 seems like there would be no difference there.

7
8 If we determine that our charter has got 12 percent or whatever
9 of the Gulf-wide allocation, based on a certain set of years,
10 and you all are using the same years to calculate what the
11 upcoming season is going to be, what is the difference there
12 between those?

13
14 **DR. CRABTREE:** We don't use that Amendment 40 timeline to define
15 what the catch rates are in the season. When we decide what the
16 for-hire season is, we're focused on just the last couple of
17 years, and so, if you allocate based on that long historical
18 timeline, you are very likely to allocate more fish to a state's
19 for-hire sector than that for-hire sector has caught in recent
20 years, and so, if you do that -- I mean, you can do that, but,
21 if you do, then that shortens up the season for everybody else.

22
23 When we do the season, we're looking at the most recent couple
24 of years, because, if you want to know what's likely to happen
25 this year, you're going to look at what happened last year, or
26 maybe what happened the year before that, but what happened in
27 1986 or 1990 really doesn't tell you anything about what is
28 likely to happen right now, and so that is where it gets more
29 complicated.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Guyas.

32
33 **MS. GUYAS:** To add onto that, and correct me if I'm wrong,
34 Johnny, because I think this was your idea to use this time
35 series, but that time series was chosen for Amendment 40,
36 because there was some desire by the council to move back to
37 what the charter boats had historically caught. It was not a
38 snapshot of what was going on right then. The fishery had
39 changed, and there had been this shift from for-hire landings to
40 private angler landings, and the council, at the time, wanted to
41 go backwards, to some degree.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Well, to that point, the reason I went with it
44 is because it followed our allocation policy, which is to use
45 the longest time series available. Then the idea of the 50
46 percent before and the 50 percent after seemed like it was the
47 only olive branch that would be there that would work, because
48 of the recent state noncompliance and the different things that

1 went on, and I think that's why we did that.

2
3 In fact, I actually came back and made a substitute motion and
4 reduced it even a little bit more, to make sure that we were
5 correct with the allocation policy, and that's why I chose that.
6 It didn't have anything to do with the numbers or the number of
7 days, but it was just what was consistent with what we had set
8 forth in that policy. Is there further discussion? Mr.
9 Riechers.

10
11 **MR. RIECHERS:** Roy, in your explanation, you are establishing
12 the length of season now based on the catch rates in the last
13 couple of years, and so what you're suggesting is that,
14 regardless of the percentage allocation a state gets at this
15 point, they should be using a catch rate that is not over that
16 entire time series, but over a time series that is much shorter
17 in nature, so that you basically are projecting out based on
18 that most recent timeframe.

19
20 Now, that, obviously, could shift across the Gulf some in how
21 those days play out, because, if a charter fleet has grown in
22 one area in more recent years or not, that would impact those
23 catch rates and the number of people participating and, thus,
24 the actual extraction rate per day, which is really what you're
25 trying to get to when you think about how long is this going to
26 make an individual state season, and whether that's for private
27 rec or even charter/for-hire or the combination of both, but
28 that's, I think, what you were trying to explain.

29
30 **DR. CRABTREE:** Yes.

31
32 **MR. RIECHERS:** It doesn't really affect the overall percentage,
33 but it affects the extraction at this time.

34
35 **DR. CRABTREE:** Yes, and, I mean, we know the fishing power of
36 the recreational fleet and the for-hire fleet has increased
37 amazingly in the last twenty or thirty years, because of all the
38 equipment they have now, the electronics and the GPS units and
39 the bottom-finders.

40
41 If you use catch rates that are thirty years old, you will
42 grossly underestimate the catch rates that are going to occur,
43 and so you've got to take in the effect of how all this
44 technology has changed catch rates, and you've got to take into
45 account how all the artificial reef programs have affected catch
46 rates. Then you've got to take into account the dynamics of the
47 stock. The catch rates twenty years ago off of the west coast
48 of Florida were next to nothing, but that's very different now.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. Is there further
3 discussion? Okay. We are heading up to our lunch hour, but we
4 had asked Ava -- Kevin had a specific ask of Ava, and so I would
5 like to at least work our way through that, and then we will
6 take our lunch break, and we will pick up with the Generic For-
7 Hire Reporting Amendment after lunch, if that will be okay with
8 the committee, and so, Dr. Lasseter.

9
10 **DR. LASSETER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just, from the three
11 letters, put together this list real quick, and they're ordered
12 and spaced in terms of, and this is my assumptions, but
13 feasibility. The first four lines there, my understanding is
14 that's already included in delegation, and I am assuming that,
15 if a state wanted to allow its charter captain and crew to
16 retain a bag limit, that that could pretty simply be included,
17 but that's my guess.

18
19 The next section is manage the ACT and angler registry for data
20 reporting, and I also think these are included in the
21 negotiations between NMFS and the states, and definitely the
22 angler registry. I assumed that all the states were working on
23 that actively. The size limits, this has been in this document,
24 and it was in 39 as well, and you did remove it. I am sure that
25 could -- It seems like that could be delegated. You had decided
26 not to modify your size limits, and I think that could -- It
27 would just need to be put back in the document for analytical
28 purposes.

29
30 This section is where I'm not real clear on, the modify gear for
31 harvest and establish area and depth-specific gear regulations,
32 and I would defer to NMFS on that. We did just address the
33 issue with carryover provisions, and that sounds like it could
34 be potentially tied to the idea of using multiyear ACLs, and
35 then there was kind of just a blanket modify the delegation as
36 necessary, and I think that's the one that probably is not going
37 to fly. Major decisions that haven't been considered would
38 probably need to come back before the council for review, and so
39 that is my guess.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there discussion? That's based
42 on the three letters that you received, correct? I don't guess
43 the other states would have anything that would be wildly
44 different from what's on the list, and I hate to put anybody on
45 the spot, but it sounds like we're kind of getting the gist of
46 what we're doing, at least on the board, or at least to discuss.

47
48 I certainly don't want to put anybody on the spot, but, as we go

1 into the lunch hour, if you think there is something on here
2 that we can move forward with, or if there's something in here
3 that's just not plausible, then we need to consider that as
4 well.

5
6 Before we leave this, I am giving everybody a minute to think
7 about it, because we're fixing to take a lunch break, and is
8 there any more comments or anything else? Any further
9 discussion? All right. We will pick up, after lunch, on the
10 Update on Implementation of the Generic For-Hire Electronic
11 Reporting Amendment. Our lunch is scheduled from 12:00 to 1:30,
12 and we will start at 1:30.

13
14 (Whereupon, the meeting recessed for lunch on January 30, 2018.)

15
16 - - -

17
18 January 30, 2018

19
20 TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

21
22 - - -

23
24 The Reef Fish Management Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery
25 Management Council reconvened at the Hyatt Centric, New Orleans,
26 Louisiana, Tuesday afternoon, January 30, 2018, and was called
27 to order by Chairman Johnny Greene.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We will continue on with our next action item,
30 which will be Item Number VII, and it will be Update on
31 Implementation of the Generic For-Hire Electronic Reporting
32 Amendment and Dr. Farmer.

33
34 **UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENERIC FOR-HIRE ELECTRONIC**
35 **REPORTING AMENDMENT**

36
37 **DR. FARMER:** Hopefully you guys aren't tired of hearing me talk
38 yet, and I will try to make this one quick. You guys, as you
39 know, passed an amendment looking at implementing a requirement
40 for electronic reporting with logbooks for your federally-
41 permitted charter and headboats in the Gulf of Mexico.

42
43 We have created what we call the Southeast For-Hire Integrated
44 Electronic Reporting Program, or SEFHIER. The implementation
45 team keeps getting new individuals added all the time, but I
46 think the current count is fifty-three, and it might be fifty-
47 four, actually, because I got an email earlier today.

48

1 These folks represent people from all the different councils,
2 from the marine fisheries commissions, ACCSP, Highly Migratory
3 Species, various Science Centers, along with the Office of
4 Science and Technology, General Counsel, Headquarters and NMFS
5 leadership, and a strategic planner, George LaPointe, who has
6 been invaluable in the development of a lot of this work.

7
8 We have broken it out into several sub-groups, and I will walk
9 through each one of them and tell you what they mean, but the
10 different sub-groups are data housing, minimum standards, survey
11 design, compliance and enforcement, outreach and education, and
12 then an overall program management and budget group.

13
14 On a biweekly basis, basically since mid-last year, we have had
15 implementation team meetings, and these are information-
16 gathering and data-sharing meetings. We have received a dozen
17 presentations now from different for-hire electronic logbook
18 programs that have been either implemented in the Southeast as
19 pilot studies or have been ongoing programs in other areas,
20 along with a national overview of ER programs from George
21 LaPointe.

22
23 Those have been invaluable in informing our overall group as to
24 what are the lessons learned from folks who have already been
25 down this path, because this is going to be an expensive, time-
26 consuming initiative, and we would rather not reinvent the
27 wheel.

28
29 Then we had our Data Housing Subcommittee breakout, and,
30 basically, the discussions centered around a couple of key
31 points, and one was access to the data. We want to make sure
32 that the program participants are able to access the data, but
33 also that access is restricted, so that confidential information
34 isn't getting into people's hands who shouldn't be getting
35 access to it.

36
37 We also wanted to make sure that our data housing provider was
38 able to provide a clear description of minimum standards,
39 preferably with an application programming interface that would
40 allow technology designed to easily be adapted to suit the
41 program, and we wanted our program to be adaptable, in terms of
42 where the data was being stored, in case the council came in
43 later, or the Science Research Director came in later, and
44 decided that some modifications were needed.

45
46 We also wanted them to be able to integrate it with other data
47 streams. Our charter fishermen are reporting currently to MRIP,
48 and we have folks who are reporting to TPWD, folks who are

1 reporting to Louisiana Creel, and we're looking for a way of
2 having all of these efforts be integrated, as well as possible,
3 and we're also hoping to leverage a lot of that dockside effort
4 that is already ongoing, in order to realize some cost savings.

5
6 We also examined staffing needs and funding needs, in order to
7 have the technology and staff capable of housing the data, and
8 the three main data housing providers that we looked at were the
9 NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, with the staff of our
10 IFQ program, basically, and then we also looked at the Southeast
11 Fisheries Science Center in Miami, and we looked at ACCSP.

12
13 After two meetings and several ongoing discussions at a
14 leadership level, a decision was made to use ACCSP as our data
15 housing provider, and so we're currently scheduling an in-person
16 meeting with ACCSP to discuss the final logistics of that, but,
17 as of now, that will be the group housing the data, and they
18 have some well-established protocols for allowing access to
19 state partners for data that they should have access to.

20
21 Then we moved on to minimum standards, and what I mean by
22 minimum standards are minimum standards for data quality and
23 transmission security. We wanted to make sure that this process
24 was transparent, and so we're generating a white paper on
25 location devices, and so these are different types of technology
26 that are currently in existence that would meet the Gulf's
27 criteria for a permanently-affixed device transmitting location.

28
29 We also will draft codified regulations that will provide the
30 regulatory framework for those requirements, and we'll have a
31 technical guidance document that will be on the SERO site, and
32 then we'll have a type approval list for hardware. All of that
33 is going to borrow very heavily from work that's already been
34 done in other regions, and, in many cases, these things are
35 already drafted and well along in the review process.

36
37 Survey design is probably the biggest, most challenging aspect
38 of this, as you might imagine. Our goal is to provide data that
39 are more robust and more timely than those currently being
40 provided by the MRIP charter survey, which is a tough bar to
41 beat while trying to make the program still relatively
42 affordable.

43
44 We would also like it to be integrated with the Southeast Region
45 Headboat Survey, HMS, MRIP, and other existing programs, so that
46 we're reducing the burden on fishermen to report to multiple
47 data sources and we're able to leverage all the effort that's
48 being done dockside for those other programs, and we're just

1 really trying to make this as cost-effective as possible.
2
3 We can break our survey design thought process out into four
4 general categories, and that is the elements that we'll be
5 collecting, how we're going to validate the data being
6 collected, how we'll integrate it with other surveys, and how we
7 will calibrate it to other surveys.
8
9 With regards to the elements, we're looking to generate as much
10 consistency with fields collected by other surveys as possible.
11 We're trying to develop a survey that is going to be quick to
12 complete. Less than eight minutes is the goal we're looking
13 for, and four to eight minutes is kind of the target.
14
15 We're trying to collect only critical elements and provide a
16 very detailed rationale for each of the elements that we're
17 requesting, so that fishermen will understand why we're asking
18 for that element and how it serves to allow you guys to do the
19 best possible job managing the stock.
20
21 We are trying to collect the dynamic elements, and that is
22 elements that are going to change on a trip-by-trip basis on a
23 trip level, and then we're going to hopefully collect the more
24 static elements, things that are just not going to change as
25 frequently, via occasional random selection, and I've got some
26 of the data elements towards the end of the presentation, but I
27 don't want to belabor the point on those, because it's not
28 totally finalized, and that will ultimately be a decision that
29 will have to be approved by the Science Research Director, but
30 the SEFHIER group will be making a strong recommendation on a
31 list of data elements.
32
33 I should say another thing that we've talked quite a bit about
34 is how to streamline that approach. We're going to auto-
35 populate as much of the elements as possible. One of the other
36 goals is to allow captains to develop favorites lists and pre-
37 populated fields for things that they are frequently catching,
38 so that this is a very simple interface that they can very
39 quickly complete, and that will probably involve using some
40 early adopters to work through some of the kinks before we go to
41 launch this thing, because, between the Gulf and South Atlantic,
42 we're looking at almost 3,000 vessels that would be going into
43 this program, many of whom have never reported via an electronic
44 logbook system before, and so we're really hoping to make this
45 as painless as possible, especially for those folks who really
46 aren't as in-tune with the process and probably don't even
47 realize that this is a requirement that might be coming down the
48 road.

1
2 Validation is probably the most important and also the trickiest
3 aspect of survey design. It would be nice if everybody would
4 just go ahead and report data and it would be flawless data and
5 they would all comply with the program and they wouldn't have
6 any questions.

7
8 We know that is not the case, and so there has got to be a way
9 of accounting for errors in reporting, either deliberate or
10 inadvertent errors in reporting, and also ways of accounting for
11 people who don't report at all, and so we need dockside
12 validation to verify catch and effort, and we need that to be
13 independent of the vessel trip reports.

14
15 The Gulf Council's requirement has made that relatively simple,
16 with the hail-in requirement, or hail-out requirement, and also
17 the requirement to report prior to offloading fish. We will
18 need dockside biological sampling, which we already do, and so
19 we'll need to expand that to get the length and weight data, age
20 data, and reproductive data that we need for these fish.

21
22 At-sea validation sampling would be helpful, because it would
23 allow us to validate those self-reported discards, but it is
24 burdensome and expensive, and so we're recommending that that be
25 something that be explored after this program has been launched,
26 and then we're also going to need compliance monitoring to
27 estimate non-reporting rates, and, in the Gulf, that could be
28 relatively simple, because we'll have those permanently-affixed
29 GPS devices, and so we might be able to do a lot of that from an
30 automated perspective, with some staff back in an office, rather
31 than having dockside staff, which are much more expensive.

32
33 With regards to integration, we're looking at developing
34 consistency between the regions and across programs, to reduce
35 angler burden, and, also, we're going to try to streamline the
36 data collection process.

37
38 One of the things that we would really like to avoid is double-
39 counting. There may be some anglers that would be reporting
40 through the SEFHIER process that will also be picked up in MRIP
41 surveys or state survey programs, such as LA Creel or TPWD, and
42 we're going to have to figure out a way to avoid double-counting
43 those landings, so that they aren't tracked twice against the
44 ACL, and that's an important part of this integration process.

45
46 As this program gets more well developed and is further along
47 and the white paper is fully conceived, and we have our
48 discussions with leadership, we will be approaching the various

1 states. As of right now, this is kind of a brainstorming
2 process, but what we would like to do, ultimately, is generate a
3 program that is so exciting and sounds like it's going to be so
4 good that the states really want to participate in it, and so
5 we're not at that point yet. We've been thinking about this and
6 working on it for quite a few months, but, once we get to that
7 point, we'll start rolling the states into the implementation
8 team process.

9
10 The most critical element of this integration is what we call a
11 trip management system, and this is something that is being
12 developed by ACCSP for the Greater Atlantic Region right now.
13 Basically, what you're looking at is having a unique trip
14 identifier assigned that applies across all the elements of the
15 data collection process, and so, for example, a fisherman in the
16 Gulf of Mexico might come to the dock and submit their logbook
17 prior to offloading their fish.

18
19 They might be intercepted by either a port agent or a law
20 enforcement agent, and those agents would then have access to
21 that logbook through the trip management system, and their
22 reports would be linked in the data stream to that trip
23 management ID.

24
25 In the Gulf of Mexico, I think that's going to be relatively
26 simple. In the South Atlantic, it's going to be a lot more
27 complicated, because the fishermen's logbooks are only required
28 on a weekly basis, and so we've been sorting through that.

29
30 We're also going to be looking at calibration, and I think most
31 of you understand that, in order for our stock assessments to
32 work, if we have a new data stream coming online, we have to
33 find some way to tune it to old data streams, and that's been a
34 big process of the MRIP certification discussions for Louisiana
35 Creel and Tails n' Scales and Snapper Check and the Florida Gulf
36 Reef Fish Survey.

37
38 If we can tune these programs and calibrate them, then they
39 become useful for stock assessments, and that tends to require a
40 minimum of three years of overlapping runs, in order to develop
41 some sort of relationship between the programs. If we don't do
42 that, then all this data that we're going to be collecting
43 through the SEFHIER process may have a break in the stock
44 assessment series, and it might not be all that useful until we
45 have collected lots of years of it.

46
47 We would like it to be immediately useful, and so that's where
48 that overlap comes in, and that's going to require some

1 duplication of effort for a few years. It will require
2 additional expenses and time for the captains and for the
3 samplers, and so we want people to understand that, and the
4 partnership with the states is going to be a critical element in
5 that design.

6
7 One of the big elements of the program that kind of snuck up on
8 us was how hard it is and how important it is to work through
9 the compliance and enforcement process. What we're hoping is
10 that, in the Gulf, this will be relatively streamlined. We are
11 going to be looking at the timeliness of reporting, where it
12 will be an automated process, where each captain will be
13 required to submit a logbook at set intervals.

14
15 If they haven't submitted either a logbook or a no-fishing
16 reporting at set intervals, they will be contacted through an
17 automated process, probably via email first and via a phone call
18 if they haven't responded within a certain amount of time, and
19 then probably via some sort of letter.

20
21 With non-reporting, we also can automate that in the Gulf, which
22 is nice, and so we can link the hail-out with the logbook and
23 the GPS track, and so, if someone hails out, but we don't get a
24 logbook, we could flag that and contact them. If we see a GPS
25 track, where a vessel is moving, but there is no associated
26 hail-out, saying that it's not a federal charter fishing trip,
27 then we can contact them and follow up.

28
29 We also had a great deal of discussion with our Southeast Law
30 Enforcement General Counsel and OLE people with regards to the
31 penalties that could be leveled on people who are failing to
32 report, with regard to delays in permit renewal or summary
33 settlements, and we also discussed the flip side of that, which
34 is how can we reward people who are good reporters?

35
36 We were thinking of maybe developing lists of compliant vessels
37 or sending some form of certificate for compliance that
38 indicates how well they're reporting, and that might be an
39 advertising boon for some of these charter/for-hire fishermen,
40 where they could advertise that on their website, to draw
41 conservation-oriented anglers to their business. It would nice
42 to incentivize folks who are participating in the program.

43
44 We went through, like I said, about a dozen pilot programs, and
45 there were a lot of lessons learned, especially along the lines
46 of compliance and enforcement. One note that came out was that
47 compliance and enforcement is very staff intensive, and
48 recommendations were to partner with the states and include all

1 the relevant offices from the very beginning and also to
2 automate, whenever possible.

3
4 With regards to outreach, it was important to conduct outreach
5 early and often and be very clear about not only what the
6 program requirements are, but also what the consequences are for
7 non-reporting.

8
9 We were told that training is going to be needed for program
10 implementation and compliance, and we were told to expect a long
11 phase-in process, as people start to buy-in and understand the
12 program, and so it may be that, even if SEFHIER comes on in
13 year-one, the data in year-one may not be all that useful,
14 because we might not have very high compliance. It may take
15 several years for this program to spin-up and get the compliance
16 that we would like to see.

17
18 That was certainly our experience with the Southeast Region
19 Headboat Survey, where it took several years of program
20 implementation before the compliance reached levels where the
21 program's estimates were what I would call very robust, without
22 a lot of adjustment.

23
24 Good ongoing communication among staff, captains, and the vessel
25 owners is going to be critical, and there is going to be some
26 interesting challenges, especially in situations where the
27 permit owner is not the captain, and so you're going to have an
28 electronic logbook that is going to be required to be submitted.
29 However, the requirement really is tied to the permit owner, and
30 that permit owner might not be on the boat. It might be a
31 different captain, and so there's going to be some communication
32 gaps there that are going to need to be plugged.

33
34 With regards to compliance protocols, we need to establish those
35 from the start, and we have talked quite a bit to develop some
36 processes and flows for how permit holds and sanctions would
37 work. We have been warned that permit renewal is kind of a poor
38 compliance point, because the reports don't have to be submitted
39 until the permit is renewed, and that could be a year from when
40 the fishing trip took place, and so we've got to iron out some
41 kinks in that process and also talk about how long after the
42 trip takes place would we accept a logbook report and actually
43 use it as actual data.

44
45 We also have coordinated with our General Counsel and Office of
46 Law Enforcement with regard to the chain of custody and law
47 enforcement requirements. Given that we're using ACCSP as our
48 data housing vendor, and that's a third-party data housing

1 solution, but they are well familiar and well versed with how to
2 follow that chain of custody, in order to provide us accurate
3 information as to whether a trip took place.

4
5 This becomes complicated in the Gulf of Mexico as well, due to
6 the requirement for a vessel tracking device, because we need to
7 ensure, with those third-party vendors that, for example, the
8 satellites were working that day or cellphone reception was
9 working that day. If we're not seeing anything coming from the
10 vessel, is it the permit owner's fault, or is it a technological
11 issue, because we don't want to be writing summary settlements
12 towards people for things that are out of their control.

13
14 With regards to outreach and education, what we're going to be
15 looking at, like I said, between the Gulf and the South
16 Atlantic, is about 3,000 participants in this program, and so
17 there's going to be a lot of outreach and education required.

18
19 It will be critical that we reach out to those permit owners, to
20 tell them what the program requirements are and explain the why
21 to them in a way that's compelling enough that they feel
22 invested in the program, either because they believe so strongly
23 in the program and are enthusiastic about what it might provide,
24 which I hope is the case, or at least understand what the
25 consequences of failing to provide the data, once it's required,
26 would be.

27
28 We also want to provide them some information sources, so that
29 they know where to go if they have any questions, and we want to
30 show them some of these applications that have been developed,
31 so that they get familiar with the reporting technology, and we
32 also want to show them how to access their own data for their
33 personal use.

34
35 One of the things we've talked with ACCSP about is allowing the
36 fishermen to access the data that they're submitting and even,
37 hopefully, providing them sort of visualization tools, so that
38 they can see spatial and temporal trends in their catches for
39 different species and other things that might be of interest to
40 them, so that they can make their business more effective.

41
42 Then we'll also need to do outreach to some of the data and
43 resource managers, so they understand what this program is and
44 how to get the data and how to use it and how to avoid double-
45 counting and how it's going to integrate with the existing
46 surveys, and we'll also need to, obviously, coordinate with
47 enforcement and our dockside agents.

48

1 We have had one meeting on that, and we've developed a white
2 paper coming from it, and we've discussed the different elements
3 of outreach and education that have been recommended by the
4 various pilot studies that we've heard from.

5
6 It's a broad gamut of outreach and education methods, but we
7 have talked a lot about how large-scale workshops, in places
8 where there are a lot of fishermen that will be participating in
9 the program, could be a good way to get people together and
10 talking.

11
12 Webinars are a good way to reach out to people, when they can't
13 travel, and letters and emails and websites and the print media,
14 and that would be even fishing magazines, and social media, like
15 Facebook and Twitter. Social media, through the fishery
16 organizations, and also just reaching out to the big industry
17 organizations, is something that we would like to do.

18
19 We might develop some training videos for some of the types of
20 software that would be NMFS approved, and we would like to reach
21 out to early adopters, because we feel that fishermen are the
22 best advocates and teachers for the program, and we would also
23 like to do a lot of dockside outreach, which is the hardest type
24 to do, because it's the most expensive, but it also is, from
25 every program we have heard from, the most effective way to
26 reach out to someone. It's to actually meet them on the dock
27 and talk with them about the approach.

28
29 This will be a multi-pronged approach to outreach and education,
30 and, like I said, the main thing is we want to get the fishermen
31 involved who are enthusiastic about the program, so that they
32 can spread the message and be the teachers.

33
34 With regard to program management and budget, we aren't there
35 yet. We will schedule some meetings with that group after we've
36 made further progress in the other subgroups, but we do have
37 white papers generated for all of the subgroups now that
38 summarize all of the discussions that we've had thus far, and
39 those are all at various stages of internal review within NOAA
40 and within the SEFHIER team. I think I am going to leave you
41 with that. Any questions?

42
43 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Are there questions? Dr. Stunz.

44
45 **DR. STUNZ:** Thanks, Dr. Farmer. That was a good presentation.
46 I just have a question, being part of the committee that put
47 forth this original amendment, and so the real question, and you
48 kind of touched on it a little bit, is -- One, I guess, is any

1 further refinements in what you think the cost might be or what
2 it's shaping, and, of course, the timeline?

3

4 **DR. FARMER:** With regards to cost, we're having a NOAA internal
5 survey design meeting coming up, and the main point of that
6 discussion is to talk about, okay, we've got this white paper,
7 and we've talked, in detail, about what elements we want to
8 collect and how we're visualizing doing it.

9

10 One of the big elements that we haven't gotten to yet is the
11 best approach, or most cost-effective approach, to monitoring
12 non-reporting. That is more generated towards the South
13 Atlantic, where we don't have the permanently-affixed hardware,
14 but we do need to talk about how many additional personnel we're
15 going to need to monitor these systems that are going to be
16 sending this data from the fishing vessels.

17

18 The main point of that discussion -- We're bringing the MRIP
19 consultants online with that as well, the folks who have helped
20 develop this FES survey and the modified APAIS survey. We are
21 bringing those consultants onboard to help us develop the final
22 kind of coverage estimates, in terms of what we're going to need
23 in order to have sufficient validation for the program, to
24 basically beat the MRIP charter survey with regard to its
25 precision.

26

27 That's kind of goal one, and then we're going to talk about,
28 okay, beat it by how much, and how much is it going to cost with
29 each level of magnitude of providing a more precise estimate?
30 How many additional personnel are we talking about? Basically,
31 it will be them working out the coverage percentages and then us
32 figuring out how many people that's going to take at each of
33 those thresholds.

34

35 I don't think that they will be substantially different in those
36 estimates from what we provided during the Gulf amendment
37 process, and we have done a lot of work reaching out to various
38 location device groups, and they have all told us that there may
39 be some bulk discounts available, and so the cost to the
40 fishermen could go down.

41

42 I think the cost to the agency will be pretty similar to what's
43 in that report, and there may be some cost savings that we could
44 realize just through using kind of a roving survey type of
45 approach, rather than kind of a set dockside validation
46 approach, but it remains to be seen how that will deliver on the
47 precision end of things.

48

1 The main issue that you run into is just because the geographic
2 region is so broad, and the number of vessels is so high, that
3 you might be able to get away with X number of personnel, but
4 there would be a lot of travel involved, whereas, if you go with
5 a higher number of personnel, it may actually end up being
6 cheaper, in the long run, just because we don't want people
7 having to go six or seven hours away from where they are based
8 in order to do some of these intercepts and that type of work,
9 and so we're still working through those final elements, but,
10 long story short, I think the estimates will be probably pretty
11 similar to what you saw in the Gulf amendment.

12
13 You had asked about timeline also, and so, currently, we're
14 still working through all of these elements. Having selected
15 ACCSP as our data housing provider, that's a major first step,
16 and a lot of the other pieces start to fall in line after having
17 made that selection.

18
19 We're still ironing through the final details of that. I am not
20 entirely sure about the timeline, but I think the main caveat
21 for this thing all along has been that we can't promise to do
22 anything until we get appropriations on it. It's going to cost
23 a lot of money that the federal government just doesn't have
24 right now dedicated to this particular program.

25
26 It's not entirely clear to me how that money would come in,
27 whether that would be an additional revenue stream dedicated to
28 the program that Congress would appropriate towards it or if it
29 would be requested that we reshuffle agency spending priorities
30 to make this program happen.

31
32 I don't know how that would work, and it's way above my
33 paygrade, and so the timeline is still a bit of an elusive
34 thing, but what I would like to do, through the SEFHIER program,
35 is develop a fully-conceived program with a cost estimate
36 associated with it and send that up to leadership, for them to
37 work out the complexity, but what we would like to do is put our
38 best foot forward and say, if you give us X dollars, we can give
39 you this deliverable.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Mr. Anson.

42
43 **MR. ANSON:** Thanks, Dr. Farmer. You mentioned ACCSP and them
44 housing the data. As commercial data is, state partners can
45 have access to real-time data, essentially, and it stands right
46 now, and that's what you envision for this as well, is the state
47 partners would be able to have that same access, real-time?

48

1 **DR. FARMER:** Yes, and we're picturing this to be kind of like a
2 for-hire equivalent of the SAFIS system that you're probably
3 familiar with the commercial fishermen, where, basically, you
4 would have non-disclosure agreements that would have to be
5 signed in order for you to get access through the ACCSP system.

6
7 We're picturing the Southeast Fisheries Science Center being the
8 ones in charge of issuing those approved NDAs to the various
9 state partners, and they may have some restrictions on some of
10 the fields coming in, and I'm not quite clear on what fields
11 those would be, but that basically would be the gist of it, is
12 that we want the states to have access to the data that they
13 need access to, and we want to work hand-in-hand with the states
14 to, like I said, reduce the reporting burden for the fishermen,
15 so that, if possible, these for-hire federally-permitted boats
16 are not also reporting to state-required programs, unless it's
17 during the time period required for calibrating, which I think
18 we're going to need some of that.

19
20 Also, we want to work hand-in-hand with the states, because the
21 states have the dockside presence out there. If we can get some
22 of these intercepts coming in with the biological sampling from
23 the state agents that are already there, I think it will be an
24 overall cost savings, and it's, again, above my paygrade to
25 figure out how we would integrate that from a financial
26 approach, in terms of federal money versus state money, but,
27 once this program is more fully conceived, I think one of the
28 big first steps in outreach is going to be towards the state
29 partners. I will be presenting on this at GulfFIN in March, and
30 so we'll have a little bit of that discussion, hopefully, there,
31 and we'll keep it moving forward.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Okay. Thank you
34 very much. That was a good report, and thank you, sir. All
35 right. With that, that will wrap up everything for the
36 electronic reporting portion of the agenda. We will move on to
37 our next action item, which will be the Analysis of the Red
38 Grouper Indices of Abundance, and this will be Tab B, Number 11.

39
40 **ANALYSIS OF RED GROUPER INDICES OF ABUNDANCE**

41
42 **DR. LORENZEN:** The SSC was asked to comment on or provide a
43 review of the red grouper indices of abundance and, in
44 particular, for the purpose of helping the council determine
45 whether it should consider interim action on the red grouper
46 fishery.

47
48 The material that we reviewed was this updated set of abundance

1 indices that was provided by the Southeast Fisheries Science
2 Center and FWRI, and the background to this is that, during
3 public testimony at the October meeting, a number of individuals
4 expressed concern about the red grouper in the Gulf of Mexico,
5 the CPUE declining, and generally people being unable to catch
6 the ACLs.

7
8 The request was made to extend those indices to the most recent
9 year, and so the Science Center did that, and you can see the
10 indices here up to -- This, in fact, includes 2016 and, in some
11 cases, 2017, and the first thing to note is that indeed the
12 indices of abundance have been declining over the last few
13 years, and so they are probably at roughly half of where they
14 were around 2012 or 2013, and so definitely this confirms the
15 reports that abundance seems to have declined.

16
17 When you look at this historical pattern, of course, there is a
18 lot of ups and downs, historically, and, in particular, there
19 was a very, very substantial down associated with the 2005 red
20 tide event, which was very, very extensive, and, in multiple
21 assessments, it's been shown to have a major impact on several
22 grouper stocks.

23
24 The stock recovered from that to, again, very high levels around
25 2010 to 2013, and then it obviously declined. One possibility
26 is that this decline in the most recent years may be associated
27 with the 2014 red tide, which was assessed to have been less
28 severe than the 2005 red tide event, and there could be other
29 things happening, recruitment failure, and we are not sure.

30
31 In order to put this in perspective, this also was provided by
32 the Science Center, and it has the SEDAR 42 red grouper
33 assessment and the spawning stock biomass, and you can see that
34 we were expecting an increase in spawning stock biomass until
35 about 2012 or 2013, and then there is -- Even in those figures,
36 there is a hint of a turn towards a decline, and, in fact, the
37 projections that were produced from this that we used to set the
38 ABCs showed a slow decline after 2013 and then a more rapid
39 decline in the coming years, and the reason for that, and this
40 is something that I put in, to give you a bit more context, but
41 the reason for that pattern is that, right in the year of the
42 red tide event, there was also a very strong recruitment event,
43 and so a lot of juveniles were produced in that year and entered
44 the fishery some years later.

45
46 Also, 2006 was still fairly strong, and so you can see that
47 there was this really big recruitment pulse, and so these
48 cohorts of fish would have moved through the fishery, and that's

1 what really caused that very high level of abundance around 2012
2 or 2013.

3
4 Now, whether the decline that we are seeing in the indices now
5 is much in excess of what we would have expected, it is
6 somewhat, but, as I said, there was an expectation of some level
7 of decline, unless there would have been another really strong
8 recruitment event.

9
10 Overall, the SSC obviously agreed with the conclusion that there
11 have been declining -- There has been declining abundance, but
12 we were unable to determine the cause without a stock
13 assessment, which is scheduled for 2018. It was noted that the
14 indices, even now, are fairly close to levels that they had been
15 at historically, with the exception of those sort of really
16 strong periods, and some decline was projected, as a result of
17 the expiration of the very strong cohorts.

18
19 It was also noted that not only have the abundance indices
20 declined, but catches have declined substantially, and so, in
21 2016, there were underages of about 50 percent, which may mean
22 that, in fact, the catch levels have declined broadly in
23 proportion to the abundance of the stock, and, even though
24 that's not very nice from the perspective of a fisherman,
25 actually, from a management perspective, it might indicate that
26 the stock is still being harvested at roughly the same rate that
27 it was harvested at before, and so, from that perspective, it
28 would be more varying if the indices of abundance had declined
29 and the catches had kept up, because that would suggest that the
30 stock is harvested at a higher rate.

31
32 Overall, the SSC comments were that it would be good to,
33 obviously, get the stock assessment in 2018, and the SSC did not
34 make a recommendation to consider interim action. Of course,
35 it's the council's prerogative to do that, if they like anyway,
36 but it was felt that there was not a strong enough case to make
37 that recommendation. Thank you.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Are there questions? I have one,
40 Dr. Lorenzen. In the previous slide, on the recruitment
41 estimates, in 2004, 2005, and 2006, it shows to be a pretty big
42 spike. If my memory serves me correct, 2004, 2005, and 2006
43 were also large recruitment years for red snapper. It also
44 reminds me that 2004, 2005, and 2006 were the three most active
45 hurricane years in history. Do you think there might be a
46 correlation somewhere along the way with all of that?

47
48 **DR. LORENZEN:** There might be.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I have never been a big fan of a hurricane, or
3 as many as we had in 2004, 2005, and 2006, but it just strikes
4 me odd that this is two species that have large recruitment
5 indices from -- Looking at it from an environmental-type
6 standpoint, it's something that -- As much as I hate to think
7 about the eco-based deal, it might be further consideration for
8 something along those lines.
9
10 **DR. LORENZEN:** Yes, absolutely.
11
12 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Dr. Frazer.
13
14 **DR. FRAZER:** Kai, thanks a lot. Real quick question. Earlier
15 in the day, I think Leann had pointed out that gag and other
16 shallow-water grouper species have also kind of experienced a
17 decline, and I was wondering if the SSC looked at the same type
18 of information for those taxa.
19
20 **DR. LORENZEN:** No, and so it was only requested for red grouper.
21
22 **DR. FRAZER:** A couple of other things. To Johnny's point, it's
23 interesting, to me, that you had a really low CPUE and kind of
24 abundance estimate, I guess, in 2004, and then you have a really
25 high recruitment year in 2006, which suggests that the stock
26 size and the recruitment relationship is not very strong, and
27 it's probably independent.
28
29 That's interesting, but I'm also wondering, because red grouper
30 are really interesting in their behavior, and they're harem
31 spawners, and so, when they move to males, essentially, that is
32 a behaviorally-mediated kind of trait, or characteristic, and
33 so, when they get low numbers, it may take some time for those
34 fish to ultimately get into a situation where they're going to
35 reproduce and contribute again to the population, and so I'm not
36 surprised by the cyclical nature of the spikes in the data, but
37 I'm just wondering how you incorporate that type of information
38 into the stock assessment or in the assessment of the dynamics.
39
40 **DR. LORENZEN:** It does seem, when you look at that, typically
41 really high recruitment events follow periods of quite low
42 abundance, and so maybe this gives us hope, but it's I guess
43 what one would call more of a periodic species, where you have
44 these occasional really high recruitment events.
45
46 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Anything else? Ms. Bosarge.
47
48 **MS. BOSARGE:** I am not sure what the council wants to do with

1 this. If you will remember, and I think it was at the end of
2 2016, we were working on a document, where we were trying to
3 figure out what to do with red grouper, did we adjust the quota
4 upwards, or did we leave it where it was, and it was strange to
5 me, because we were getting mixed signals from the fisheries.

6
7 We had some commercial fishermen that were saying, hey, we've
8 got a problem out there. We're not catching our quota, and
9 we're not catching it for a reason, and we have an issue with
10 this stock, but we had a situation where the recreational
11 fishery was actually experiencing a closure, if I remember
12 correctly, because they had bumped up against their quota, and
13 so it was a catch-22.

14
15 Do we increase the quota, so that we can extend that season, so
16 the recreational fishery won't have a closure, because they are
17 catching their fish. Those fish are there, and they're catching
18 them, but, on the other side, the flip side, the commercial guys
19 were not catching their quota, and they were telling us that the
20 fish are not healthy and we've got a problem.

21
22 I guess, now that we see where we're at, and we see that we do
23 have a problem, the one thing that I kind of took away for the
24 future, to think about when I get into one of those situations
25 again, is the commercial guys actually stopped fishing a little
26 earlier on that stock than the recreational fishery will, just
27 because of the economics of it.

28
29 When you go out there to fish commercially, you are not out
30 there to catch two or three or four fish. You need to catch a
31 lot of fish in a short amount of time to make it economically
32 profitable for you. As that stock goes into decline, and it
33 gets to a point where it's not super healthy, they will actually
34 start -- From a profit motive standpoint, they're going to start
35 pulling back a little sooner than maybe a different fishery that
36 only needs to catch two or three to really make it worth their
37 while, and I think we've got to think about that in the future,
38 as we're starting to look at some of these -- Because I can see
39 where this might come into play again with some of these other
40 groupers, because it looks like they may be having issues there
41 too, and so, if we come up against a situation like that again,
42 where we're trying to square the circle, and we're trying to
43 figure do we bump the quotas up or do we leave them where they
44 are or do we decrease bag limits, I think we need to keep that
45 mind, as maybe a learning lesson that sometimes comes into play,
46 because you can see it in the landings.

47
48 You can see it in the landings, and it makes sense. It makes

1 commonsense that it's just two different methods of fishing with
2 two different goals in mind, and it's not anybody's fault. It's
3 just a learning lesson that I took away from it.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

6

7 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think we'll get the new assessment for red
8 grouper later in this year, and the trouble right now is, even
9 if we wanted to do something to reduce the ACLs, because the
10 quota has already been distributed under the IFQ, it's not clear
11 to me how effectively we could make a change in it before the
12 beginning of next year anyway.

13

14 The real issue becomes setting the quota for 2019, and I think
15 we have a provision in the rule now that allows us to hold back
16 some quota if we have an assessment, and so, depending on when
17 we get the assessment, then we could potentially look at
18 adjustments for the following year, I guess, but it's not clear
19 to me that we could really do much in mid-season like this, very
20 easily anyway.

21

22 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Shipp.

23

24 **DR. SHIPP:** Dr. Lorenzen, what is your data source for those
25 recruitment estimates?

26

27 **DR. LORENZEN:** It was the SEDAR 42 red grouper assessment.

28

29 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Bosarge.

30

31 **MS. BOSARGE:** Dr. Crabtree, when you said we can hold back the
32 quota, do you mean a portion of the overall quota, or we can
33 only hold back a portion of one sector or the other?

34

35 **DR. CRABTREE:** Remember, in Amendment 36A, which we approved,
36 but it hasn't been implemented yet, we put a provision in there
37 that we could hold back quota for some period of time in case we
38 had an assessment coming. Clay pulled up the schedule, and it
39 looks like the assessment would be submitted to the council in
40 February of 2019.

41

42 If we had some idea of what was coming before that, we could
43 potentially hold back some quota then and then do a framework
44 adjustment early in the year, but I think we'll just have to see
45 how it plays out.

46

47 I mean, barring that, you could do something dramatic, like
48 close the fishery down or something, but I don't think anyone is

1 thinking along those lines, and so I think the best we can do
2 now is try to set ourselves up in a position where, if we have
3 to make reductions for 2019, we're able to do that.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Mr. Swindell.

6
7 **MR. SWINDELL:** I guess I'm a little bewildered by the fact that
8 our Scientific and Statistical Committee had no recommendations
9 as to what to do with a stock that has had significant declines
10 in a couple of times, and it bothers me as to either the science
11 isn't there to indicate any problem and the statistics doesn't
12 prove there is a problem, and so what do we do?

13
14 I mean, here we're basing all of our management decisions on the
15 best scientific information available, and the scientific
16 information available that we have from the SSC committee says
17 basically don't do anything, and so I guess I am kind of
18 bewildered. I don't know what to do. Thank you.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Gregory.

21
22 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Bernie, how quickly could you put
23 Slide 11 up from the PowerPoint that we circulated to the
24 council earlier? With the exception of 2017, the commercial
25 slide that we're putting up, the landings have been relatively
26 stable. The other low number there is 2010, and I assume that's
27 from not fishing during the closures.

28
29 Now, what looks bad is, when you start with 2014 and come to
30 2017, that's a regular decline, but 2014 was the highest year in
31 the series, and so I think the SSC is looking at this and saying
32 that it looks like things are about average, with the exception
33 of this 2017, and I don't know how preliminary those numbers
34 are, and so I don't see the alarm here at this point, but the
35 fishermen, even two years ago, when we raised the quota and the
36 ACL, the fishermen were saying they're not finding red grouper,
37 and so it is a dilemma, and I think the next stock assessment,
38 hopefully, will shed some light on that.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

41
42 **MR. ANSON:** I don't know, but, Dr. Porch, do you know when there
43 might be some outcomes from the assessment this year that the
44 Science Center or someone could bring to the council to kind of
45 give an idea as to where things are going, as far as the
46 assessment of the stock?

47
48 I guess I am just wondering, depending upon that answer, if --

1 They're catching 40 or 45 percent right now, and the fishermen
2 are saying, hey, we've got a problem here, and so they seem like
3 they are interested, maybe, in being a little proactive in that
4 trying to match some sort of partial IFQ distribution setup for
5 the first part of 2019, maybe, with the anticipation folded over
6 with the assessment information of somewhere around 50 percent,
7 just as a holdback, for the first six months. Do you think that
8 probably by August we might have that, because we will probably
9 have to do something pretty quick, I would suspect.

10
11 **DR. PORCH:** Probably not by August, because the data/assessment
12 workshop in St. Pete isn't scheduled until September, and so,
13 even then, we'll just have preliminary runs, and then they will
14 make some tweaks, and so I don't expect that we'll have anything
15 close to definitive until close to November. Then, of course,
16 the final report is not going to be submitted to the council
17 until February of 2019.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

20
21 **MR. ANSON:** Well, if there is any commercial fishermen out
22 there, if they want to comment on that, so we can maybe start
23 thinking about it, during public testimony. I guess I would
24 just be curious to see if there is any idea, from the industry,
25 as to whether or not they want to go down that road or not, and,
26 if they do, we need to start looking at the data a little
27 harder.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Froeschke.

30
31 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Just a little more background information. If
32 you recall, when you guys reviewed the last stock assessment,
33 the initial ABC recommendations from the assessment were much
34 higher, and it was a declining yield stream, and you considered
35 several alternatives. One was a declining and then, secondly,
36 was a constant catch, and it was thirteen million pounds,
37 roughly, and then you ultimately selected Alternative 4, which
38 was a constant catch at the lowest value of the projected time
39 series.

40
41 The reason was that, even at that time, there were some
42 fishermen that were stating that the red grouper were not as
43 abundant as the assessment was indicating, and so it seems that
44 that was done in a cautionary approach, and so I guess it seems
45 like this might be lingering a little bit longer than we may
46 have remembered, and, also, if you look at those landings, in
47 terms of what it should have been doing, in terms of the
48 projections, we should have been experiencing quite substantial

1 increases during that time.

2
3 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Ms.
4 Bosarge.

5
6 **MS. BOSARGE:** I'm sorry, but I just can't give up on it yet.
7 Essentially, the only option that we have is try and hold back
8 quota for 2019, 50 percent or so of the quota, and I'm assuming
9 that's on the commercial side. You didn't really tell me if it
10 was commercial and recreational or just commercial, but which
11 one is it? Let me ask that question first.

12
13 **DR. CRABTREE:** The issue with pulling back quota is an IFQ-
14 related issue, and so that's commercial. Traditionally, I think
15 about 80 percent of the fishery has been commercial, and I don't
16 know if that's the case today or not.

17
18 With the recreational fishery, we could make an adjustment most
19 any time, although, the later in the year you get, the less able
20 you are to actually reduce the catches, because so much fishing
21 has already happened.

22
23 **MS. BOSARGE:** Right, and so, if we see the results from this in
24 the first quarter of 2019, and then we have a mechanism to go
25 ahead and be ahead of the game with the commercial side, but,
26 essentially, we wouldn't be able to make any changes on the
27 recreational side that would really get implemented, probably,
28 until 2020.

29
30 **DR. CRABTREE:** If we came in during early 2019 and put
31 reductions in the ACLs in place, we could talk about some sort
32 of closed season or early closure or adjustment to the bag
33 limit. We would have a variety of things we could do on the
34 recreational side, and, if we started dealing with that at the
35 January or April meeting, we could probably get them in place by
36 mid-summer sometime, if it was a framework action.

37
38 Of course, a lot of this depends on how long we debate the issue
39 and how long it takes us, but we could do something like that,
40 and it would have some effectiveness in the year, but it still
41 partly depends on the seasonality of the catch and when most of
42 the fishing happens, and so it's hard for me to say.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Frazer.

45
46 **DR. FRAZER:** I think I'm going to kind of follow-up with Leann
47 here. I think what's bothersome about this -- Mr. Swindell made
48 a point that he was surprised that the SSC didn't come with a

1 recommendation, but the reality is that they don't really have
2 the data to make a recommendation.

3
4 Dale was at the last SSC meeting, as was I, and they're looking
5 at it from the last stock assessment, and that's the data and
6 the catch, or the landings, but we don't have this other
7 information, for example, that might say, well, what was the
8 effect of the red tide in 2004 or what explains the high
9 recruitment in 2006 and why do we have the cycles in the
10 catches, and the reality is, if you implement something now, you
11 may in fact, if you look at the cycles, two years from now, be
12 in the uptick, but we don't know, because we don't have the data
13 in hand to do that.

14
15 Yesterday, we had this discussion about why you would have an
16 FEP, and the FEP allows you to incorporate these other type of
17 data into the system that allows a council to be more responsive
18 to these types of things that we see going on, and so kudos to
19 the SSC, because I think they do the best they can with the data
20 that they have, but it's not always the appropriate data, and we
21 don't get it on the right time scale to make this type of
22 decision.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Is there further discussion? All
25 right. Before we leave red grouper, last call. All right.
26 With that, we will move on to our next agenda item, which would
27 be Amendment 41, Allocation-Based Management for Federally-
28 Permitted Charter Vessels, and Dr. Freeman.

29
30 **AMENDMENT 41 - ALLOCATION-BASED MANAGEMENT FOR FEDERALLY-**
31 **PERMITTED CHARTER VESSELS**

32
33 **DR. MATT FREEMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. If I could get staff
34 to open Number 8(c), and, while they're doing that, I just
35 wanted to note that Tab B, Numbers 8(a) and 8(b) are provided
36 for reference. This presentation will be an overview of the
37 actions in Amendment 41, and, if you had a chance to look at
38 Amendment 41 since the last council meeting, the main additions
39 are that we have now a Chapter 3, the affected environment, as
40 well as updates to Chapters 1 and 2, to reflect any additions
41 with regard to actions from that last council meeting.

42
43 Focusing on the presentation, with Action 1, the type of
44 allocation-based management program, the council has already
45 selected a preferred alternative. In this case, it's
46 Alternative 2, Option 2b, a PFQ program. At the end of each
47 action, as I go through it, if there is any discussion, either
48 if there is a preferred or if there is not a preferred, please

1 let me know.

2
3 With Action 2, the species to include in the program, again, the
4 council has already selected a preferred. In this case, it's
5 Alternative 2, Options 2a, 2b, and 2c, which include red
6 snapper, greater amberjack, and gray triggerfish.

7
8 Action 3, which is allocation of ACL to charter vessels, this is
9 an action that the council has not yet selected a preferred for,
10 and so we can address them. I will note, before advancing
11 through the rest of the alternatives, that, again, this was an
12 action though that the AP had selected a preferred. In that
13 case, it was Alternative 5.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Sanchez.

16
17 **MR. SANCHEZ:** If I was inclined to try to pick a preferred here
18 for Action 3, just let me know the appropriate time in your
19 presentation.

20
21 **DR. FREEMAN:** Sure. This would be an appropriate time, but I
22 was just going to mention, very briefly, what was included in
23 the alternatives. In this particular case, I wasn't going to go
24 through each option, since that refers simply to the years.

25
26 Alternative 2 would look at allocating a percentage of the
27 recreational ACL based on average landings from 2011 through
28 2015. Alternative 3 would allocate that percentage based on
29 average landings from 2004 to 2015. Alternative 4 would
30 allocate that percentage with half based on average landings
31 from 2011 to 2015 and the other half based on average landings
32 from 2004 to 2015. Lastly, Alternative 5, which was the time
33 series of the preferred alternative from Amendment 40, based
34 half of that percentage, of the recreational ACL, on average
35 landings from 1986 through 2013, excluding 2010, and the other
36 50 percent based on average landings from 2006 through 2013,
37 again with 2010 excluded. Mr. Sanchez.

38
39 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Thank you. **I would move that, for Action 3, that**
40 **we select Alternative 5 as the preferred alternative, again**
41 **being the AP-selected preferred.** If you need me to, I will read
42 Alternative 5 in, or you can just copy it.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Sanchez, is that your motion?

45
46 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Could I make a note, if appropriate? In the prior
47 action, we kind of identified three species as the preferred,
48 and maybe kind of just make that subtle distinction here that,

1 although there is five listed, that they were chosen in the
2 prior action identifying red snapper and greater amberjack and
3 gray triggerfish as preferred.

4
5 **DR. FREEMAN:** Certainly, and the document, hopefully, does
6 address that. I will check before the next council meeting, but
7 hopefully all the subsequent actions note that they are specific
8 to the species selected in that prior action, but I will review
9 that again.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Mr. Sanchez, is your motion correct?
12 Okay. Is there a second for this motion? It's seconded by Dr.
13 Frazer. Is there discussion? Mr. Boyd.

14
15 **MR. DOUG BOYD:** John, in your motion, with Alternative 5, that
16 would put these new species allocated into a PFQ, and is that
17 correct?

18
19 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Again, that was my intent earlier on, as we might
20 recall. It was to remove the groupers, but I think other folks
21 decided to leave them in, and so, rather than have that battle
22 again, I have just kind of made that distinction, that there
23 were preferred picks in the prior action, but, in the interest
24 of not revisiting that whole battle -- If you want them in,
25 leave them in. If you want to take out gag and red grouper,
26 you're certainly not going to hurt my feelings.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

29
30 **MR. RIECHERS:** I guess I am -- Either we have alternatives that
31 are now in conflict, if we do that, John. I am trying to figure
32 out -- I mean, it certainly wouldn't be the first time we've had
33 two preferreds that are in conflict, but I am just trying to
34 figure out what that means, as we move forward.

35
36 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Again, as I recall, in the prior action, I had
37 made a motion to remove the groupers, and I think it might have
38 been you, Robin, that you wanted to leave all the species in,
39 and I don't know. I mean, when we discussed this several times
40 over, I had listened to the folks from Florida, and we wanted to
41 remove the groupers.

42
43 Now, there was discussion, and it resulted in leaving them in,
44 and, albeit, we picked some preferreds, but they were all left -
45 - Instead of going the route of removing them in the prior
46 action, they were all left in there, and then here we are, and
47 so I'm trying to be consistent in following, I guess, your
48 concern of consistency by having all of the species in both

1 action items.

2

3 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

4

5 **DR. CRABTREE:** Well, someone correct me if I'm wrong, but, as I
6 understand it, we already, in the previous action, have a
7 preferred that leaves gag and red grouper out, and so, unless we
8 change that, this action, if we choose it, would only set these
9 allocations for red snapper, greater amberjack, and gray
10 triggerfish, and the gag and red grouper part wouldn't apply,
11 because we're leaving that out, and I think that's right.

12

13 **DR. FREEMAN:** That would be correct.

14

15 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

16

17 **MR. ANSON:** Before Mr. Sanchez withdraws his motion, I would
18 like to tell him that I support this motion, because I think, in
19 our prior discussions, that was certainly some of the heartache
20 that a lot of the charter boats up in Alabama, and maybe even
21 the Panhandle, to some degree, in Florida had some problems with
22 in this, but there is a little bit of inequity there, when you
23 talk about at least the charter boat guys down in southwest
24 Florida or the Keys, in that they may not have caught a red
25 snapper before, and yet they're going to get some distribution,
26 and it's unfair, but, as Dr. Crabtree pointed out, there is a
27 preferred that was in Action 2 that didn't have those, and this
28 would be in conflict to that, but I would certainly support this
29 motion, but we would probably have to go back and address Action
30 2.

31

32 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

33

34 **DR. CRABTREE:** I don't think anything is in conflict. This only
35 is setting the allocations for red snapper, amberjack, and gray
36 triggerfish, because gag and red grouper are out, because of our
37 previous alternative. I don't think there is a conflict, and is
38 that correct?

39

40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

41

42 **MR. ANSON:** If it isn't, then it's just confusing to keep them
43 in there. If they're going to be our preferred alternatives,
44 then we need to remove them.

45

46 **DR. CRABTREE:** Then, if we come back at the next meeting and
47 change our minds on the first one, we'll have to revamp the
48 document and add them back in.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Levy.
3
4 **MS. LEVY:** I think we talked about this at the last meeting,
5 putting something at the top of this allocation action that
6 basically says this applies to the species that you have
7 included in the program, meaning we have all five in there for
8 analytical purposes, and you have chosen three out of the five,
9 and we have also included these allocations of all five, for
10 analytical purposes, because they are all possible for you to
11 choose in the prior action, but the actual allocations that are
12 going to happen are only going to happen for those species that
13 you have decided to include.
14
15 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Guyas.
16
17 **MS. GUYAS:** I guess, if we're going to talk about this and make
18 a decision about what allocation we should be setting here, I
19 kind of want to hear some more rationale. I am looking at the
20 most recent percentages for the recent years, and it's pretty
21 different for some of these species, and I am not sure why we
22 would want to change things up and allocate more or less to
23 charter/for-hire for these specific species.
24
25 Like, for example, in 2015, it looks like 6 percent of gray
26 triggerfish came from charter vessels, and this would allocate
27 forty-six-and-a-half percent. That's a big difference, and I
28 think we need to be able to rationalize each of these species
29 and why.
30
31 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Further discussion? Okay. **Seeing no further**
32 **discussion, all those in favor of the motion on the floor before**
33 **you, please signify by raising your hand.**
34
35 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** One.
36
37 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** All opposed, like sign.
38
39 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Ten. **The motion fails one to ten.**
40 I just want to say, if you don't put your hand over your head, I
41 have a tendency to miss it.
42
43 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Dr. Freeman.
44
45 **DR. FREEMAN:** Certainly. Based on some of the conversation that
46 took place on this motion, are there any other questions on this
47 action before we proceed?
48

1 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Levy.

2
3 **MS. LEVY:** Can I make a suggestion? I don't know where it would
4 be best to put this, but, at least from my perspective, when I
5 look at the different alternatives and try and think about
6 what's in 42, because they go together, and 41 and 42 have to do
7 the same thing, but it would be nice to someplace, in an
8 appendix somewhere, be able to look at them and see what the
9 breakdown would be.

10
11 Meaning, if we choose Alternative 5 for both documents, how much
12 is the charter going to get, and how much is the headboat going
13 to get, and how much is going to be left for the private rec
14 side, and the only way to do that is to toggle back between them
15 and add them up in your head and then figure out what's
16 leftover, and so I would find that helpful, and I don't know if
17 other folks would.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Dr. Freeman.

20
21 **DR. FREEMAN:** Okay. I can certainly discuss that with Dr.
22 Diagne, and we can look at adjusting these for 41 and 42. Are
23 there any other questions or comments on this action? All
24 right.

25
26 Action 4 is another action that the council has not selected a
27 preferred alternative for yet, and this is distributing the
28 charter quota to charter vessels. Alternative 2 looks at
29 distributing the charter quota based on tiers of passenger
30 capacity, and Alternative 3 looks at distributing that charter
31 quota based on average historical landings of charter vessels in
32 each region.

33
34 Alternative 4 would distribute the charter quota based on equal
35 distribution, passenger capacity, as well as historical landings
36 by region, using one of the following, and there is four options
37 there. Alternative 5 would distribute the charter quota by
38 auction, and all eligible participants would be allowed to place
39 bids.

40
41 Lastly, there was Alternative 6, which would distribute a
42 portion of the charter quota by auction, and then the remainder
43 would be based on equal distribution, passenger capacity, and
44 historical landings by region, again with the metrics for those
45 options weighted through in Options 6d through 6g. The AP has
46 made some motions, and I am able to revisit those if anyone has
47 any questions or any comments on any of these alternatives, and
48 I will pause there.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. Mr. Dyskow.

3
4 **MR. DYSKOW:** I am going to ask a very fundamental question,
5 because I was not on the council when this amendment was put
6 forth, and this seems to be very complex and very confusing, and
7 perhaps somebody who is more up to speed on this than I could
8 state what it is that we're trying to accomplish with this
9 amendment. What is the goal in mind?

10
11 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Matt, would that be answered with
12 the purpose and need statement?

13
14 **DR. FREEMAN:** It should be. Yes, sir. If staff would open the
15 Word document, it will be on page 11. Just to read that for
16 everyone, particularly those in the audience, the purpose of
17 this action is to establish a management approach for federally-
18 permitted Gulf reef fish charter vessels to harvest reef fish
19 that provides flexibility, reduces management uncertainty,
20 improves economic conditions, and increases fishing
21 opportunities for federal charter vessels and their angler
22 passengers.

23
24 The need for this action is to provide flexible management to
25 federally-permitted charter vessels when harvesting reef fish;
26 to prevent overfishing while achieving, on a continuing basis,
27 the optimum yield from the harvest of reef fish by the for-hire
28 sector; take into account and allow for variations among and
29 contingencies in the fisheries, fishery resources, and catches;
30 and provide for the sustained participation of the fishing
31 communities of the Gulf, and, to the extent practicable,
32 minimize adverse economic impacts on such communities.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

35
36 **DR. CRABTREE:** We have, over the last six or seven or eight
37 years, we have had a number of closures, of course of red
38 snapper, but also triggerfish and amberjack, and so, along the
39 way, we tried, through an exempted fishing permit, a program
40 with headboats, and I can't remember the exact years, but I
41 think it was 2013 and 2014. It was for two years.

42
43 We had about twenty headboats in the program, and we essentially
44 allocated the same proportion of the catch that they generally
45 catch to them as a cooperative, and they were then able to fish
46 at the time of the year they chose to fish and however they
47 wanted to do it.

1 It was generally felt to be hugely successful, and it was very
2 popular with the vessels that fished, and their net revenues and
3 profits went up, and so what this amendment and Amendment 42 --
4 They were essentially an attempt to take that experimental
5 program that we tried and see if we can find a way to implement
6 it in the fishery on a permanent basis.

7

8 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Dyskow.

9

10 **MR. DYSKOW:** Thank you. I was hoping you were going to say
11 that, because, if I can paraphrase you, my perception is we have
12 a system that is working properly. I mean, it is working
13 effectively, and the major change, with this long document going
14 through, is it would assign a specific quota to each permitted
15 vessel, and that's basically -- All of this is about that, and
16 is that correct?

17

18 **DR. CRABTREE:** Ultimately, yes, that's where it's going to get
19 to. Now, in Amendment 41, it's more complicated, because we
20 don't have landings histories, but that then would allow the
21 vessels to essentially customize when they're going to fish,
22 based on when it works for them, and give them more flexibility.

23

24 The other thing about it is our experience with IFQ types of
25 programs have been that we don't go over quota when we have a
26 program like that, and clearly, for triggerfish, amberjack, and
27 red snapper, we have had issues with staying in the ACL, and so
28 there is some likelihood that this would help us out in that.

29

30 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Dyskow.

31

32 **MR. DYSKOW:** I am sorry, and I hate to keep beating this to
33 death, but I think the big difference between some of those
34 other models that are used effectively in the commercial sector,
35 there are unintended consequences here, because the real
36 customer is the recreational angler that goes out on these
37 boats, and is it in his best interest to have this individual
38 quota established on a per-vessel or a per-license basis?

39

40 This is a very complicated issue, and we might go through all of
41 this only to find out that it does benefit a segment of the
42 charter or headboat industry, but the customer, the recreational
43 fisherman, is put at a disadvantage, because he is going to have
44 several things happen.

45

46 If this share is distributed, or quota is distributed, on a per-
47 vessel basis, it's going to affect when he can fish, who he can
48 fish with, and how much it's going to cost, presumably, to fish,

1 and so there is lots of consequences here beyond just the
2 relatively small number of charter and headboat operators. It's
3 the entire customer base, of which there are hundreds of
4 thousands.

5
6 **DR. CRABTREE:** I agree with you there. There potentially are a
7 lot of consequences, and we do need to consider how it affects
8 the customers. I don't know that it's that much different from
9 the commercial program, because we have customers there, and
10 they're not the fishermen who catch the quota. They're the
11 customers who buy it in a restaurant and other places, and so
12 I'm sure you have the same things there.

13
14 The positive side with the commercial program is that it makes
15 product available year-round, which is a benefit to most, and I
16 think the potential side of this is it makes access to the
17 resource year-round a possibility, and so there are pluses.
18 Like any other program, there are positives and there are
19 minuses of it, and, at the end of the day, it's a matter of
20 weighing the pros and cons and making a decision of whether,
21 overall, the program is beneficial, and I think that's what the
22 council needs to figure out.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Mr. Sanchez.

25
26 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Thank you. I would add to that that the anglers
27 that have chosen to go on a for-hire trip -- I mean, they have
28 historically -- There is a history of them doing this, and what
29 this would do is it would give them the ability to, instead of
30 having to do it as we were doing before 40, in the constrained
31 time manner in a derby-type of scenario, now these respective
32 captains -- They would be able to go in a more spread-out
33 fashion, and so, in essence, it would probably give some
34 flexibility and increase some recreational fishing opportunity
35 for those anglers that choose to go on a charter/for-hire
36 vessel.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Dr. Crabtree.

39
40 **DR. CRABTREE:** Another point to make that is worth looking is so
41 there was a study done after the completion of the Headboat
42 Collaborative by Josh Abbott, who I believe is at Arizona State
43 University. In that, as I recall, he concluded that the program
44 also benefitted anglers, because it increased access, and they
45 also found that it decreased discards, and so we have looked
46 into some of these kinds of things, and that would be a good
47 place to take a look at his study, to look at how this worked
48 when we did try it.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Bosarge and then Dr. Stunz.

3
4 **MS. BOSARGE:** When we had our presentation at the end of that
5 two-year EFP, the other thing we saw was some changes in CPUE,
6 and, essentially, those anglers that go and fish on the
7 headboats or charter boats or whatever have a little bit
8 different style of fishing.

9
10 They don't necessarily want to load everybody's ice chest with
11 as much red snapper as you can get, period, and max out on all
12 of it. They want an opportunity to go and catch that red
13 snapper, but it's not that they have to have whatever the max
14 bag limit is per person. It's more the opportunity to go out
15 there and get it, and they get a few.

16
17 Six people on the boat, they might get three or four, or maybe
18 six, but they don't get twelve, and so what ended up happening
19 is those CPUEs changed, and they went down, and you actually
20 reached more anglers. More anglers were able to have an
21 opportunity to go and catch those red snapper through that
22 process, if that makes sense.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Stunz.

25
26 **DR. STUNZ:** Well, that's what I recall too, and I was going to
27 bring up this report, but I interpreted that a little bit
28 different than what Leann did, and maybe it would help to bring
29 that up again, just to refresh everyone's minds. What I recall
30 was that there was really two components to that report, how did
31 it work out for the actual boat owner and then how did it work
32 out for the angler.

33
34 It worked out for the boat owner, and they liked it, but, in my
35 recollection, it didn't work out for the angler. In fact, it
36 was good for the headboat, but not for the angler, and so that -
37 - In other words, you had an increase in their fishing ability,
38 but there was this lower decrease in catch per unit effort, and
39 so what did the really mean, in terms of -- Are they reducing --
40 Did the anglers want to catch two, but they were told, for
41 example, they could have only caught one, and I don't know.

42
43 We got a report on the headboat side of that, and we were
44 supposed to, at a follow-up meeting, get the report about what
45 that meant to the actual private angler that's coming on the
46 boat, and I don't recall that we ever had that presentation.
47 Now, I was just sifting through some old notes and pulling that
48 up, but what I recall is that it wasn't as good as for the

1 angler, and it's somewhere in that information, but I think
2 that's something we need to look up and look a little further
3 into.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

6

7 **DR. CRABTREE:** Well, I think it would be worth pulling that up
8 and refreshing our memories about it, and I also think that I
9 saw Daniel Willard here earlier, and he was a co-author of the
10 report, and so I think he's at the meeting, but we had
11 presentations and all on this, and maybe it would be worth going
12 through that again at some point.

13

14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion? Mr.
15 Dyskow.

16

17 **MR. DYSKOW:** I am sorry to keep beating this to death, but I
18 came into this process late, and that's probably why I have so
19 many questions, but I read all of the emails that I get
20 regarding 41 and 42, and maybe it's just because of the fact
21 that I sit in a recreational chair, but they have been
22 overwhelmingly against 41 and 42.

23

24 Do we know for a fact that there is a broad-based consensus
25 among, in this case, charter boat fishermen that this is what
26 they want, and not some, but is this something that is broadly
27 requested throughout this segment of the industry?

28

29 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

30

31 **MR. BANKS:** I think that's a very good question, Mr. Dyskow, and
32 I think that's why, at least to me, we need to get it to a
33 referendum to find that out. The things I look at, when I try
34 to understand what the public wants, is I first look to the AP,
35 and the AP, if I recall, they recommended to keep these things
36 going. However, my local guys in Louisiana tell me that the AP
37 is stacked, and so that leads to me having some doubt about the
38 guidance that the AP gives me, and so then I say, well, then
39 maybe I don't know what the Gulf-wide fleet wants, because maybe
40 I can't trust what the AP is telling us, and so how do you find
41 that out?

42

43 Well, I don't see any other way than to go to a referendum to
44 find that, and then we can finally make up our minds about what
45 we want to do with these things, and that's -- It seems, to me,
46 that's the only way to find out exactly what you're getting at,
47 and I agree with you that we need to know that.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Shipp.
2
3 **DR. SHIPP:** If you have a referendum, who would take part? It
4 goes back to what Phil said. This really is an issue for
5 recreational fishermen, and do you envision a referendum amongst
6 all recreational fishermen or just the charter boat fleet? This
7 is the most complicated action that I have ever seen on this
8 council, and I don't see it -- I just don't see a good end to it
9 all.
10
11 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree and then Robin.
12
13 **DR. CRABTREE:** There is language in the statute with regard to
14 referenda, and so, if we do a referendum, as required by the
15 statute, it would be the permit holders in the affected fishery,
16 and so, for Amendment 42, it would be the headboat individuals
17 who are affected. For Amendment 41, it would be the charter
18 boat fleet who are affected by it.
19
20 Now, having said that, that's the statutory language. We do
21 public comment, and have for years on this, and I think it's
22 fair to say that there are regional divisions among the charter
23 boat fleets, and I could probably name certain areas that are in
24 favor of it and other areas that are not in favor of it.
25
26 You might be able to do some kind of survey or question or allow
27 people to enter their comments from private recreational
28 anglers, and it gets tricky when you start getting into polling,
29 because, sometimes when we do that, we will get 20,000 letters
30 from private individuals, who may or may not even fish, that
31 will weigh-in on this, and we do have limits on our ability to
32 survey the public, but we could look into it.
33
34 If we do a referendum, which is required by the statute before
35 we could take final action on it, it would be the permit holders
36 in the fleet that are affected, and the other thing is, before
37 we really could do a referendum, or before we could really ask
38 the public to judge on this, we would need to finish choosing
39 preferred alternatives, so they would know what are the
40 specifics of the program that we would be asking them to either
41 support or not support, and we haven't gotten to that point yet.
42
43 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.
44
45 **MR. RIECHERS:** I am trying to answer Phil's question, and I
46 guess my recollection dates back to when sector separation first
47 went into effect, or when we had the final vote on that. As per
48 practice, we tried to get an actual tally of the for and

1 against, and we were unable to do that, but one of our
2 colleagues did tally that up, and I think we included it in the
3 record on that day, as we talked about that, and I don't
4 remember what the exact percentages were, Phil, but it was
5 pretty overwhelmingly not in support, based on the comments that
6 we had received.

7
8 Now, those comments come from both private recreational anglers
9 as well as charter boat captains, and so they come from a
10 different group of people there with different aspects of how
11 this business operates, but it was overwhelmingly against, and I
12 think there's a minority report that includes that as well for
13 that period of time.

14
15 Going back to what Bob said, and I think I said it at the last
16 meeting, as we look to continue to work on this document, and as
17 it has gotten more and more complex, with this redistribution
18 notion, until we can get a document that's going to tell someone
19 what they can expect after some period of years, it's going to
20 be very, very difficult for people to look at this and vote on
21 this and know what they're getting.

22
23 As I said, based on what I am seeing in this redistribution,
24 those vessels with larger capacities are going to be the people
25 who win in these redistributions. I mean, that's just kind of a
26 fact, based on what we're seeing here. Those who can get out
27 more days, those with larger capacities, are going to get a
28 greater share of the redistribution, and so everyone just -- If
29 we don't get it to where we can tell them exactly what they're
30 going to get, they better know that fact at least, is that, if
31 you're one of the smaller vessels, you're probably not going to
32 end up with as much after this all gets redistributed three and
33 four times, unless you are really finding a way to get on the
34 water more than your colleagues.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Shipp.

37
38 **DR. SHIPP:** I just wanted to point out, to Roy, that was a
39 rhetorical question, Roy. I know who would be involved in the
40 referendum, but the point I was trying to make is what Phil
41 brought up, that this is really a recreational issue, and, to
42 have the recreational excluded from the decision, I think that's
43 the wrong way to go.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Mr. Dyskow.

46
47 **MR. DYSKOW:** Again, I apologize, but I have lots of questions,
48 because I'm new. I know, in private industry, when we have such

1 a complex issue, where there is a question about a consensus,
2 many times we would just table that issue until we could learn
3 more and perhaps have a consensus. Is that something that we do
4 in the council process? Is it possible to simply say, look, we
5 don't understand this and we don't want to go forward with it at
6 this time? Is that theoretically possible, and I'm asking
7 simply because I don't know.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Levy.

10
11 **MS. LEVY:** The council can decide to do whatever you all decide
12 to do. Meaning, if you decide you want to stop work on
13 something, then you make a motion to stop work on it. If the
14 majority agrees, then you stop work on it. That being said, at
15 the next meeting, you can start to work on it again, and so
16 nothing is set in stone.

17
18 **MR. DYSKOW:** So it's determined by a majority vote of the
19 council to either start it or to not start it? I mean, you can
20 put it on hold, and, at some future date, if the opinion of the
21 council is different, they can simply, by a majority vote,
22 reinstate the process, and is that correct? I am sorry that I
23 interrupted, by the way.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** It's no problem. I want to make sure that you
26 get the answer to your question that you're after. Mr. Diaz.

27
28 **MR. DIAZ:** Thank you, Mr. Greene. I actually think this is a
29 good conversation for us to have. I mean, we're moving
30 incredibly slow on these documents, and I think -- Sometimes I
31 feel like we're bogged down. We tried to pick a preferred on
32 Action 3 a minute ago, and we didn't make any motion to do that,
33 and there's about ten things that don't preferreds in here, and
34 it's mostly the most difficult decisions that we have to make.

35
36 I guess the reason I think this is a healthy conversation is
37 because we do have to make a decision, as a council. We're
38 bringing these up meeting after meeting, but it's costing staff
39 time, and we've got staff dedicated to this that is not working
40 on other things. I am glad that we're having this discussion,
41 and I look forward to having some more, and let's figure out
42 exactly where we're going.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Boyd.

45
46 **MR. BOYD:** I would like to just have a little bit of discussion.
47 I think we have another complicating factor that's going to be
48 coming up either later today or tomorrow, and that's the state

1 EFPs and whether the states are going to enter into EFPs and
2 have the charter/for-hire group and the headboat group in their
3 state managed by the state, and so I see a conflict here of
4 we've talked about choosing preferreds, John, in this document,
5 and we're going to talk about what goes into 41, and we're
6 staring at the possibility of NMFS approving EFPs that are going
7 to change a lot of what we're doing. I am not sure that it's
8 appropriate that we go forward on these right now.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Sanchez.

11
12 **MR. SANCHEZ:** I promise you, as we go forward or don't go
13 forward, we have never gone forward in a rapid fashion on these
14 things, and so I wouldn't be fearful of something happening
15 tomorrow and there being a referendum next week. That's just
16 not going to happen.

17
18 I also would speak against just tabling something because we
19 have these others, because, while I am for exploring
20 recreational opportunity in the state plans, and I would support
21 them, to a great extent, if they're done right with respect to
22 the charter/for-hire folks that have been coming here for years,
23 and there is a history, and we all know, those of us that have
24 been here for many years, why and the genesis of all of it.

25
26 It started with them ending up with shorter seasons by virtue of
27 having a federal permit, and so they created this and started
28 talking about it, many, many years ago, and it has taken us many
29 years to get here, and so I don't think we're rushing anything
30 to judgment by picking, at the rate we're going, one or two
31 preferreds at a meeting.

32
33 I would encourage that both of these plans, state or 41 and 42,
34 that we continue to just foster them, and hopefully arrive at
35 the right decision when the time comes, but I promise you that
36 it's not going to be a quick one.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Shipp.

39
40 **DR. SHIPP:** I think Dale's comments and Doug's comments are both
41 very germane, Dale's regarding the effort that staff is putting
42 in on this and the uncertainty of it, but especially given the
43 upcoming issue of the exempted fishing permits. **I would like to**
44 **find out how the council as a whole feels, and so I move that we**
45 **table, indefinitely, 41 and 42.**

46
47 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Levy.

1 **MS. LEVY:** Just to clarify, I think it's more accurately a
2 motion to postpone indefinitely. That would be my suggestion.
3
4 **DR. SHIPP:** I'm sorry, but what was the suggestion?
5
6 **MS. LEVY:** To postpone indefinitely, rather than table.
7
8 **DR. SHIPP:** I prefer table. The reason is that a motion to
9 table is not debatable, and, with indefinitely, we could, and I
10 would like to get a sense of the council as a whole and find out
11 how they feel about this.
12
13 **MS. LEVY:** I will just say, if we're going to follow the Roberts
14 Rules of Order about tabling not being debatable and a motion to
15 postpone being debatable, the reason a motion to table is not
16 debatable is because it's used in very limited circumstances,
17 and so when there is sort of an emergency that comes up that
18 requires you to table discussion of something to take care of
19 something that needs to be taken care of immediately. Then you
20 do a motion to table, and you don't debate it, but it's not
21 supposed to be used to avoid the debate and dealing with the
22 measure, and so, if there's not something immediate that needs
23 to be decided, then really the appropriate thing is to debate it
24 and decide whether you actually want to postpone work on it.
25
26 **DR. SHIPP:** Well, that's not been the history of this council,
27 but I defer to your experiences, and I will agree to make the
28 motion to postpone indefinitely.
29
30 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have a motion on the floor. Is there a
31 second?
32
33 **MR. RIECHERS:** I will second it.
34
35 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** It's seconded by Mr. Riechers. Mr. Sanchez.
36
37 **MR. SANCHEZ:** I would speak against that, for the reasons that I
38 kind of mentioned earlier. We have been working on these, and
39 while they are confusing, these are difficult issues, and there
40 is people involved that have been coming to these meetings,
41 because their livelihoods are at stake, and they've been coming
42 for years, and they have been fostering the development of these
43 things, albeit at a snail's pace, and I think those very same
44 people would support some state management for private anglers,
45 because I think we would all love nothing more than to have
46 private anglers have a meaningful season and some opportunity,
47 but they were kind of shortchanged in some of this, and that was
48 the development of this.

1
2 To just right now put it on a shelf and wait to see how
3 something else plays out, I find it a little unfair, because, in
4 essence, a group, an entire industry, that has come, and enough
5 of them to develop into the development of these amendments, and
6 they have come repeatedly, for years, supporting and advocating
7 these positions, and now the reverse of that would happen.

8
9 They may be, without wanting to, be forced into a state plan,
10 and what is their alternative there, and I just don't find that
11 fair, whereas, proceeding with both of them, I think we
12 eventually, albeit it difficult, we vet out and end up at the
13 right place.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Bosarge.

16
17 **MS. BOSARGE:** Mara, I have a question for you, and I guess it's
18 actually a point of order. Right now, we're on the agenda, on
19 Amendment 41, and this is a motion that actually speaks to
20 something that's further along in the agenda that we have not
21 gotten to yet, and does this actually need to be in two separate
22 motions, because it's a motion that is addressing something that
23 is actually not germane to what we've been on on the agenda, and
24 does it matter?

25
26 **MS. LEVY:** I mean, I think that's up to you. Technically,
27 you're talking about 41, and so I guess you could decide to
28 limit it to 41, and then I assume you're going to have a vote on
29 42.

30
31 **MS. BOSARGE:** Well, out of respect for the two different groups
32 and two different amendments, I would rather do it twice than to
33 do it with one fell swoop. I would like to see that they were
34 both treated separately, and, if we come to the same conclusion,
35 that is fine, but we did it separately.

36
37 **DR. SHIPP:** If my seconder will agree, I will go along with
38 that.

39
40 **MR. RIECHERS:** I will agree, but I disagree with the concept.
41 Because it's on the agenda for later in the day, there is no
42 reason to have a second motion to do it, unless there is a
43 belief that people are going to vote differently on those two
44 motions, and then they could call for splitting the question,
45 which is what you would do here, but, just because the Chair
46 suggests that, that doesn't mean we have to do that.

47
48 **DR. SHIPP:** He disagreed, in which case I will have to stick

1 with the original.

2

3 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

4

5 **DR. CRABTREE:** I will probably vote against the motion, but I am
6 sensitive to the notion that these are controversial, and we're
7 devoting an awful lot of time with it. At some point, we do
8 need to decide if the majority on the council supports this or
9 not, and maybe that time is now to get to that point, before we
10 invest a whole lot more time and energy on this, just to have it
11 go nowhere.

12

13 To me, I truly believe these amendments would be a better way to
14 manage the for-hire fishery, and I think it would not only
15 benefit the operators of the vessels, but I think it would
16 benefit the recreational fishermen who go out on those vessels,
17 and so I hate to see us stop work on this, but I do understand
18 the issues and the problems and the concerns that people have,
19 but I guess we'll see where the majority opinion on the council
20 is.

21

22 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Guyas.

23

24 **MS. GUYAS:** I am kind of like Dale, and I'm glad we're having
25 this conversation, because it seems like, the last few meetings,
26 when we've gone through these amendments, we have kind of gone
27 through them and made some motions that failed, and sorry, John,
28 and then that's kind of been that, and we have kind of walked
29 away.

30

31 I think we do kind of need to make a decision about what we're
32 going to do here, and I kind of wonder if -- Well, it seems like
33 there's a lot of things that really need to happen if these
34 amendments were going to go forward, and they would need to
35 happen first.

36

37 One, we need to talk about state management and what's going on
38 there and these EFPs, and those are out there, and we're going
39 to get to EFPs later in this meeting, but, to me, another thing
40 that's kind of missing from this is we would need to have that
41 electronic reporting underway, and we would need to have it set
42 up so that it's successful.

43

44 If we don't have that, this isn't going to work, and so my, I
45 guess -- I kind of have mixed feelings about this motion. In my
46 mind, it would maybe make sense to postpone to a time certain,
47 and I don't know what that time is, if it's after we do the
48 state management thing or the EFPs or it's after we have so many

1 years of electronic reporting under our belt, but something like
2 that makes more sense to me, to maybe come back to these in the
3 future and see where we are.

4
5 Maybe we figure things out between now and then, and things work
6 out great with state management or whatever, but, to me, I don't
7 think that 41 and 42 are going to work if we don't have
8 electronic monitoring, regardless of what happens with state
9 management.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

12
13 **MR. ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not in favor of this
14 motion as it's written. I realize that we bring these
15 amendments to Reef Fish, and we discuss them, and so it takes
16 some staff time, albeit it's not much here as of late, because
17 we haven't done much to change them, but it is council time, and
18 so I understand that, but we've also invested a lot of time and
19 energy, and staff has invested a lot of time and energy to what
20 has been produced so far.

21
22 Having some more time to give an opportunity for folks to kind
23 of read and digest is one thing, but, to postpone indefinitely,
24 I don't think that's a good approach, because then who knows
25 when we'll bring it back, and we really won't know what the
26 amendment does or what it could do or what impact it could have
27 without kind of discussing it out in the open, and so I am kind
28 of with Martha that I think, if we had a little bit better data
29 collection system in place, a lot of the issues, a lot of the
30 text that we've developed so far, I think it goes away, and it
31 makes it a lot easier for folks to understand and for folks to
32 understand what impact it could have on their business, but
33 that's a long ways away.

34
35 I mean, the question was asked to Dr. Farmer earlier, and he
36 said he didn't know, and so it's still a lot of unknowns there,
37 but, at least relative to the motion, I am going to not support
38 it.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Stunz.

41
42 **DR. STUNZ:** I would speak in favor of this motion, and both
43 Martha and Kevin made my point about, to me, the real deal-
44 breaker on this is having a data collection program in place, or
45 at least imminent, a lot further along than we are, but we seem
46 -- Lately, these state plans are getting traction, and, of
47 course, we're talking about these EFPs and things, and I sure
48 would like to see those play out and give the states an

1 opportunity to see how they can manage this fishery and how that
2 goes, and so I speak in favor of this motion of postponing these
3 amendments.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Matens.

6

7 **MR. MATENS:** Thank you. I speak in favor of the amendment, for
8 all of the reasons that we've talked about around this table,
9 but, additionally, the Louisiana Charter Boat Association is not
10 in favor of this. Accordingly, let me repeat. I speak in
11 favor.

12

13 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Sanchez.

14

15 **MR. SANCHEZ:** Thank you. I have a comment and a question for
16 Mara. Mara, going down the road, should I get to this day, what
17 would be the appropriate way to bring this back up, to un-
18 postpone it? I mean, un-postpone it indefinitely? What would
19 be the procedure here?

20

21 **MS. LEVY:** I think you would just make a motion to bring it
22 back.

23

24 **MR. SANCHEZ:** The comment then, what it would be is just it
25 seems now that, after many years of work and lively discussion,
26 we're going to postpone two amendments for two EFPs, and it just
27 doesn't make much sense to me, when we could explore both of
28 them at the same time.

29

30 One more thing, too. The logbooks, the same industry that's
31 been asking for these two plan amendments, they have been
32 requesting logbooks since about the day I got on this council,
33 and that -- I am going on six years, and they don't have them,
34 and we heard today that now it's going to take longer.

35

36 I don't know what else you want from these people. They have
37 asked for these things that now you're being critical of,
38 saying, well, this won't work until we get the logbooks. Well,
39 they have been asking for them for six years, and somehow that
40 came to fruition a little quicker, and maybe we wouldn't be
41 using some of their same requests against them. I don't know,
42 but I am befuddled.

43

44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Mickle.

45

46 **DR. MICKLE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. John stole my question of,
47 if we resurrect this at some point down the road, and this is my
48 specific question, but do they just resurrect themselves as 41

1 and 42, or is it like when 39 -- Does it get that number again,
2 or does it resurrect itself as a whole, just as we're seeing
3 now, and we pick up exactly where we left off, or do we lose a
4 lot of -- We haven't gotten very far, and let's be honest, but
5 do we start back at the beginning, on level one, or, like a
6 video game, do we start back on this level here?

7
8 Just to the point of discussion, it's all of our jobs to talk to
9 our constituents and not just listen to the loud ones that email
10 a lot, and that's part of what we do, and that's definitely what
11 I do. I go down to the docks, and I want to talk to every
12 single person I can and not just listen to the loud ones,
13 because we represent everybody. Thank you.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Boyd.

16
17 **MR. BOYD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had the same question
18 that John asked a minute ago about the resurrection of a
19 postponed amendment, and what we've heard from Mara is that the
20 council can postpone or table, depending on the correct
21 terminology, at any time, and they can bring things back at any
22 time.

23
24 The only thing I've heard that we can't touch is something that
25 has been put in a moratorium, and so I support this motion,
26 because it doesn't kill it. This does not say kill 41 and 42,
27 but it says postpone it to some future time. We've got the huge
28 issues and the complexity of the EFPs coming up and staring us
29 in the face, and we still don't understand what the true
30 fishermen, the recreational guy who walks down the dock and gets
31 on the boat, wants, and I think we've got to find some way to
32 find that out, and so I am in support of this motion.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks, I am going to give you the last
35 opportunity to speak.

36
37 **MR. BANKS:** I pass.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Mr. Swindell.

40
41 **MR. SWINDELL:** I hope I'm not the last, but I hate to sit here
42 and -- Ever since I've been on the council, we've talked about
43 these issues, and now we seem to be wanting just to throw it
44 away and hide from the issue, and that's what this is saying to
45 do. Why?

46
47 I mean, it's going into a plan that has not been approved, and
48 let's move on with the plan. You've got the AP that has given

1 us advice to include it in the plan, and we're not listening to
2 them, and we just throw all of this away, and people that we
3 chose to be on an advisory panel, and we choose not to listen to
4 them.

5
6 Let's at least put it in there, and eventually the plan --
7 Hopefully, we'll get it together to where it goes out for public
8 comment, and we then come back with a final provision as to what
9 to do with it, to do it or not do it, and we still have plenty
10 of opportunity, and this is not the end of the world here with
11 this plan. I hate to drop this, as far as it's gone, and I
12 think we -- I am speaking against the motion to postpone. I
13 think we just keep it in the plan as it's going. Thank you.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. We have heard the deliberation and the
16 conversation around the table, and there was one point made that
17 was incorrect, and I want to correct that at this point. It was
18 that we don't have a data collection system in place.

19
20 In Amendment 42, those people have been filling out headboat
21 logbooks since 1986. That is inaccurate, and so there is some
22 form of data collection for the headboats in Amendment 42, and
23 so I just wanted to put that on the record, that at least a
24 portion of this does have data collection in place. With that,
25 with the exception of Madam Chair --

26
27 **MS. BOSARGE:** Johnny, thank you, and I'm glad you pointed it
28 out, because I was going to. That's why I asked if we could
29 split these into different motions, because we're looking at
30 five EFPs tomorrow that hopefully will come up with something
31 that maybe will be good for some anglers, and it would be a heck
32 of a note if they were wildly successful and we came back and
33 started a plan to implement them and then, right about the point
34 we got to the point where we were actually going to do a census
35 of all the people that were going to participate under that
36 management, we just stopped.

37
38 42 is a different beast. They had an EFP, and it was wildly
39 successful, and they do have a data collection program, and we
40 started an amendment to essentially try and implement that EFP
41 as management. There are more decisions to make in 41. I do
42 think it can be done, but that's why I wanted these in two
43 different motions, because they are slightly different, but it's
44 in one motion, because Mr. Riechers wanted it that way, and so I
45 am going to speak against the motion, and I'm going to vote
46 against it.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. You have a motion on the floor before

1 you. All those in favor of the motion, please signify by
2 raising your hand.

3
4 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Seven.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** All those opposed, like sign.

7
8 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Nine. The motion fails seven to
9 nine.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. We are kind of behind schedule, but I
12 do feel like that conversation was good, and I think people
13 needed to kind of ask the questions, and, in Mr. Dyskow's
14 defense, he has kind of walked into an ant bed at this point in
15 trying to make decisions, and I can understand that, and so we
16 will try to get back on schedule, as best as we can, and we are
17 scheduled to go through 5:30, and we have a couple of items
18 under Other Business. With that, we will try to pick back up
19 where we were.

20
21 With advice from the Chair, we're going to continue. We were
22 going to take a break around this time, but I don't know that
23 we're going to get through the agenda, and I know there's some
24 people here that want to see the agenda as it's been displayed,
25 and so, if you need to take a break, do that on your own. With
26 that, we will pick back up with Amendment 41 and try to work
27 through the remainder of this as quickly as we can.

28
29 **DR. FREEMAN:** On that note, are there any other questions or
30 comments or motions related to Action 4, before I move into
31 Action 5? Okay. Action 5 considers the adaptive catch share
32 management, and Action 5.1 is an action that the council has
33 selected a preferred for. In this case, it is Preferred
34 Alternative 3, Option 3a, which says that the cycles for
35 adaptive management will occur in an increasingly progressive
36 range, with one-year incrementing by one-year until reaching
37 three years.

38
39 Action 5.2 deals with reclamation of shares, and this is an
40 action that the council has not yet selected a preferred for.
41 Alternative 2 would reclaim a set percentage of shares of each
42 share category from all shareholder accounts, and it has set
43 percentages suggested there as options.

44
45 Alternative 3 would reclaim a progressively decreasing amount of
46 shares of each share category from all shareholder accounts, and
47 Option 3b had been selected as preferred from the AP. Are there
48 any questions or comments on this action, before I move to the

1 next one?

2

3 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

4

5 **MR. RIECHERS:** Is 2c just a placeholder for a new percentage
6 there that you are waiting on or trying to decide whether we put
7 one in or not?

8

9 **DR. FREEMAN:** Yes, sir. It was there in case the council had
10 any additional suggestion.

11

12 **MR. RIECHERS:** Okay.

13

14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Dr. Freeman.

15

16 **DR. FREEMAN:** Moving forward, Action 5.3 is redistribution of
17 reclaimed shares, and the council had selected a preferred here,
18 which is to redistribute reclaimed shares by share category
19 proportionally among all participants that harvested species in
20 that share category.

21

22 Moving forward, Action 5.4, which is reclamation of latent
23 shares, this is one of two actions that I will present that is
24 being recommended to the council from the interdisciplinary
25 planning team, comprised of council staff and SERO staff, and so
26 I will read through this, and then, if the council would like,
27 they could make a motion to add this, as recommended by the IPT.
28 If not, we can remove it from the document.

29

30 This is, again, something that has been a discussion both by the
31 AP and by some of the council members. Alternative 1 would be
32 no action, and so reclamation and redistribution, through this
33 adaptive management process, would continue for each shareholder
34 account indefinitely, regardless of level of landings.

35

36 Alternative 2 says that, after the first three years, and then
37 after each subsequent cycle, shares would be declared latent if
38 the following conditions are met for a shareholder account, and
39 there are two conditions. The first is that the percentage of
40 shares in a share category is less than X percent, and that X
41 percent is defined under the options, as well as if no fish were
42 landed during that time period or cycle for that share category.

43

44 Latent shares from those shareholder accounts would be reclaimed
45 at the end of that time period or cycle, and the two options
46 regarding the percentage of shares, we have Option 2a and Option
47 2b. There is a third alternative as well, which says that,
48 after the first three years, and then after each subsequent

1 cycle, shares would be declared latent if a shareholder account
2 does not have landed fish in a species category. All shares in
3 that species category from that shareholder account would be
4 reclaimed at the end of the time period or cycle. I will pause
5 there, if there are any questions about this action.

6

7 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Any discussion? Seeing none --

8

9 **DR. FREEMAN:** Could I at least get a motion from the council
10 with regards to whether to add or remove this IPT-recommended
11 action from the document?

12

13 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

14

15 **DR. CRABTREE:** I will move that we add the IPT-recommended new
16 action to the document.

17

18 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** It's been moved and seconded. We need just a
19 second to get it up on the board. The motion is to add a new
20 Action 5.4, Reclamation of Latent Shares, and it has been
21 seconded. Do you need any rationale with this, or is this just
22 simply -- Is this going to be good enough?

23

24 **DR. FREEMAN:** This would be sufficient for staff.

25

26 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. Is there discussion?
27 **Seeing no discussion, is there any opposition to the motion on**
28 **the floor before you? Seeing no opposition, the motion carries.**
29 Dr. Freeman.

30

31 **DR. FREEMAN:** Thank you. I will give staff one moment to finish
32 writing that motion. Actions 6 and 7, and I will let Ms. Levy
33 correct me if I'm incorrect, but Action 6 deals with
34 transferability of IFQ shares, and Action 7 deals with
35 maintenance of IFQ shares. If I remember correctly from the
36 last council meeting, the council does not need to select a
37 preferred at this point, since the preferred is a PFQ program,
38 and is that correct, Ms. Levy?

39

40 **MS. LEVY:** Correct. These actions only apply to IFQ programs.

41

42 **DR. FREEMAN:** At this point, since the council has selected as
43 its preferred the PFQ program, I will move forward to Action 8.
44 Action 8 deals with transferability of annual allocation.
45 Again, this is an action that the council has already selected a
46 preferred for, and so I will move forward, unless there is any
47 discussion on this.

48

1 Seeing none, Action 9 deals with share caps. Action 9 is one
2 that the council has not yet selected a preferred for.
3 Alternative 1 would not cap the amount of shares for a given
4 species that one participant could hold, and Alternative 2 says
5 that no participant may hold shares for a given species equaling
6 more than the maximum amount of shares issued for that species
7 during initial apportionment for a participant, as defined in
8 Action 4, and Alternative 3 says that no participant shall hold
9 shares for a given species which comprise more than X percent of
10 the total charter vessel quota for that species.

11
12 Alternative 3 was selected as the preferred by the AP. However,
13 they did not have a recommendation for the council in terms of
14 that X percent. If there are any questions or comments, again,
15 I will pause for a moment.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

18
19 **MR BANKS:** Just a question. If we were to go with the AP
20 preferred here, would we have to choose a percent at that time?

21
22 **DR. FREEMAN:** That, I am not sure. It appears that the answer
23 is yes.

24
25 **MS. BOSARGE:** Well, I mean, I guess there's a couple of ways
26 that you could do it. You could at least -- If you want to make
27 that your preferred, and you're not sure what the number would
28 be, you could add a couple of subalternatives under it of
29 whatever, 5 percent, 6 percent, 10 percent, and I don't know
30 what numbers you're thinking about, but give some sort of range
31 that you think is reasonable, and then we can go from there.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

34
35 **MR. RIECHERS:** I think we're getting at it in these
36 alternatives. Alternative 2 starts talking about initial
37 apportionment, and then Alternative 3 leaves that a little more
38 open, and I think we're going to have to be specific, because,
39 with the reallocations that are contemplated in the document,
40 unless we're going to cap people to a point where, in the
41 reallocation, they get capped at a certain percentage and it
42 can't go above that, we just need to make that clear, if that is
43 our intent, if we do add these, or if we try to put that X
44 percent in, because, otherwise, you could be reapportioning and
45 then capping someone at a level lower than they would probably
46 receive if you were going to go through that reapportionment.

47
48 I think that's just a question that we need to decide as a

1 council, whether or not you want it on the backend, once all
2 that is done, and create that level, or whether you wanted to do
3 it from the beginning, or the outset, or allow that
4 reapportionment to occur, but keep people below some X percent
5 before you get into that. It's a question of just when you want
6 to have that go into effect.

7

8 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Levy.

9

10 **MS. LEVY:** I think you're correct that choosing the share cap
11 will impact how much the redistribution for certain people, how
12 much they can get, but I still think that you need to decide, at
13 the beginning of the program, what constitutes an excessive
14 share. If somebody reaches that cap, whether they would be
15 entitled to more or not, you have decided that's an excessive
16 share, and they don't get more, but they do interact in that
17 way.

18

19 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

20

21 **MR. RIECHERS:** Well, we've got nothing to base that on. In past
22 programs, we basically have looked at what the maximums were at
23 the time, Mara, and tried to make that determination and say
24 that someone can't be beyond the max coming into the program, or
25 at least that's one way that it's been done.

26

27 Really, what that leaves us to a discussion with here would be
28 what we think, from any local area of a monopoly kind of notion
29 of market control, et cetera, and I just don't have those
30 numbers or that kind of information in front of me that would
31 help us there, but that's what we would want to be, I believe,
32 looking for, is some sort of reasonable approach at that from a
33 localized basis as to what would constitute some undue share
34 that could control the market in a particular area.

35

36 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

37

38 **MR. BANKS:** Another question. A participant can hold multiple
39 permits, and, since our preferred is a PFQ, that would -- If
40 somebody has twenty permits or whatever, they would be capped at
41 a percentage, regardless of how many permits, and am I reading
42 that correctly?

43

44 **DR. FREEMAN:** I believe so, and let me defer to Dr. Stephen.
45 She helped work on this action, and she might can answer that a
46 little better than I can.

47

48 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. Dr. Stephen.

1
2 **DR. JESSICA STEPHEN:** When we think about share caps, we're
3 required by Magnuson to look at the entity level. The entity
4 level is the human level, the individual, as well as the
5 business level, and so you need to look at those all combined as
6 well as what we're calling the account level, if the structure
7 is similar to what our commercial IFQ program is, and so that
8 means that no account could be higher than the share cap, no
9 business across accounts could be higher, and no individual
10 across businesses that may be also across accounts could be
11 higher than that, and that's when we collect the ownership of
12 business, in order to determine the cap.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

15
16 **MR. BANKS:** Dr. Stephen, when you look at a participant across
17 multiple businesses, if I own 100 percent of Business A, but
18 only 10 percent of Business B, do you have to own a majority of
19 each business to be considered the participant?

20
21 **DR. STEPHEN:** We would take your percentage of that business and
22 apply it to the percentage of the cap, and so, if you own 10
23 percent of the business, you own 10 percent of the shares in
24 that.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Stephen, I have a question. If you have a
27 permit fishing quota, it is tied to the permit, correct?

28
29 **DR. STEPHEN:** You said issued to the permit? I'm sorry, but I
30 couldn't hear as well.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** If you have a permit fishing quota, it's tied
33 to the permit.

34
35 **DR. STEPHEN:** Correct, but the permit is tied to entities, and
36 so this is one of the things that we've talked at the AP about,
37 is a PFQ is tied to the permit, but the permit is tied to
38 different entities, and so, if an entity was involved in
39 different businesses that own different permits, it would apply
40 across all those different permits.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. I just wanted to make sure
43 that I was clear. Is there further discussion? Okay, Dr.
44 Freeman.

45
46 **DR. FREEMAN:** Thank you. Sorry.

47
48 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think maybe we're going to need some more

1 information to ever kind of get to a point where we can come up
2 with a number for Alternative 3, if that's the route we end up
3 going, and so I know that, in this particular amendment, it's
4 hard to flesh out what those numbers may be, but, if you could
5 even bring us some numbers from other individual fishing quota
6 type systems, where we can say, well, okay, and so here is how
7 it was used in other scenarios, so we at least start to hone in
8 on a range of what may be reasonable.

9
10 **MR. FREEMAN:** I can take that as a suggestion for staff to work
11 on, and I have spoken briefly with some of the economists at
12 SERO about, if the council continued forward with this
13 amendment, to look at what would constitute market consolidation
14 with these share caps, and so we can try to prepare some numbers
15 for the next council.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Also, to that point though, I think
18 that we're going to have to make some decisions back in Action
19 5.2 about the cyclical distribution type stuff, because, if you
20 have certain entities that are at the top, and they're having to
21 give up portions of their days, or of their poundage, and then
22 it's redistributed, at some point, everybody will bump up to
23 that cap, and so I think we'll have to make some decisions to
24 get to that.

25
26 I do agree that we need something in there, but I think that
27 it's going to be really hard to get to fill in what X is until
28 we make some decisions further down. I think that's part of the
29 complication, and am I correct, Dr. Freeman? I am just trying
30 to make sure that I understand.

31
32 **DR. FREEMAN:** One moment. Let me -- You were referring to which
33 action? I apologize. Did you say Action 5.2?

34
35 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Yes, sir. 5.2.

36
37 **DR. FREEMAN:** Let me scroll back real quick. That would
38 certainly involve, if they hit the cap -- What I was referring
39 to with Madam Chair is that we could look to see what the total
40 share percentage would be in the industry that, under economic
41 theory, would constitute consolidation, and so it would be
42 consolidated regardless of the redistribution portion.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. I appreciate that.

45
46 **DR. FREEMAN:** Certainly.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Is there further discussion? Dr.

1 Freeman.

2
3 **DR. FREEMAN:** Before I proceed further along, since we've sort
4 of revisited a little bit of the adaptive management, could I
5 get staff to open back up the Word document for Amendment 41?
6 If you could go to page 44.

7
8 Again, just as a reminder of some of the material since the last
9 council meeting that the IPT has been working on, there are some
10 new tables on page 44 through 47 that address some of the
11 questions and comments that council members have made regarding
12 redistribution to large shareholders versus small shareholders
13 as well as the concept of individuals who hold multiple permits,
14 and so, again, hopefully that will be helpful information,
15 moving forward, as well.

16
17 Now we'll go back to the presentation. Moving forward to Action
18 10, which is a cap on allocation usage, this is another action
19 that the council does not have a preferred for yet, and so
20 Alternative 1 would not establish a limit on usage of
21 allocation. Alternative 2 would limit the allocation usage to X
22 percent above the allocation, equal to the share cap for each
23 species. Option 2a was selected as preferred by the AP, and
24 they suggested saying the percentage to 25 percent. Alternative
25 3 would limit allocation usage to the allocation equal to the
26 share cap for each species, and so, again, I will pause there,
27 if there are any comments or questions.

28
29 Seeing none, I will move forward. Actions 11 and 12 are also
30 new to the document, and these were requested by the council at
31 the last meeting. Actions 11 and 12 mirror two actions that are
32 currently in Amendment 42, and so some of this, as Amendment 41
33 and 42 have proceeded, there have been certain actions that
34 have, in essence, been needed to carry over from one amendment
35 to the other.

36
37 Action 11 refers to retaining annual allocation before a quota
38 reduction. Alternative 1, which would be no action, would
39 distribute 100 percent of the annual allocation to IFQ
40 shareholders on January 1 of each year.

41
42 Alternative 2 says, if the quota for a species is anticipated to
43 decrease after January 1, the Regional Administrator has the
44 authority to retain the anticipated amount of decrease during
45 distribution of allocation for that species at the beginning of
46 the year, and, if the decrease does not occur by a set date, the
47 amount retained will be distributed as soon as possible.
48 Options 2a and 2b are options for that set date, and so I will

1 pause there. Again, this was something that the council
2 requested at the last meeting, and so, if there are any comments
3 or questions.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Bosarge.

6
7 **MS. BOSARGE:** Dr. Crabtree, now I know we've done this for the
8 commercial IFQ, and we even talked about using this earlier
9 today, when we were talking about red grouper, and this is the
10 action that allows us to do that, if we see something coming up
11 on the horizon.

12
13 I seem to remember, in some of the discussions there, we settled
14 on June 1, mid-year, as when the quota would be released. If
15 something hadn't been implemented by mid-year, then the quota is
16 released, and, that way, you don't release it all late, towards
17 the end of the year, and almost have a race to fish again at
18 that point. At least you'll have six months to do what you need
19 to do and let those people go fish, but this is something that
20 is not totally new, if you all feel it's something we should
21 implement.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Mickle.

24
25 **DR. MICKLE:** It is kind of new, because you're applying it from
26 a commercial market, a retail market, to a tourism-based,
27 somewhat, and so I think that the AP never had a chance to chew
28 on this, and so, at least in public comment, I would really
29 encourage some input on that, and it's apples and oranges, in my
30 opinion.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

33
34 **MR. RIECHERS:** Paul is correct, because what can happen here is
35 people are determining when their trips are, based on their
36 bookings, and, if their bookings are more leaning towards the
37 summer or into the fall, and they were holding their quota for
38 that purpose, then a June 1 date would catch them, or likely
39 catch them, with a higher percentage not yet caught, and the
40 same can hold true for the commercial side, but probably the
41 incentives and the booking issues and the tourism-based aspect
42 of that is not probably quite the same.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** To that point, Ms. Bosarge?

45
46 **MS. BOSARGE:** Yes, thanks, and those are really great points.
47 We might need to add some other dates in here, because you're
48 right that it's a little bit different, and I didn't think about

1 that.

2

3 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

4

5 **DR. CRABTREE:** It's just that, given the pace of rulemaking, it
6 would be tough to do it much sooner or move it much later than
7 June, and, if you do use June 1, for at least the states that
8 have the majority of these vessels in them, that's really the
9 beginning of their most intensive fishing season, and they would
10 know, prior to the beginning of the year, how much we were
11 holding back, and so they would be able to plan, but it's just
12 that they might get a bonus if we don't get it put in place.

13

14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Further discussion? Dr. Freeman.

15

16 **DR. FREEMAN:** If there is no other discussion, I will move
17 forward to Action 12. Again, Action 12 was requested by the
18 council at the last meeting, and it's an action currently in
19 Amendment 42, and it addresses cost recovery fees. Alternative
20 1 would be no action, and so cost recovery fees would not be
21 collected.

22

23 Alternative 2 says that, for each participant, cost recovery
24 fees will be collected. The total value will be the standard
25 price per pound, or per fish, of a given species multiplied by
26 the number of pounds or fish harvested by the shareholder, or
27 unique permit holder, during the specified time period. The
28 cost recovery fee will be up to 3 percent of the total value,
29 and the standard price will be equal to either Option 2a, which
30 is the commercial ex-value price, or Option 2b, the average
31 price of annual allocation. Again, I will pause here, if there
32 are any questions or comments.

33

34 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** I don't see any, Dr. Freeman. Mr. Swindell.

35

36 **MR. SWINDELL:** What is the average price of annual allocation?
37 How would that be determined?

38

39 **DR. FREEMAN:** Since this is an action that is currently in
40 Amendment 42, I may defer to Dr. Diagne, since he has worked on
41 this a little bit longer than I have.

42

43 **DR. DIAGNE:** Thank you, and there is some discussion that it
44 would be the average price of annual allocation after at least
45 the first year, once the program has gotten started. Then,
46 based on the trades and the price that we collect, we can
47 compute an average and base the cost recovery on that.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.
2
3 **DR. CRABTREE:** The main issue I see with that is I think we get
4 some unrealistically low costs reported sometimes, and we don't
5 have any way to verify it. The simplest way to do this would be
6 to use the commercial ex-vessel price, because that's pretty
7 easy to figure out, but we probably could do it either way, but
8 that's more straightforward.
9
10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Dr. Freeman.
11
12 **DR. FREEMAN:** Thank you. Next, we have what we're referring to
13 tentatively as Action X, and it sounds slightly exciting, which
14 refers to units of measures for quota distribution and
15 reporting. This is the second IPT-recommended new action, and
16 so, again, once I have discussed it, if the council so feels,
17 they can make a motion to either add or remove that from the
18 document.
19
20 Alternative 1 is no action, and so, in this case, the charter
21 vessel quotas would be distributed and reported in pounds.
22 Alternative 2 would have the charter boat vessel quotas
23 distributed and reported in numbers of fish, and Alternative 3
24 would have the charter vessel quotas distributed in pounds and
25 then reported in numbers of fish. I will pause there for a
26 second for questions, comments, or discussion.
27
28 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Is there discussion on the potential
29 new action? Mr. Anson.
30
31 **MR. ANSON:** How would the quota be reconciled with the numbers
32 of fish, based on the dockside sampling for that particular
33 area, through like MRIP and such?
34
35 **DR. FREEMAN:** I will take the first stab at it, and then I will
36 let Dr. Stephen refer to it. If I understand correctly, part of
37 this is the conversion would be based on the average weight of
38 the fish, and that could have some variability from year to
39 year, and, at this point, I will go ahead and defer to Dr.
40 Stephen.
41
42 **DR. STEPHEN:** When we did the headboat pilot program, we did
43 this conversion from fish in pounds into fish in numbers, and we
44 had dockside samplers, and we did realize that sometimes there
45 were regional differences, particularly for red snapper in
46 different regions, and so we used a different conversion for the
47 vessels in each region.
48

1 It worked really highly successfully, and remember back to the
2 presentation that we did about the program and the difference
3 between where it was with a preseason weight that we applied
4 throughout, which was our original number to convert from pounds
5 to numbers for the fishermen, compared to the in-season ones,
6 and they were fairly close. It does, of course, depend on that
7 we have enough dockside sampling to get that value.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Mickle.

10
11 **DR. MICKLE:** I may be off-base here, but, within this amendment,
12 they're going to be able to fish whenever they want. There
13 could be a lot of seasonal variation in the size of the fish
14 that they're catching. At least off of Mississippi, I can see
15 much larger fish being landed at certain times of the year,
16 which would create an inequity in the fishery under probably 1
17 and 3. I am a little hesitant to put this into the amendment,
18 so to speak. Any conversation to that point?

19
20 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Stephen.

21
22 **DR. STEPHEN:** We did see some slight variability with seasons
23 too when we did the headboat pilot program. Now, of course, the
24 headboats function a little bit different than the charters, and
25 so there could be more variability in the charters. Again, it
26 goes down to making sure we have adequate sampling initially and
27 that your average, when you do the initial conversion, is based
28 on the entire year.

29
30 You look at the previous year's seasonal differences and
31 regional differences in order to create that original conversion
32 value, and then you track it throughout the year and see how
33 close you're getting to exceeding the quota in pounds versus
34 numbers.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.

37
38 **MR. RIECHERS:** When you say you track it throughout the year,
39 let me try to understand. You are basically going to put it in
40 place based on last year's size classes by region, by season, et
41 cetera, and so, as those landings come in for the next year,
42 you're assuming it has whatever that breakdown of poundage and
43 landings by season, by region, that you would have had.

44
45 Then you say you track it, and so are you going to make a change
46 before the next year, or are you just suggesting that you go
47 another year and then reset that bar again and say here is what
48 we expect, and we'll live with the variability as we go from one

1 year to the next?

2
3 **DR. STEPHEN:** What we did with the headboat pilot program is we
4 used -- For the second year of the program, in 2015, we did use
5 the 2014 ones, which were the averages for that preceding year,
6 and tracked them.

7
8 Whether we would shut things down or not, again, red snapper is
9 a little different than everything else, and so, if we were
10 predicting that we were going to be over, we would have to shut
11 it down, but, for the other species, we could probably live with
12 that variability. It's something we need to track better, but,
13 for that pilot study, there wasn't much difference. There was a
14 very small margin of difference, percentage-wise, between the
15 two.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Dr. Mickle, did you have a comment
18 earlier? Are you good? I'm just making sure, man. I am trying
19 to pay attention here. All right. Mr. Anson.

20
21 **MR. ANSON:** Dr. Stephen, have you all looked at the
22 possibilities of the discrepancies in sample size for charter
23 boats versus headboats? I don't know how many dockside visits
24 the port samplers make for headboat surveys, but I suspect,
25 relative to the number of trips, that they are probably
26 inspecting those boats and those trips more frequently than
27 what's in MRIP for the charter boats.

28
29 **DR. STEPHEN:** That's correct, and so there is many more charter
30 boats than there are headboats, too, and so we had really good
31 sampling for that headboat pilot program. This is one of the
32 things that we're also talking about with for-hire electronic
33 reporting, and so it's kind of a co-occurring issue, to make
34 sure that we get enough dockside sampling there.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Dr. Freeman.

37
38 **DR. FREEMAN:** Thank you. If I could request that the council
39 make a motion either to accept or reject the IPT-recommended
40 action. Thank you.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

43
44 **DR. CRABTREE:** I move that we accept the IPT-recommended
45 actions.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have a motion to add Action X to the
48 document. I guess it will be given an appropriate number.

1
2 **DR. FREEMAN:** Yes, sir. I left that part out, and we
3 tentatively refer to it as Action X, because, if the council did
4 move to accept it, we would find the appropriate location in the
5 document to place it.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay, and so we have a motion, and it was
8 seconded. Let me make sure we get it up on the board. We have
9 a motion on the floor to add Action X, Units of Measure for
10 Quota Distribution and Reporting Alternatives, to Amendment 41,
11 and it was seconded. Is there any further discussion? **Is there**
12 **any opposition? Seeing no opposition, the motion carries.** Dr.
13 Freeman.

14
15 **DR. FREEMAN:** Thank you. While that concludes the physical
16 presentation, we did have, from the IPT, one additional question
17 for the council, and that is, again, as we were looking through
18 Amendments 41 and 42 and trying to find the pieces that, again,
19 would make sense to mirror from one to the other, Amendment 42
20 has an Action 4 that considers either the creation of
21 endorsements that the shares would be tied to or it considers
22 the idea of having, in essence, split permits, again to tie the
23 shares to between headboats, and, in this case, headboats and
24 the charter boats.

25
26 If the council would like to make a motion, the IPT could
27 develop that, again, based off of Action 4 from Amendment 42 to
28 present at the next meeting, and I think I will pause for just a
29 moment, and, again, Dr. Stephen, do you want to give a little of
30 the rationale, or Ms. Gerhart?

31
32 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Stephen.

33
34 **DR. STEPHEN:** In 42, we have this action where we're either
35 going to split the two permits, headboat and charter, and
36 they're one permit right now, and split them into two, or add
37 the endorsement. When I was looking at ways we would actually
38 implement this program without having that similar action in 41,
39 it would become very hard, particularly if the endorsement,
40 which I believe is the preferred in 42, was selected, to
41 distinguish those two groups in the electronic system.

42
43 It would be easier for us to have endorsements on both, in order
44 to do it, and so that's kind of from the IT technical side, and
45 then, from the idea of the assumption that you don't want
46 someone bouncing back and forth between the two programs and the
47 fact that 41 is looking at a PFQ, and remember, with a PFQ, the
48 shares can be associated with the permit.

1
2 That permit is now also good for a totally different allocation-
3 based program in 42, and so you would want to make sure that you
4 have a distinction, and it would be simpler, all the way around,
5 if that PFQ was associated with the endorsement, and then you
6 pick the endorsement from which program you're on, and, if
7 you're in 42, which is currently preferred as an IFQ, there is
8 no shares attached.

9
10 If you're in 41, those shares are attached to that endorsement,
11 and so that means that the base permit, what we currently have,
12 can be exchanged back and forth regardless of those
13 endorsements, and the endorsement tells you which program you
14 are playing in. If you're not catching any of these species on
15 either end, you wouldn't even need the endorsement.

16
17 **DR. FREEMAN:** Again, just to add, this would be an action that
18 we could simply develop, and, again, I don't think we would
19 necessarily need a formal motion, but, if the council would
20 like, we could develop it, and, again, just present it for your
21 consideration at the next meeting.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. I am seeing some nodding of heads that
24 that would be agreeable. Is there any objection?

25
26 **DR. FREEMAN:** Okay. Then we'll work on that, and, again, have
27 that prepared for the next meeting. Mr. Chair, that concludes
28 my presentation, unless there are any other questions or
29 comments at this time.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.

32
33 **MR. ANSON:** I don't know if it's needed, but I noticed, when we
34 skipped over Actions 6 and 7, we did that because they had a
35 reference to IFQ shares, and we're not really doing that in 41,
36 and so, in Action 6, we selected a preferred alternative as
37 Alternative 1, but there is no preferred alternative in this
38 document for Action 7, and I didn't know if we needed to do
39 that, just to cross our Ts and dot our Is.

40
41 **DR. FREEMAN:** Certainly. The conversation came up after the
42 council had voted for the preferred for Action 6 that we did not
43 need to select one. I am not necessarily sure. Ms. Levy, for
44 Action 6, which was transferability of IFQ shares, the council
45 selected a preferred alternative, and do they need to un-select
46 it, for lack of a better word?

47
48 **MS. LEVY:** I mean, you can do that. It doesn't need a

1 preferred. 6 and 7 don't need preferreds unless you're doing an
2 IFQ program, but it's just that that's true. We didn't realize
3 that until after we had done it for this one, and so, as we
4 progress, we can clean it up. We can do it as a housekeeping
5 item, and we don't have to do it right now, but, before the
6 document goes final, or after you have selected all your
7 preferreds everywhere else, we could just clean this up and
8 remove that. It's up to you what you want to do with it.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. Is there any opposition to
11 removing that preferred in Action 6, as she was noting? I don't
12 see anybody opposing that, and so that would be fine. Dr.
13 Freeman.

14
15 **DR. FREEMAN:** Thank you. Then we will remove that as a
16 preferred alternative for the next council meeting. Thank you.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. With that, unfortunately, with an
19 hour-and-a-half left to go, I don't know that we're going to get
20 through the rest of it, and so we're going to just keep working
21 and get through as much as we can. With that, we'll move on
22 into Amendment 42, Reef Fish Management for Headboat Survey
23 Vessels, Tab B, Number 9(a), and Dr. Diagne.

24
25 **AMENDMENT 42 - REEF FISH MANAGEMENT FOR HEADBOAT SURVEY VESSELS**

26
27 **DR. DIAGNE:** Thank you. This is Tab B, Number 9(c), and I will
28 try to highlight the changes that were made since the last
29 meeting, and so some of the actions and alternatives were
30 revised to reflect the council's direction.

31
32 I will start with Action 1, and Action 1 essentially looks at
33 the type of management program for the headboat survey vessels,
34 and we have the no action alternative, and Alternatives 2 and 3
35 would establish an IFQ or a PFQ, respectively, and, as discussed
36 previously, the AP selected or recommended Alternative 2 as
37 their preferred option. Mr. Chair, do I just continue going,
38 and, when someone has a question, they will let me know?

39
40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Yes, sir. Just continue on. If anyone has a
41 question, please raise your hand, and I will stop Dr. Diagne and
42 we'll tackle it at that point. That way, we don't lose where
43 we're at and can continue on. Dr. Diagne.

44
45 **DR. DIAGNE:** Thank you. The second action looks at the range of
46 species to be included in this amendment. As a council, you
47 already did select a preferred alternative, but, during the last
48 council's discussion, you suggested that we restructure the

1 action to be consistent with the format in Amendment 41, and
2 that is what we have done here by offering the options, one
3 option for each species, and, as you selected all five reef fish
4 species here as your preferred, and that is indicated here, and
5 that is also the choice that the AP made during their last
6 meeting.

7
8 The third action discusses the participation at the onset of the
9 program. Essentially, it would give the headboat participants
10 the option to opt-out of this program at the onset of the
11 program, and the AP selected the no action, meaning that all the
12 headboats that qualify would be in the program. We have a
13 couple of alternatives, two more, that essentially allow those
14 to opt out based on their participation in the Southeast survey
15 and an alternative here that would allow them to do so
16 regardless of their status.

17
18 The fourth alternative is the action that Dr. Freeman just
19 talked about for consistency between 41 and 42, and this is the
20 action that considers the establishment of an endorsement or a
21 permit. The no action alternative would be the first one, and
22 Alternatives 2 and 3 would consider, respectively, the
23 establishment of an endorsement or of a permit. The AP
24 indicated that their preferred option would be to go with an
25 endorsement.

26
27 The fifth alternative looks at the allocation of annual catch
28 limit to the program here, and, obviously, this action has to be
29 consistent across the two amendments, and the preferred
30 alternative would be the same, presumably, so that we can
31 proceed. We have a variety of time series, with potentially the
32 exclusion of 2014, or 2014 and 2015, which were the years of the
33 EFP for the headboats, for example.

34
35 We also have options to exclude 2010, in some cases, and the AP
36 selected the very last alternative, which is consistent across
37 the amendment. The Charter AP, as well as the Headboat AP, both
38 selected Alternative 5, which would take the longest time series
39 and then the most recent one, I mean recent in quotes, of
40 course, because it stops at 2013, and this was the preferred
41 alternative in Amendment 40. These are the percentages that
42 would be allocated to the headboat program.

43
44 We also have here an alternative that would indicate what would
45 be done with the landings associated to those headboat vessels
46 who decide to opt-out, and, essentially, the vessels opting out
47 of the program, as discussed in Action 3, their landings would
48 be subtracted from the allocation for this program, and they

1 would be, essentially, added to the other pie, if you would.

2
3 In terms of Action 6, Action 6 looks at the units of measure for
4 quota distribution and reporting, and we have no action, in
5 which everything would be done in pounds, and Alternative 2
6 would distribute and track in number of fish, and Alternative 3
7 would essentially take a mixture. The distribution of annual
8 allocation would be done in pounds, but the tracking and the
9 reporting would be done in numbers of fish. That is the AP's
10 preferred alternative.

11
12 Action 7.1 looks at the time period to be used for the
13 distribution of initial shares, and we have various time series
14 here, and the preferred alternative, which is Alternative 4,
15 and, when we indicate a preferred alternative, that means that
16 the council did select a preferred option at a previous meeting,
17 and so your preferred alternative is that, for each species, the
18 distribution would be based on the year of the highest landings
19 during the most recent five years, and so, essentially, each
20 participant will pick their best years, and then that will be
21 the basis for aggregating it and converting it into percentage
22 for distribution. That is also the AP's recommended preferred
23 alternative.

24
25 7.2 looks at the distribution of initial shares, and your
26 preferred alternative is Alternative 2 with Option a, and this
27 is also what the AP recommended. The initial shares will be
28 distributed equally amongst participants of the program and
29 apportioned proportionally, and so, essentially, both were
30 considered, but, because of the option chosen, the Option 2a, no
31 equal distribution, everything will be based on the landing
32 histories of the participants.

33
34 In terms of the transferability of IFQ shares, you have also
35 selected a preferred during a previous meeting, and your
36 preferred alternative is Alternative 2, which would require a
37 valid reef fish permit with an endorsement or a permit,
38 whichever is established in Action 4, to receive shares through
39 transfers, and, of course, shares can only be held by U.S.
40 citizens and permanent resident aliens.

41
42 In terms of the maintenance of the shares, you also did select a
43 preferred alternative during the last meeting, and that is
44 Alternative 2, which is also what the AP recommended as a
45 preferred. To hold shares would require a reef fish for-hire
46 permit with an endorsement or a permit, whichever is established
47 in Action 3.

48

1 For the transferability of annual allocation, we have the no
2 action alternative, and the AP recommended, as a preferred,
3 Alternative 2, which would require a valid reef fish for-hire
4 permit with an endorsement or a permit, whichever is established
5 in Action 3 for the transfers.

6
7 You did direct us to add an Alternative 4, which would allow for
8 lotteries and auctions to transfer annual allocation, and that
9 alternative is similar to the one in Amendment 41, and it has
10 been added to the document.

11
12 In terms of the share caps, you selected a preferred alternative
13 during the October meeting, and the share cap would be that, for
14 each species category, no person shall hold more shares than the
15 maximum percentage issued during initial distribution, and that
16 is also the AP-recommended preferred alternative.

17
18 For the allocation caps, the AP recommended Alternative 2, but
19 you do not have a preferred alternative, as a council, for this
20 action. At any point in time, a person's total landings across
21 all accounts cannot be more than the maximum holdings
22 distributed to a person in each share category, initially. We
23 also have a no action as well as in Alternative 3, which would
24 look at the cap across all species.

25
26 This is also an action that is consistent across the two
27 amendments, and it would allow for the retention of annual
28 allocation before an anticipated quota reduction, for example,
29 and we were directed to add the options to return these
30 withholdings either by June 1 or August 1, and this is the exact
31 same action as the one in Amendment 41.

32
33 The cost recovery fees, the actions are also very similar, and
34 we'll just highlight the fact that the AP recommended that the
35 cost recovery fees be based on the commercial ex-vessel price.
36 There is, in Amendment 42, an action that deals with new
37 entries, and we have four alternatives, at least four, in this
38 action.

39
40 There is no action, which would not allow for new entries, and
41 Alternative 2 would allow new entries at the beginning of each
42 calendar year, and then Alternative 3 would allow new entries to
43 join this program any time during the year, but their entry
44 would become effective in the subsequent calendar year.

45
46 Finally, Alternative 4, which is the preferred alternative by
47 the AP, which also attaches a minimum passenger capacity, and,
48 for new entrants here, only those vessels that carry over forty-

1 nine passengers would be considered, and this is what the AP
2 recommended as a preferred.

3
4 Of course, new entry, on its own, does not grant the ownership
5 to any share or allocation. One enters the program and then
6 that is to be determined, but you have, based on the AP
7 recommendation, directed us to add an action that would consider
8 distribution of shares to new entrants, and those would be then
9 Actions 16.1, 16.2, and 16.3.

10
11 To distribute shares to new entries, we would need to set aside
12 a certain portion of the quota affected to the program, and so
13 the first action provides Option a, Option b, and Option c,
14 which consider various percentages to be withheld for the
15 purpose of distributing them later to new entries, and the
16 options here are 1, 2, and 5 percent. We could consider other
17 percentages, if directed to do so.

18
19 Now, the set-aside shares would be distributed to new entrants,
20 and so 16.2 has two alternatives, a no action, which would not
21 distribute and, essentially, by not defining eligibility
22 criteria, and Alternative 2, which would distribute the set-
23 aside shares to new entrants.

24
25 Finally, how would those shares be distributed, and, for the
26 time being, we have only considered an equal distribution
27 amongst eligible new entrants, and that is the Alternative 2,
28 and also, for discussion, added an alternative that would
29 require that, for each share category, no new entrants may
30 receive more shares than the minimum distributed during initial
31 apportionment, because it will be difficult to justify that
32 someone that received a very low amount is required to
33 essentially lose let's say 5 percent of his shares and then turn
34 around and see that amount be distributed to a third party that
35 will get much more than they have themselves, and so that is why
36 this is added here, just for discussion. In Action 16.3,
37 presumably, more than one alternative can be selected as a
38 preferred alternative.

39
40 This is a quick overview of Amendment 42, and, of course, a lot
41 of the actions are consistent across the two amendments, and we
42 have indicated the preferred alternatives that you have selected
43 at this time. Thank you.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Is there discussion? Do you need
46 anything else from us at this particular point?

47
48 **DR. DIAGNE:** No, Mr. Chair. I think we are fine.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Banks.

3
4 **MR. BANKS:** I just want to make a comment, and it's as much to
5 me as it is to anybody else, but a motion was put on the board
6 for us to table these two amendments, and it was voted down,
7 fairly narrowly, and I feel like we need to at least get them to
8 the point of some final action and get to a referendum before I
9 can make up my mind about them, and so I am scolding me as much
10 as anybody else, but, if we're going to choose to keep moving
11 forward with these things, we've got to do something.

12
13 We sat around here for all this time and, just like those who
14 were trying to get it tabled said, we're not doing anything, and
15 so, at Full Council, I think I'm going to be starting to put
16 forth some preferreds, so we can try to do something, and I just
17 wanted everybody to know that. Thanks.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Sanchez.

20
21 **MR. SANCHEZ:** To that, I would encourage anyone in the audience
22 that is so inclined to help this selection of preferreds process
23 along. Please include your choice of preferreds at public
24 comment.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?
27 Okay. With that, we will wrap that portion. Is there anything
28 else under 42? You're done, Dr. Diagne?

29
30 **DR. DIAGNE:** Yes, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. With that, we will move on to our
33 next agenda item, which will be National Marine Fisheries
34 Service Response Regarding Referendum Requirements for Auctions,
35 and this will be Tab B, Number 10, and Dr. Crabtree.

36
37 **NMFS RESPONSE REGARDING REFERENDUM REQUIREMENTS FOR AUCTIONS**

38
39 **DR. CRABTREE:** I am going to give you the agency's
40 determination. The council asked whether referendums are
41 required under Section 407(c) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act for a
42 plan amendment that considers using an auction to redistribute
43 available red snapper quota above 4.65 million pounds.

44
45 NMFS has determined that referendums are not required under
46 these circumstances. The referendum requirements in Section
47 407(c) apply to any fishery management plan, plan amendment, or
48 regulation that creates a limited access privilege program for

1 the Gulf of Mexico commercial red snapper fishery.

2
3 NMFS interprets this provision to require the referendums only
4 at the time the program first comes into existence. This
5 interpretation is based on the meaning of the term "create",
6 which is defined as to cause to come into being, as well as the
7 very specific eligibility requirements for voting that are
8 specified in Section 407(c)(2) of the statute. These
9 eligibility requirements are linked to permit status and harvest
10 in the mid-1990s, which were relevant at the time the council
11 was considering the IFQ program, but they do not reflect current
12 permits or participation in the fishery.

13
14 With respect to a proposed auction system, Section 303A(d) of
15 the statute provides the council with the authority to establish
16 an auction system or other program to collect royalties for the
17 initial or any subsequent distribution of allocations in a
18 limited access privilege program.

19
20 This section requires the council to consider such a system in
21 requiring a limited access privilege program, but it does not
22 expressly address adding an auction to an existing limited
23 access privilege program, such as the red snapper IFQ program.
24 Thus, NMFS interprets the section as allowing for adoption of an
25 auction through an amendment to the existing program.

26
27 Now, I also want to say that the agency's view of this program
28 is that it is a well-functioning management system for the
29 commercial fishery, and, if you decide that you want to come in
30 and add an auction to this, it is going to be a very complicated
31 matter to figure out how to do that and how to make it work, and
32 we need to be very thoughtful and very careful and deliberative
33 about how we proceed with this, because the agency supports this
34 program and believes it works well, and so, if we make a
35 decision to move forward on this, we're going to have to do it
36 in a way that doesn't prevent this program from continuing to
37 meet the goals of the fishery management plan and achieves its
38 objectives.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there discussion? Mr. Boyd.

41
42 **MR. BOYD:** Roy, a question. In the first part of your
43 announcement, if that's what you want to call it, you used a
44 different number than the council used. We used 9.12, and what
45 number did you say that they used? It was four-point-something,
46 I think.

47
48 **DR. CRABTREE:** That is the 51 percent of the 9.12, and that is

1 the amount that I believe the council referenced in their letter
2 to the Fisheries Service asking for a determination.

3
4 **MR. BOYD:** Thank you.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?

7
8 **DR. CRABTREE:** If it's the council's desire, I would be willing
9 to put this determination into a letter and send it to the
10 Chair, if that's what you would like.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Yes, sir, I believe that would be correct.
13 Mr. Riechers.

14
15 **MR. RIECHERS:** Yes, I think that would be good, Roy, or we can
16 pull it off the record, but certainly part of it is because, in
17 past discussions similar to this, and I don't say that they were
18 exactly contrary, because there has been a bunch of different
19 discussions surrounding this, but this is a little bit of a
20 different discussion or interpretation than we might have heard
21 in the past, and so I think, if we could get that, or, again, we
22 can just go to the record and get it pulled out, but it might be
23 helpful to have it in writing.

24
25 **DR. CRABTREE:** We can do that, and this is a complicated issue,
26 and it has implications not only for the Gulf, but for New
27 England, because that's the general reference in the statute,
28 but we are responding really specifically to the red snapper
29 portion of this and the reference to the procedures in Section
30 407, and so it is limited, in the sense that it is different for
31 red snapper than for the other species.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Thank you. Anything else? Thank you.
34 We will move on in our agenda to the SSC Summary Reports.

35
36 **SSC SUMMARY REPORTS**

37
38 **DR. LORENZEN:** I will aim to be quick. There are two summary
39 reports, one from the webinar in October and one from the
40 meeting in January. The first item we were asked to consider
41 here was a review of legislative approaches to recreational red
42 snapper management, and the request here was, essentially, for
43 the SSC to shed light on how things like use alternative
44 fisheries management measures in the recreational fishery,
45 including extraction rates, fishing mortality targets, harvest
46 control rules in developing a fisheries management plan, and so
47 the question from the council was how would you do that and
48 would that work.

1
2 The question from the SSC was exactly what do you mean and what
3 are you looking to achieve, because that is sort of not very
4 clear, just from the text of the legislation, and I know this is
5 sort an issue, and I get asked this question a lot, by a variety
6 of people, and I can only say, well, I think maybe this is what
7 they're trying to do, and so we kicked it back and said, well,
8 can you give us more detail of really what you have in mind, and
9 my suggestion, actually, on this would be for the council to
10 consider whether we can have a more continuous process of
11 deliberation on this, something that doesn't just throw it back
12 and forth between the staff and the SSC and so on, because the
13 SSC doesn't develop things like this, typically.

14
15 We review information, and so someone has to take the lead and
16 develop some ideas as to what this might look like, and then we
17 can comment on the feasibility of that. One possibility might
18 be to have some sort of working group that might include AP
19 members and SSC members, and I know this has been done sometimes
20 in the past, and I'm just thinking of something that allows more
21 effective two or three-way communication than the usual process
22 of kicking things around.

23
24 Next on the agenda, we had a whole lot of SEDAR activities, and
25 I don't want to go into details of those, but only that the
26 request has been made to abandon the black grouper assessment,
27 because there is a lot of misidentification between black
28 grouper and gag grouper, and, since the gag landings are orders
29 of magnitudes higher than the black grouper landings, even a
30 moderate level of misidentification really does not help the
31 data quality.

32
33 Then there were a whole set of motions just to approve terms of
34 reference and so on and so forth, and one thing that I wanted to
35 mention here, particularly for those of you who are relatively
36 new to the process, is the SSC really responds primarily to
37 requests from the council to comment on things and so on and
38 areas mostly to do with stock assessments, where the questions
39 we are asked and the things that we need to do are very, very
40 well defined and very clear, and so we know that we have to
41 approve the terms of reference for the stock assessments, and we
42 go through and do that, and then there are other items where
43 that is not as clear, and so sometimes we don't know exactly
44 what the council really wants to know or what we should --
45 Should we have a motion in response to that or should we just
46 deliberate and tell you what we think, and I just wanted to flag
47 this. As you will see, we have different levels of responses
48 here, and so, for some things, they are very specific and

1 concrete, and, for some, they are more open-ended.
2
3 Then we had -- One thing that also happened here, which I
4 believe is the first, or one of the first, research track stock
5 assessments that are happening, and so this is for scamp
6 grouper, and that was discussed.
7
8 Then there was an exercise to try and compare results from a
9 data-limited assessment that was done with the DLM toolkit and
10 compare results, and the plan was for two fisheries, between
11 that the toolkit and full-blown assessments done with Stock
12 Synthesis 3.
13
14 The idea here was not to see if the species with full
15 assessments can be bumped down to a data-poor assessment,
16 obviously, but the other way around. We wanted to see how well
17 the data-poor assessments do with the stock that we have a lot
18 of information for.
19
20 In the end, it turned out that -- There were two stocks
21 selected, greater amberjack and gray triggerfish, and it turned
22 out that the information for the gray triggerfish was in fact
23 not really amenable to the data-limited approach here, and so
24 that did not work out.
25
26 We had one comparison for greater amberjack, and there is a
27 table, if you go down a little bit, and there is a table of
28 results using different data-limited methods, and you can see
29 that, generally, those suggested higher overfishing limits,
30 higher essentially sustainable catch levels, than the data-rich
31 assessment, but it was very, very large standard deviations.
32
33 Those are very uncertain, and there was some debate over why the
34 data-limited methods suggested substantially higher OFLs, and
35 one possible reason for that is that a lot of these approaches
36 rely on a reference period and essentially compare the stock
37 status to that reference period that is assumed to essentially
38 approximate harvesting at MSY, which does not necessarily have
39 to be the case, and so the suggestion was that this may be
40 because the reference period in fact was characterized by very
41 high catches.
42
43 We have a comparison of basically one fishery now, and there is
44 really not a lot of generality that can be derived from that,
45 but I did want to mention that this is going on, and we'll
46 probably have to do it for some more stocks, to get a better
47 idea of how those methods compare.
48

1 We had the review of framework action to modify the ACT for red
2 snapper, the federal for-hire and private angler components, and
3 we reviewed that, and we basically concluded that the options in
4 the framework action were logical, and there were no immediate
5 concerns. The rest of it, I have already presented on, which
6 was the discussion on the red snapper biomass and recreational
7 trip estimates. That was the webinar. Any questions about the
8 webinar?

9
10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Frazer.

11
12 **DR. FRAZER:** Thanks, Kai. In that table that you just showed,
13 where you had the amberjack data and the data-limited, and you
14 had standard deviations, I am just curious, and maybe I am
15 missing something, but how come you don't have a standard
16 deviation for the data-rich median value?

17
18 **DR. LORENZEN:** Right. It's not in the table, and you would,
19 obviously, in fact compute a sort of confidence interval for
20 that.

21
22 **DR. FRAZER:** How does it compare, in general, just off the top
23 of your head?

24
25 **DR. LORENZEN:** Actually, I do not know, in this case. I would
26 like to know that, too. I should add here that I did not
27 actually attend the webinar. I am not sure that we can have an
28 answer to that right now, unless Clay has it.

29
30 **MS. BOSARGE:** Hopefully we can get an answer to it. I will tell
31 you that nobody wanted to come and be the SSC rep for this
32 meeting for us, and I think we've been too rough on them. We're
33 going to have to be more gentle. Nobody wants to come back
34 here.

35
36 **DR. LORENZEN:** I think that's a very valid question, and I would
37 like to say that, if I had been at the webinar, I'm sure I would
38 have asked that question.

39
40 **MR. STEVEN ATRAN:** On the data-rich OFL, the PDF, the
41 probability density function, would have formed the confidence
42 interval, and it's there, and so, if you wanted to look at the
43 80 percent confidence limits, you could get that off of the PDF.
44 That's what we normally use to set ABC. We use the ABC control
45 rule function to determine the probability of overfishing that
46 we're comfortable with, and usually it's somewhere around 38 to
47 40 percent, and then we find that spot on the distribution
48 curve, but, because that curve is established, we use that in

1 setting ABCs, and so a specific standard deviation is not
2 explicitly stated.

3
4 **DR. LORENZEN:** I should say that, usually, the confidence
5 intervals that we get out of those assessments are quite narrow,
6 and possibly unrealistically narrow, in some cases.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?
9

10 **DR. LORENZEN:** If we move on to the in-person meeting, this
11 started with a Joint Standing and Coral SSC session. In fact,
12 it was the first we had of that special SSC and the Standing SSC
13 together, and you remember, in the discussion about expertise
14 that is coming in on particular sub-specialist topics, this was
15 probably the most specialist that I had seen, because we,
16 generally, on the Standing SSC, have expertise mostly in
17 fisheries management and relatively little in deep-sea coral.

18
19 This was largely -- It started with an informational part about
20 the Southeast Deep-Sea Coral Initiative and the sort of ongoing
21 expeditions and data products, and then there was a review of
22 the public hearing draft of Coral Amendment 9, and I have
23 discussed this with the council, and I will not go through the
24 details of this, because this will come in front of the council
25 at the next meeting, and so we'll not go through the details of
26 this part.

27
28 Following this, there was a review of a management strategy
29 evaluation, and this is a sort of more strategic planning
30 exercise that uses a system that is used a lot in terrestrial
31 conservation planning, and, basically, what it is, it's a
32 mapping out of the coral habitat, and it's mapping out the
33 fishing effort, and it's trying to -- It gives you the option,
34 or the ability, to actually identify sort of protected area
35 configurations that would conserve a certain area of coral at
36 minimal cost to the fishing industry.

37
38 This was seen as a very interesting development, but, right now,
39 the characterization of both the value of the coral, or the
40 coral habitat, and this was based on basically habitat
41 characterization, and the characterization of the cost to the
42 fishing industry were deemed to be not realistic enough to
43 really use this for management, but it's an interesting
44 development for the future.

45
46 This was followed by a Standing and Socioeconomic session, and
47 so this was one of those things where the Standing was there for
48 three days, and then different specialist SSCs came in. The

1 Socioeconomic SSC joined us for this review of the grouper-
2 tilefish IFQ program, and there were two presentations, one by
3 Dr. Marvasti on safety-at-sea, which showed that, in fact, since
4 the start of that IFQ program, fishermen tend to choose not to
5 go out in sort of bad weather conditions, and so they are less
6 exposed to risks, and there has been a reduction in fatality
7 rates since the start of that IFQ program.

8
9 There was some debate about this program and the previous, and I
10 believe that would be the red snapper, and the showing that,
11 particularly after the grouper-tilefish IFQ program, there was a
12 bigger decline in fatalities, and the reason, probably, is that
13 this fishery happens generally further out, and the risks are
14 somewhat greater.

15
16 The second set of surveys that was presented by Dr. Perruso
17 concerned general, basically, attitudes to the IFQ program from
18 participants, from captain and crew and from dealers, and this
19 was a very detailed, very involved presentation, and it is
20 actually not really summarized in here. Suffice it to say that
21 there is sort of quite a range of attitudes to this program, and
22 so there are roughly as many people satisfied as there are
23 unsatisfied, and there are very few people who are neutral, in
24 the middle, and so there is a very wide range, generally, of
25 opinions on this program among the participants.

26
27 I don't know whether this report will come to the council at
28 some stage, but our job, really, was to review the quality of
29 the survey, and so we discussed response rates and
30 characteristics of non-respondents versus respondents, and there
31 were no sort of major concerns about that survey, and so this
32 was an example of one of those requests that are not as
33 specific, and so we were not asked to really necessarily approve
34 this or comment on this very specifically. It was more like
35 this is what we got and are there any comments on it.

36
37 This was followed by the Standing and Reef Fish SSC session, and
38 there was a review of the draft status determination criteria
39 and optimum yield options paper, and there are two issues that I
40 want to highlight here. One is that the SSC requested to
41 include a wider range of SPR proxies for FMSY, and this was
42 originally set to 20 percent or 30 percent, but there is a study
43 going on in the Southeast Fisheries Science Center that suggests
44 that, if you at least allow the possibility that the steepness
45 of the stock-recruitment relationship may not be very high, then
46 you get into a range where actually the best proxies for FMSY
47 may be more in the range of 40 percent or 50 percent SPR,
48 depending on whether those species are also hermaphroditic or

1 not, and so the request was made to have a wider range of
2 options that can be chosen.

3
4 The other somewhat interesting part of this was the discussion
5 about optimum yield, Action 4, and there is -- The question is
6 should there be a sort of standard optimum yield proxy.
7 Sometimes the 75 percent of FMSY has been used, and there is a
8 sort of economic idea behind that that really relates to the
9 economics of commercial fishing.

10
11 There was some debate about that, and it was felt that this
12 probably was not necessarily appropriate to apply to primarily
13 recreational or mixed fisheries, and so, essentially, there was
14 a recommendation not to go over the standard OY proxy of that
15 kind, and, perhaps, as an addition, really thinking about
16 optimum yield also is something, if we can bring in more
17 explicit information on the economics and on social criteria in
18 fisheries, we can end up with more meaningful characterizations
19 of what the optimum yield might be for a particular fishery.

20
21 This was followed, again, by a bunch of fairly standard SEDAR
22 activities, and so we have approved terms of reference for a
23 number of assessments, and then we had two last brief points
24 here. One is this ongoing project on the spawning aggregations
25 in the Gulf of Mexico that is funded by RESTORE Act funding, and
26 so we had an update on that project. That is proceeding to
27 identify spawning aggregations for reef fish and also pelagics.

28
29 We had a presentation on the robustness of harvest control rule
30 alternatives to future red tide events, and this is using red
31 grouper as an example, and the question was, if you have a
32 responsive assessment schedule, and that basically means, after
33 a suspected red tide event, you do an earlier assessment and
34 then go back to a sort of regular five-year schedule, versus
35 having just a regular schedule.

36
37 The result of that was that there is a sort of -- I would say a
38 moderate improvement in performance when you do have more
39 responsive assessments, but it wasn't a day-and-night scenario.
40 It worked somewhat better. I think that the rest of this that I
41 have already covered, and so there was the carryover provisions,
42 red snapper indices of abundance, and so I think, the rest of
43 it, we have already covered in detail.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Any questions or discussion? Dr.
46 Mickle.

47
48 **DR. MICKLE:** The RESTORE Act spawning aggregation study that's

1 being currently conducted, it sounded like that was an update,
2 and was there a list of species, in particular, that was in that
3 presentation, or do you remember?
4

5 **DR. LORENZEN:** I don't remember, offhand. It was quite wide-
6 ranging in the update.
7

8 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?
9 Carrie.
10

11 **DR. CARRIE SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I had just a
12 couple of housekeeping items that I wanted to bring to the
13 committee. For the grouper-tilefish IFQ review, that will come
14 back. The review will come back to the SSC, the Standing and
15 the Socioeconomic SSC, the review, a more complete part of the
16 review, and then we'll try to convene the new AP that you formed
17 and finalized at this council meeting, prior to the April
18 council meeting, to have them also review it, as well as the
19 options paper. Then we'll bring those recommendations to the
20 council in April.
21

22 Then the other item that I wanted to bring up was the Coral
23 Amendment 9. Based on the recommendations that the Standing and
24 Coral SSC made, in consultation with Chairman Bosarge, we
25 decided to have those recommendations come back to the new coral
26 committee and have them look at those decisions, or those
27 recommendations, and see how they want to include it or not
28 include it in the amendment, and then postpone our public
29 hearings until after they have had a chance to look at those and
30 make any changes to the amendment, and so we would have our
31 public hearings, potentially, between the April and June council
32 meetings, and so just delaying them by one meeting. That
33 currently is our plan, and I just wanted to let everyone know.
34

35 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you for that update. Any further
36 comments? Okay. With that, we will move on to our next action
37 item, which will be Presentation on Greater Amberjack Commercial
38 Fishing Year and Trip Limits and Recreational Vessel Limits and
39 Split Quotas, Tab B, Number 12, and Dr. Froeschke.
40

41 **PRESENTATION - GREATER AMBERJACK COMMERCIAL FISHING YEAR AND**
42 **TRIP LIMITS AND RECREATIONAL VESSEL LIMITS AND SPLIT QUOTAS**
43

44 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Good afternoon. I think we've all got multiple
45 turns today, and, moving on, new fish and same problem, greater
46 amberjack. This has been a busy species that we've worked on
47 several times in recent months.
48

1 Just to kind of get you up to speed on what you've already done,
2 we have recently completed two framework actions in response to
3 a stock assessment that required some modifications to the ACLs.
4 In August of 2017, we completed work on a framework action that
5 reduced the ACLs and ACTs for the commercial and recreational
6 sectors.

7
8 We, meaning you, recommended a July 1 to December 31
9 recreational closed season. If you recall, there was a whole
10 bunch of discussion about recreational closed seasons at that
11 time, and the decision, at that time, was, well, we need more
12 time to talk about it, and this will get us down the road, and,
13 in fact, at the October meeting, we completed final action on
14 another framework action that further revised the recreational
15 fishing year, or the fishing season, to May and then August,
16 September, and October. Those are the open months. Then it
17 changed the fishing year, which is currently based on a calendar
18 year, from January to December, to August 1 to July 31 for the
19 recreational sector only, and so stay tuned.

20
21 There are also some additional management actions that you guys
22 all talked about and recommended that we begin working on. That
23 was recreational fractional bag limits, meaning bag limits of
24 less than one per person per day, for the recreational sector
25 and split quotas. If you recall, the season, which has not been
26 implemented yet, but we hope that will be sometime soon, it
27 would split the quota, some percentage of the quota, between the
28 May, or spring, season and the August/September/October fall
29 season.

30
31 On the commercial side, a potential action could be to modify
32 the fishing year. Among other things, this could align the
33 fishing year with how you have just recently defined it for the
34 recreational sector, and there may also be some other benefits,
35 or not, and so we can look at that, and then one potential
36 action to modify the trip limits, and we've been down this road
37 before, and we'll talk about that.

38
39 First, this idea of recreational fractional bag limits, and
40 there is a number of euphemisms for this, I suppose, but that's
41 what we went with at this time, and, again, the idea is that you
42 would implement something less than one fish per person per day.

43
44 A question of is this new, and the council has been through this
45 before, in Amendment 30B, and, at that time, they elected not to
46 take any action. However, it did sort of give us a pathway to
47 begin looking at this, and so what was done is we took the
48 landings and evaluated them on some -- On this table on the

1 right, what you will see are some different options.

2
3 What we did is we took the landings, which you see in the table
4 on the left, and evaluated them, had they come in different
5 options of one fish per person, which is what we have now, and,
6 if you look at the far-right column, it would be the percent
7 reduction. Obviously, there is no reduction. That's the status
8 quo.

9
10 If the limit became one per two, you would get a 38 percent
11 reduction. One per three would be 42, and so on. Obviously,
12 the one fish per more people, you get a greater reduction, and
13 so these are some of the preliminary numbers that we have so
14 far, to give you some idea of what kind of reductions you might
15 expect.

16
17 Split quotas, and I will try to kind of summarize this all for
18 you at the end, but the split quotas -- Again, it's this idea
19 that dividing the recreational quota into some fall and spring
20 season, such that what's happening now is the different portions
21 of the Gulf access this stock at different times of the year,
22 and, if it's caught up early and it's closed, then one
23 geographic region may be sort of limited in their access.

24
25 The past four years, we have had early season quota closures for
26 this species on the recreational side, and the split quota could
27 reduce the likelihood of one region and/or season being locked
28 out of the fishery, and so what do the data look like on this,
29 in terms of the monthly patterns? It's the typical peak in the
30 summer months that we see for other reef fish species, and so
31 how we would do this is we would calculate fall and spring
32 seasons, meaning the May and the August through October,
33 something like that, and you would calculate the monthly harvest
34 based on daily catch rate and the number of days open.

35
36 As we currently have it, based on the recent data, the August
37 through October months captured about 61 percent of the quota,
38 and this is based on the decision tool that the Regional Office
39 has recently prepared, and we looked at a couple of options of
40 the 60/40, meaning 60 percent of the quota in the fall and 40 in
41 the spring, or 70/30. Again, these are just sort of loose
42 ideas, to get the ball rolling, and they're not hard-and-fast
43 recommendations, and so that's why we're here, to get your
44 input.

45
46 In terms of what do you get from those kinds of quotas, we will
47 start with the table and then go to the caveats. The top
48 column, or the top row, is no action, if we didn't bother to do

1 any of this and we just ran the season straight through, and so
2 the fall season would be the August 1 through October 31, and
3 the close data would indicate the date it would be closed, if
4 any, for both the fall and spring seasons, and then the far-
5 right column is the landings.

6
7 What you will see, with the no split quota, is, based on the
8 2018/2019 quota for this year, if the catch rates were held
9 constant, based on the decision table, we wouldn't anticipate a
10 closed season this coming year or beyond. If we did a 60/40,
11 what you will see is that it would -- If it had run its course,
12 it would close on October 31, and this is based on that we would
13 have to close just shy of this, based on the decision tool,
14 October 28. There would not be a closure in the May season.

15
16 If we did a 70/30 split, it would remain open through October,
17 but you would close just before the May season, and so somewhere
18 in there -- If you wanted to do this split, it would be
19 somewhere in between those, based on what we have now.

20
21 However, keep in mind that, in the 2019/2020 year, there is an
22 increase in quota, through the rebuilding process, that will go
23 into effect, and so, if we increased the quota and we did not
24 increase the catch rates, that would further ameliorate that
25 problem. That is one thing to think about.

26
27 Moving on to the commercial side here, commercial trip limits,
28 as I mentioned, we have been down this road twice before, and,
29 again, it's the same sort of problem, where the commercial
30 sector is closed if they reach their allowable quota before the
31 year end, which they have done frequently throughout the last
32 several years.

33
34 The trip limit is one idea to slow down the rate of harvest for
35 this species. In 2013, there was a 2,000-pound trip limit that
36 was implemented, and that is in whole weight. The commercial
37 sector typically lands them in gutted weight, and so that's
38 1,923 pounds gutted weight. That didn't slow them down as much
39 as perhaps you all had hoped, and so this was further revised
40 down in a subsequent action in 2016, with a 1,500-pound trip
41 limit in gutted weight.

42
43 The question, again, is we're still meeting those early season
44 quota closures, and the question is should trip limits be
45 further reduced to slow the harvest rate, and so we looked at
46 some more recent data, and this bar chart here is the number of
47 pounds landed per trip, and this is the distribution of the
48 trip, and what you will see, in far-left bar, is that most of

1 the trips are between one and 500 pounds, and that likely
2 indicates that they are not targeting amberjack and it's more of
3 a discard kind of a thing.

4
5 You will see that there are a few trips landing up to the 1,500,
6 or even slightly above the 1,500, pound trip limit, and so, if
7 you were to lower the trip limit, presumably those bars, those
8 trips with the bars to the right of that number, would be
9 reduced down to the maximum, and then the net effect is that you
10 would reduce the rate of harvest for the fleet.

11
12 In terms of monthly landings, what we did is calculated the
13 monthly harvest for the commercial sector, assuming that they
14 were constrained to the five different potential trip limits,
15 and so what you will see is that, when you lower the trip limit,
16 you lower the projected harvest, and that's not surprising.

17
18 The monthly pattern here, this trough in March and April, that
19 is the quota closures, the spawning season closure, and so
20 that's an artifact of management and not something unique to
21 that particular species.

22
23 In terms of going from the bottom up, what you will see is you
24 get the biggest bang from your buck at the 500 to 750. Then, as
25 you go larger, the benefits to the trip limit get progressively
26 smaller.

27
28 In terms of how does this all work, there are two tables here,
29 and so this is the trip limits that we evaluated as potential
30 options, and so 1,500, again, this would be the current no
31 action, and we kind of stepped those down in 250-pound
32 increments to 500.

33
34 The landings would assume that the fishery is open all year,
35 which clearly it isn't, because, under those scenarios, you
36 would hit the ACT before the year ends, and the parentheses are
37 the percent reductions, and so, if you went to a 500-pound trip
38 limit reduction, you would get about a 48 percent reduction, and
39 so stay tuned on that, and we'll come back to that in just a
40 minute. There is one more thing to muddy the waters.

41
42 The commercial fishing year, I mentioned this at the beginning,
43 is one of the things that we've been tasked with getting the
44 ball rolling. On the recreational side, it's now been defined
45 as August 1 through the July 31 of the following calendar year,
46 and the commercial is based on the calendar year.

47
48 In terms of monitoring for OFL and things, it would be simpler

1 if they were on the same period, such that, when you calculated
2 the total landings for that stock, you could add them up over
3 the same time period, and it can be done without changing the
4 calendar year, although it would be simpler to do it if they
5 were both on the same calendar year, and so that is one thing to
6 think about.

7
8 The other thing to think about is, if you change the start of
9 the calendar year, you change the date at which the quota
10 resets, and so, if it were to reset in the beginning of August,
11 the rate of harvest per day later in the year is lower than it
12 is in the spring, and so that affects how many days you would
13 get by the trip reductions that I just alluded to, and so, if
14 you stay on the edge of your seat here, we have a table, and so,
15 to make it interesting, both of these variables interact, and
16 so, on the left column, you have the potential options for trip
17 limits.

18
19 Then the second column, the top panel there, assumes that we
20 have a January to December fishing year, and that's what we have
21 now, and the bottom would be if, for example, we went to an
22 August to July fishing year.

23
24 The grand difference, again, is that, in the bottom panel, given
25 that you would start fishing and have a season in a period that
26 historically has lower fishing effort, you get more days for a
27 given trip limit in the bottom panel, which would modify the
28 fishing year, than if you didn't. That may or may not be a
29 desirable attribute, given that it's a commercial fishery. You
30 may want to maximize harvest per trip, or you may not, but
31 that's what the data suggests at this point.

32
33 The next steps, this is where you guys get to provide input.
34 What do you want us to do? We have given some things to think
35 about, and are the range of options reasonable and appropriate,
36 and should other actions or alternatives be considered?

37
38 In terms of the recreational, and specifically the fractional
39 bag limits, or vessel bag limits, whatever you want to call
40 those, keep in mind that we have twice modified the recreational
41 season recently. One of those has not been implemented, and, if
42 we were to go to something of a bag limit less than one -- We
43 have enough days, it seems, for the one-fish bag limit, and so
44 it would seem reasonable that you might want to further modify
45 and extend it out some more days, in order to make use of the
46 extra time, or reduced rate of effort.

47
48 We're here seeking your input. If you want us to do more on

1 these and bring something back for you to look at more formally
2 in April, or if you want to get rid of some of these, but we're
3 at your mercy. I think that's what I have.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** All right. Thank you. Is there discussion?
6 Ms. Bosarge.

7
8 **MS. BOSARGE:** Well, I'm not sure where we're going with it, but,
9 if we do end up bringing an amendment, I am not real sure that I
10 would want to start delving into changing the season date for
11 commercial just to make it easier for the scientists to plug it
12 into the model. I think they've been able to figure it out thus
13 far.

14
15 I mean, they have a season, and, if the commercial fishermen
16 have an issue with when their start date is on their season and
17 they want to change it, that's cool, and we'll take a look at
18 it, but to change it just to make something easier to compute, I
19 don't really see where I would be too excited about that, but
20 that's all.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Guyas.

23
24 **MS. GUYAS:** I would definitely be supportive of looking at some
25 of these things at a future meeting, and I can take or leave the
26 commercial fishing year, depending on what the industry wants to
27 do, but I have heard from a lot of folks that would like to
28 consider fractional bag limits, and that would include
29 potentially extending the season, depending on the bang for the
30 buck there.

31
32 We talked at a few meetings, when we were discussing the season,
33 about potentially doing a split quota situation, and it looks
34 like that may not be necessary here, but it may be something
35 that we want to keep in the back of our minds, if we are going
36 to be playing with the season again and making changes to it for
37 recreational.

38
39 Then I have also received a fair amount of input from the
40 commercial side about wanting to reduce trip limits, and so it
41 seems that it would be appropriate to work on an amendment that
42 at least covered those things, and maybe we wait until Full
43 Council and get some more feedback before we decide what goes in
44 there, or make a motion, but it seems to me that it would be
45 appropriate to look at these things.

46
47 **DR. FROESCHKE:** One more thing on the fractional bag limits. If
48 you were to go to something like that, I suspect that you would

1 want to change the way you do the seasons. For example, on red
2 snapper, we set an opening date, and we estimate the harvest
3 rate per day, and then you would set a closed date. You would
4 close it based on when you were projected to be met, and so that
5 would likely -- It could be different each year, much like the
6 red snapper season, rather than more of a fixed closed season
7 that we are currently considering. It certainly could be done,
8 but it would just be a change in the way that we do it.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there further discussion?
11 Okay. Next up on the agenda, we will move to Other Business,
12 and we had a couple of items for Other Business. The first one
13 will be the Historical Captain Charter Reef Fish Permits and Mr.
14 Banks.

15
16 **OTHER BUSINESS**
17 **HISTORICAL CAPTAIN CHARTER REEF FISH PERMITS**

18
19 **MR. BANKS:** Thanks, Mr. Chairman. This is an issue that was
20 brought to my attention by some of our charter guys in
21 Louisiana, and they talked to me about permits that they held
22 that only allowed them to use it on that boat, and they didn't
23 come with some of the same types of flexibility that regular
24 permits do, and they asked about the possibility of moving those
25 historical permits into a normal permit, for lack of a better
26 way to describe it.

27
28 I wanted to ask the council if you guys would be willing to
29 discuss that issue, or at least consider it. It looks like,
30 based on the information provided by council staff, there is
31 thirty-two of these across the Gulf, and so we're talking about
32 a very small amount of the overall 1,247.

33
34 As I understand, some of these guys, or maybe all of them, maybe
35 all of the thirty-two permits, are actively fishing, and so
36 we're already counting their landings, and it doesn't seem like
37 it would add anything to landings, and so I don't see a downside
38 there, but I am certainly open to discussing it with the council
39 and trying to find out if there is any downside to management to
40 moving these historical endorsements or whatever into full and
41 regular permits. If we think that there is some appetite for
42 such, I would like to make a motion.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Dr. Stunz.

45
46 **DR. STUNZ:** I just have a question, because I am not familiar
47 with it, but what's the historical basis for these permits, or
48 how did they arrive, versus not getting a regular permit?

1
2 **MR. BANKS:** I am probably not the best one to explain this, and
3 I will turn it over to somebody else who can explain it better.
4

5 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Well, I mean, just out of memory, it was one
6 of those things that we were going into moratorium permits for
7 the charter industry, and there were mates and captains who
8 didn't own boats, but were basically, at some point, were
9 obviously going to, and they were basically the new entrants at
10 that time.
11

12 There was about thirty, and they were typically your deckhands
13 that had been around for a while that just weren't quite ready
14 to make the leap to buy their own boat or do whatever, and they
15 were awarded a historical captain type of deal. Now, I believe
16 there is some information in your briefing book that talks about
17 that, but there is about thirty of them.
18

19 It is required that they have to be on the boat when the boat
20 runs, and so, if they're on the boat and the boat runs, they can
21 fish whatever season. Now, if they have a boat and they're not
22 on that boat, then that boat can go fish state waters, which is
23 different than a boat that has a permit, and so there is a small
24 difference there in that, and so I don't think it's a big deal.
25 Most of these guys were -- If I remember right, this was the mid
26 to late 1990s, somewhere in that timeframe, just out of memory.
27

28 I am sure that most of these guys have boats now, or are
29 operating boats in some capacity, and so that's the best I
30 recall. I would have to scan back through, and I didn't even,
31 honestly, read that document. I remember enough about it to get
32 me through, but, to sit here and give you a history lesson on
33 it, I'm not quite there yet, but, if staff wants to take a stab
34 at it or correct me with anything that I have said incorrectly,
35 please do so. Mr. Banks.
36

37 **MR. BANKS:** As I understand it, and I was looking back through
38 the document that the staff put together, and they referenced
39 Amendment 20. If you look back at the purpose and need, it was
40 somewhat to cap the growth in the industry. Well, at that time,
41 if I understand the number of permits overall, it was around
42 1,900. That has already come down to 1,247, and so it seems
43 like that has already been established, and so I don't think
44 that, again, adding these thirty-two into regular permits is
45 going to upset the purpose and need of what that original
46 amendment was.
47

48 Another thing, just more on a personal level for the captains, I

1 mean, these are guys who, unlike normal permits, if they get
2 sick, and they can't go to work, they can't get somebody else to
3 go run their boat and run their business for them, and so they
4 have a hard time continuing their business in the same fashion
5 that some of the regular guys do, and so it just seems like it
6 would be fair to move them into the regular permitted category.

7
8 It's only thirty-two boats, and their landings are already
9 factored in, if they're participating, and so it just doesn't
10 seem to be that big of a deal, and I would certainly love to
11 offer a motion at the appropriate time.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

14
15 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think the intent, when we did this, was to let
16 these guys continue to do what they were doing at the time,
17 because they weren't the vessel owners then, and so they didn't
18 qualify for the permits, but they wanted to enable them to keep
19 fishing for the rest of their career, and then the idea was that
20 they would go away. You could change it, if that's what you
21 want to do. In the scheme of 1,200 permits, you're right that
22 it's not going to make a huge difference.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Gerhart.

25
26 **MS. GERHART:** A couple of issues to bring out about this. One
27 is that there are about ten vessels, we think, that do not --
28 I'm sorry. Ten of those permits do not have a vessel, and so,
29 although a lot of those guys did go and get vessels, there are
30 ten that didn't. They are working on vessels that are owned by
31 someone else.

32
33 Some of those vessels have their own permits on them, and so you
34 can't associate the other permit with that vessel, and, the way
35 our permits system works, these are vessel permits, and so they
36 have to be associated with a vessel, and so that's one concern.

37
38 A second one is that all the for-hire vessels have a passenger
39 capacity associated with the permit, and these ones do not, and
40 so that would be something that would have to be addressed as
41 well.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

44
45 **DR. CRABTREE:** I would think, if we did this, it would be a six-
46 pack permit, and that would be it. I mean, I can understand
47 these guys wanting to get a transferable permit, because it's
48 essentially -- They're worth a fair amount of money, but I would

1 think, if we did this, we would issue them six-pack permits, but
2 I don't know what you do with the guys who don't own boats now.
3 It's not clear to me how we could issue them one, and, if we go
4 down that path, then they will come back in a few years and buy
5 a boat and then want us to do it again, and so just know what
6 you're getting into.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion? Mr. Anson.

9
10 **MR. ANSON:** I was just wondering, in the spirit of equity, if we
11 ought to not look at the historical captains for the coastal
12 migratory pelagic permits as well. There is about thirty-three
13 of those that are currently in there, and so what's good for one
14 might be good for the other.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Well, I do personally know of one individual
17 who does have a vessel that probably carries fourteen or fifteen
18 or eighteen people, and so that would be something -- I am not
19 saying that this can't be done or shouldn't be done, and I'm not
20 trying to steer you one way or the other, Patrick. If you want
21 to make a motion to do something, that's fine. Don't let me
22 steer you, but I am just trying to provide you what information
23 I know about it, because I don't think anybody else at the table
24 really wants to speak to it, and so I'm just trying to speak as
25 fairly as I can with you.

26
27 **MR. BANKS:** Well, maybe I will just ask staff to bring that kind
28 of information to us, Kevin, on not just the historical reef
29 fish permits, but those historical pelagic and how many there
30 are and what their contribution to landings are, how many of
31 them actually own a boat and don't.

32
33 That's the first I have heard of them not actually owning a
34 boat, and I can appreciate that, at least in our world, Wildlife
35 and Fisheries in Louisiana, if it was a vessel permit, and, yes,
36 they had the right to get one, but they had no vessel to put it
37 on, then we couldn't issue one, and so it would just be a matter
38 of they just wouldn't get one, because they don't have a vessel
39 to put it on. I don't know if it's that easy in the federal
40 world or not, but, anyway, that's how we would handle it at the
41 state level. Thank you.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.

44
45 **DR. CRABTREE:** One other thing is I think most of these guys
46 probably have both a reef fish and a CMP, and so, if you're
47 going to do this, it's more than just reef fish.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Anson.
2
3 **MR. ANSON:** Sue, looking at the website, the total records equal
4 the total permits, historical captains, but there is a valid
5 permit count, and it gives a number that is smaller than total
6 records, and you have a category here where it says, "valid",
7 and then you have some other options in there of
8 renewable/transferable. Is that because they are beyond their
9 twelve-month period and they are in the grace period?
10
11 **MS. GERHART:** Yes, they have expired, but they have a year after
12 expiration to renew those.
13
14 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Is there further discussion?
15
16 **MR. BANKS:** I guess I will make a motion, and, as much as I
17 would like to make a motion to what Kevin said, I guess I have
18 to ask Ms. Levy if -- Since the agenda item reads about reef
19 fish permits, are we able to make such a motion to include
20 migratory?
21
22 **MS. LEVY:** I think you can pretty much -- You're not taking
23 final action on anything, but you're just asking for
24 information, and I don't see a problem with you making a motion.
25
26 **MR. BANKS:** Okay. I would like to make a motion to instruct
27 staff to begin development of an action in the appropriate
28 document that considers removing the historical captain
29 endorsement to both the reef fish and CMP permits and allow
30 those permits to be fully transferable. Thank you to staff for
31 helping me word that correctly.
32
33 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** We have a motion on the board to instruct
34 staff to begin development of an action in the appropriate
35 document that considers removing the historical captain
36 endorsement to reef fish and CMP permits and allow those permits
37 to be fully transferable. It was moved by Mr. Banks, and it was
38 seconded by Mr. Swindell. Is there any further discussion on
39 this motion? Mr. Boyd.
40
41 **MR. BOYD:** I had two questions, one for Mara. Mara, are these
42 historical captain permits already figured in the moratorium?
43 Did I make that clear or not? Okay. Are those permits under
44 the moratorium and there can be no more of those?
45
46 **MS. LEVY:** Correct, and they can't even be transferred at this
47 point. They belong to the historical captains.
48

1 **MR. BOYD:** So they are included in the existing number of reef
2 fish permits?
3
4 **MS. LEVY:** Correct.
5
6 **MR. BOYD:** Okay. A question for Patrick. Patrick, if these
7 permits are transferred into permanent permits, that makes them
8 eligible for Amendment 42, and is that correct?
9
10 **MR. BANKS:** If they were part of the headboat survey, I guess
11 they would be available to 42, and I would assume the others
12 would be available for 41.
13
14 **MR. BOYD:** Okay, and so that makes them eligible then for
15 whatever quota is established in those two sectors, I mean in
16 that sector, those two sectors.
17
18 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Dr. Crabtree.
19
20 **DR. CRABTREE:** I mean, that would be up to you. I don't know
21 that we have specifically really discussed that. It seems to
22 me, if you're going to allow their historical captain
23 endorsements to become fully transferable endorsements, then,
24 yes, they would be in, but you could tweak them in any number of
25 ways in those amendments.
26
27 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Ms. Gerhart.
28
29 **MS. GERHART:** In 41 and 42, the numbers that we've been giving
30 have included the historical captains as well as the decision
31 tools that you've seen and things like that.
32
33 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Mr. Riechers.
34
35 **MR. RIECHERS:** In those numbers, the ten that don't have a
36 vessel, you have excluded them, I'm assuming? You are including
37 those as well? Okay.
38
39 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. We will let Dr. Stephen make her way to
40 the microphone and help clarify it, just to make sure that we're
41 on the same page.
42
43 **DR. STEPHEN:** Those ten vessels, the historical captain does not
44 own his vessel, and that vessel is owned by a different person.
45 In some of those cases, that vessel also has other permits on it
46 that are held by, most likely, the vessel owner. If we would
47 convert them, we couldn't have two permits on the same vessel
48 with different vessel owners, and so they would be forced to

1 find another vessel to lease or to buy, in order to put their
2 permit on it.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Okay. Any further discussion? We have a
5 motion on the floor, and it's been seconded, and we've had
6 discussion. **Is there any opposition to the motion on the floor**
7 **before you? Seeing none, the motion carries.**

8
9 With that, we will move to our next Other Business item, which
10 is Mr. Anson and an Overview of Research.

11
12 **OVERVIEW OF ALABAMA RESEARCH**

13
14 **MR. ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I have spoken to several of
15 you over the last couple of months, but we're going to be
16 hosting kind of a research review of Alabama-centric research
17 related to artificial reefs that has been conducted off of
18 Alabama for the last eight to ten years, or maybe longer.

19
20 It's going to be focused primarily on interactions of anglers
21 with reefs and also looking at Dr. Powers' habitat-based
22 assessment methodology, and he's going to give us a little bit
23 of the details of what he does and how he develops those
24 numbers. We're going to review a two-year tagging study, a
25 fairly-extensive tagging study, that just wrapped up this year,
26 the artificial reef program, Snapper Check, and it's going to
27 kind of touch all the high points and all of the topics that
28 seem to be discussed here quite frequently.

29
30 Again, the major focus is artificial reefs and red snapper, and
31 Dave has offered his staff and their equipment to make the
32 research available via the web, and so, if you can't make it,
33 you'll be able to look at our Outdoor Alabama DCNR YouTube
34 channel, but it's scheduled for March 22. It's going to be an
35 all-day event, and, as we book the room and make some of those
36 final arrangements, we will get an official announcement out,
37 but that essentially gives you a heads-up. It will be in
38 Mobile, and so we'll give you the hotel details when we get
39 those sorted out, but thank you very much.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN GREENE:** Thank you. Is there any further business to
42 come before the Reef Fish Committee? Seeing none, I will hand
43 it back over to Madam Chair Bosarge.

44
45 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on January 30, 2018.)

46
47 - - -