

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

JOINT SHRIMP ADVISORY PANEL, CORAL ADVISORY PANEL, AND CORAL
SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE

Gulf Council Office

Tampa, Florida

AUGUST 3-4, 2016

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Kimberly Chauvin.....
Julius Collins.....
Glen Delaney.....
Julie Falgout.....
Gary Graham.....
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John Williams.....

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Joseph Weatherby.....
J.P. Brooker.....
Steve Ross.....
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George Schmahl.....
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1	
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4	Eric Cordes.....
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7	Chad Hanson.....Pew Charitable Trusts
8	Tom Frazer.....
9	Jay Lucas.....
10	Sharon McBreen.....Pew Charitable Trusts
11	Johnny Nelson.....
12	Mrs. Nelson.....
13	G.P. Schmahl.....FGBNMS
14	Robert Spaeth.....FL
15	Steve Werndli.....Florida Keys NMS
16	
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18	

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TABLE OF MOTIONS

PAGE 85: Motion that the Shrimp AP, the Coral AP, and the Coral SSC request that the discussion and comments made pertaining to the Flower Gardens Banks boundary expansions be included in the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council letter to the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary. The motion carried on page 86.

PAGE 108: Motion that the Coral SSC, Coral AP, and the Shrimp AP recommends to redraw the boundaries to accommodate the commercial fishery in the bank on the Viosca Knoll 862/906. The motion carried on page 110.

PAGE 123: Motion by the Coral SSC and the Coral AP that the Pulley Ridge proposed expansion for HAPC be placed on the priority list and convene a working group of Walter Jaap, Sandra Brooke, Rob Ruzicka, Robert Spaeth, Jay Lucas, Scott Daggett, J.P. Brooker or Joseph Weatherby. The motion carried on page 128.

PAGE 128: Motion by the Coral SSC to postpone any work on the recommended HAPCs that are the same as those proposed in Alternative 3 in the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary expansion DEIS. The motion carried on page 132.

PAGE 136: Motion by the Coral AP that the three existing sites of Long Mound, North Reed, and Many Mounds be made priorities. The motion carried on page 148.

PAGE 150: Motion by the Coral SSC to support the Coral AP motion that the three existing sites of Long Mound, North Reed, and Many Mounds be made priorities. The motion carried on page 152.

PAGE 152: Motion by the Shrimp AP to support the Coral AP motion that the three existing sites of Long Mound, North Reed, and Many Mounds be made priorities. The motion carried on page 152.

PAGE 157: Motion by the Coral AP, the Coral SSC, and the Shrimp AP to set aside the Alabama Alps as an area for priority using the staff-recommended boundary. The motion carried on page 158.

PAGE 158: Motion by the Coral SSC, Coral AP, and the Shrimp AP to make Viosca Knoll 826 a priority area. The motion carried on page 159.

1 PAGE 159: Motion by the Coral SSC, Coral AP, and the Shrimp AP
2 to make Rough Tongue Reef a priority area. The motion carried
3 on page 159.

4
5 PAGE 168: Motion by the Coral SSC that if the FGBNMS expansion
6 DEIS Preferred Alternative 3 does not result in sanctuary
7 expansion, the HAPCs currently in that alternative be
8 reconsidered as priority areas in the upcoming HAPC document, to
9 include adjustment of boundaries to Bouma Bank, Sonnier Bank,
10 and MacNeil Bank. The motion carried on page 169.

11
12 PAGE 174: Motion by the Coral SSC, Coral AP, and Shrimp AP to
13 adjust the boundaries of L&W Pinnacles and Scamp Reef to the
14 proposed boundary in the FGBNMS DEIS Alternative 5 and that this
15 site be a priority area. The motion carried on page 174.

16
17 PAGE 185: Motion by the Coral SSC, Coral AP, and Shrimp AP to
18 make AT 047, AT 357, GC 852, and Mississippi Canyon 118 priority
19 areas. The motion carried on page 189.

20
21 PAGE 208: Motion by the Shrimp AP, Coral AP, and Coral SSC that
22 any action moving forward should utilize the council staff's
23 realigned green boxes. The motion carried on page 209.

24
25 PAGE 200: Motion by the Coral SSC, Coral AP, and Shrimp AP to
26 make Harte Bank a priority area for HAPC status. The motion
27 carried on page 212.

28
29 PAGE 214: Motion by the Coral SSC and the Coral AP to include
30 Southern Bank as a high-priority area for an HAPC in the western
31 Gulf. The motion carried on page 214.

32
33 PAGE 215: Motion by the Coral SSC and the Coral AP to make GB
34 535, GB 299, GC 354, GC 140 and 272, GC 234, MC 751 and 885
35 priority areas for HAPC status with no fishing regulations. The
36 motion carried on page 220.

37
38 PAGE 220: Motion by the Coral AP, Coral SSC, and Shrimp AP to
39 make Viosca Knoll 862/906 with input for boundary revisions from
40 Steve Ross, Erik Cordes, and John Nelson be made a priority area
41 for HAPC status. The motion carried on page 221.

42
43 PAGE 222: Motion by the Coral SSC and the Coral AP to make
44 South Reed Site a mid-priority area for HAPC status with no
45 fishing regulations. The motion carried on page 222.

46
47 - - -
48

1 The Joint Shrimp Advisory Panel, Coral Advisory Panel, and Coral
2 Scientific and Statistical Committee of the Gulf of Mexico
3 Fishery Management Council convened at the Gulf Council Office,
4 Tampa, Florida, Wednesday morning, August 3, 2016, and was
5 called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Chairman Corky Perret.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN CORKY PERRET:** I am Corky Perret, Chair of the Shrimp
8 Advisory Panel, and I think the agenda is up on the board.
9 Morgan, Dr. Kilgour, is going to be the person who is going to
10 hopefully lead us through this stuff today and tomorrow.
11 Unfortunately, I've got to get on an airplane early tomorrow
12 morning, or fortunately for some of you, to get rid of me, but
13 we've got quite an agenda.

14
15 I am really happy to see that we're able to bring the two
16 advisory panels as well as the Coral SSC members together. Our
17 charge is to try and get through these coral areas and try and
18 prioritize the list of areas of importance and that sort of
19 thing, keeping in mind that we have other activities, shrimping
20 and longlining. Morgan, are the longline people here today?
21 Are they here yet?

22
23 **DR. MORGAN KILGOUR:** I believe they will be here shortly.

24
25 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

26
27 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. With that, let me just say this. I
28 don't know how best we will handle the protocol if motions come
29 up, if we vote as a whole or if we take it Shrimp AP, Coral AP,
30 Coral SSC, but hopefully we will get that worked out, as to what
31 may be the best thing when we all agree on what we do with what
32 we want to do with this issue.

33
34 With that, you've got the agenda in front of you, and the first
35 item of business is Adoption of the Agenda. I think we've got
36 something that we want to modify or change an item around. Is
37 that right, Morgan, and what is it, please?

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** If could just flip the discussion of the Florida
40 Keys National Marine Sanctuary to after the Flower Gardens
41 National Marine Sanctuary discussion, that would be ideal. The
42 Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary people will be here at
43 eleven, and we will have one on a conference call from 11:00 to
44 11:30, and then we will have Steve Werndli, who will be here for
45 in-person questions.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** So current Item IX you suggest goes to VIII
48 and current Item VIII goes to IX? Okay. Any objections to

1 that? Hearing none, any other modifications or anything to add
2 or delete? With that, I will say, with no objection, we will
3 adopt the agenda as modified.

4
5 Before we go any further, let's everybody identify themselves
6 and which panel you're on. Again, my hearing is not great, and
7 my eyes are not a hell of a lot better either, and so if I don't
8 see your hand, keep it up and I will try an identify you when
9 you want to speak. I am Corky Perret, again, with the Shrimp
10 Advisory Panel, and we will go around the room, starting on my
11 left.

12 13 INTRODUCTION

14
15 **MR. GEORGE SCHMAHL:** Hi, and I'm G.P. Schmahl from the Flower
16 Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, and I'm on the Coral
17 SSC.

18
19 **MR. JULIUS COLLINS:** Julian Collins, Shrimp Advisory Panel.

20
21 **MR. DENNIS HENDERSON:** Dennis Henderson, Shrimp Advisory Panel,
22 Fort Myers, Florida, and Freeport, Texas.

23
24 **MR. GLEN DELANEY:** Glen Delaney, and I'm here on behalf of the
25 Southern Shrimp Alliance, part of the Shrimp AP.

26
27 **MR. JOHN WILLIAMS:** John Williams, Southern Shrimp Alliance and
28 Shrimp AP.

29
30 **MR. FRANK HELIES:** Frank Helies, Program Director at the Gulf
31 and South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation, Shrimp AP.

32
33 **MR. THOMAS SCHULTZ:** Tom Schultz, Shrimp Advisory Committee.

34
35 **MR. GARY GRAHAM:** Gary Graham, Texas Sea Grant, Shrimp Advisory
36 Committee.

37
38 **MR. BRYAN SCHOONARD:** Bryan Schoonard, Gulf Council staff, GIS
39 Analyst.

40
41 **DR. KILGOUR:** Morgan Kilgour, Gulf Council staff.

42
43 **DR. PAUL SAMMARCO:** Paul Sammarco, Coral SSC.

44
45 **DR. ERIC CORDES:** Eric Cordes, and I'm a coral biologist from
46 Temple University in Philadelphia.

47
48 **DR. STEVE ROSS:** Steve Ross with the University of North

1 Carolina in Wilmington, and I'm on the Gulf Coral AP as well as
2 the South Atlantic Coral AP.

3
4 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** Dale Diaz, and I'm a member of the Gulf Council.
5 I'm Chair of the Habitat Committee, and I'm an at-large member
6 from Mississippi.

7
8 **MR. JOHN TALBOTT:** John Talbott, Coral AP.

9
10 **MR. HARRIS LASSEIGNE:** Harris Lasseigne, AP, Texas.

11
12 **MS. PORTIA SAPP:** Portia Sapp, Coral AP.

13
14 **DR. JUDITH LANG:** Judy Lang, Coral SSC.

15
16 **MR. WALTER JAPP:** Walt Japp, and I'm the Coral SSC Chair.

17
18 **MS. SHELLY KRUEGER:** Shelly Krueger, Florida Sea Grant and the
19 Coral AP Chair.

20
21 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** Leann Bosarge, Gulf Council, and I'm the
22 Chair of the Shrimp Committee.

23
24 **MR. STEVE BOSARGE:** Steve Bosarge, Shrimp AP, Pascagoula,
25 Mississippi.

26
27 **MR. JOSEPH WEATHERBY:** My name is Joe Weatherby, and I'm from
28 Key West, Florida. I am the Vice Chair of the Coral AP.

29
30 **MR. J.P. BROOKER:** J.P. Brooker, Ocean Conservancy, Coral AP.

31
32 **MS. JULIE FALGOUT:** Julie Falgout, Louisiana Sea Grant, Shrimp
33 AP.

34
35 **MS. KIMBERLY CHAUVIN:** Kimberly Chauvin, Shrimp AP, from
36 Chauvin, Louisiana.

37
38 **MR. CHAD HANSON:** Chad Hanson, Pew Charitable Trusts.

39
40 **MS. SHARON MCBREEN:** Sharon McBreen, Pew Charitable Trusts.

41
42 **MR. JOHNNY NELSON:** Johnny Nelson, royal red shrimper.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Did we miss anyone? There's someone
45 coming in the room. Could you identify yourself, please?

46
47 **MR. ROB RUZICKA:** Rob Ruzicka, Coral SSC.

1 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MARCH 3, 2016 SHRIMP AP MEETING**

2
3 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. The next item, Item II, on the agenda
4 is Approval of the Minutes of the March 3, 2016 Shrimp Advisory
5 Panel Meeting. The Shrimp AP members have had a chance to
6 review the minutes, and are there any comments on the proposed
7 minutes or corrections or modifications? I don't see any hands.
8 Do we have a motion for approval of those minutes, please?

9
10 **MR. BOSARGE:** So moved, Mr. Chair.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** It's moved by Mr. Bosarge and seconded by Mr.
13 Graham. Is there discussion? Any opposition? Then they are
14 approved. Next is approval of the minutes of -- Mr. Japp, do
15 you want to handle that, please?

16
17 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM MAY 27, 2015 CORAL SSC/AP MEETING**

18
19 **MR. JAPP:** The Coral SSC and AP, do you have any comments to
20 make on the minutes from the last meeting? Do we have a motion
21 to approve? Do we have a second? All in favor. All right.
22 They're passed.

23
24 **COUNCIL CHARGE AND PLAN OF WORK**

25
26 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Item IV is Council Charge. To request
27 at the August 2016 meeting of the Coral SSC, Coral AP, and
28 Shrimp AP that the group identify and rank the most important
29 coral areas and provide the information to the council in a
30 report. Morgan, can you tell us a little bit now? Do you want
31 to handle that and tell us just how you want to approach this,
32 please?

33
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** Sure. That's that this whole meeting is about, is
35 we're going to review some recommended HAPC areas. The Shrimp
36 AP and Coral SSC and Coral AP need to make recommendations on
37 those areas and prioritize areas that they think are important
38 for HAPCs and prioritize areas that they think are important for
39 shrimp, and so this is going to be an ongoing discussion
40 throughout the meeting, and we will hopefully have some
41 recommendation by the end of it, but that's why we're here.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay, and the plan of work, how do you want to
44 approach it, Morgan?

45
46 **DR. KILGOUR:** I will keep us on track.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. You're going to keep us on track. Any

1 comments? Walter, have you got a comment?

2
3 **MR. JAPP:** Just to mention that the plan of work has a sort of
4 outline of what we're going to go through, and probably people
5 should take a look at that.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Good suggestion. Morgan, I'm going to
8 let you handle things.

9
10 **DR. KILGOUR:** Okay. Like I said, I will keep us on track with
11 the plan of work, as we get to each agenda item. If there's
12 something that we're not doing, I will remind everybody, but
13 it's basically you're going to be presented with some
14 information, and you will need to comment on -- I guess we're
15 going to do the Flower Garden Banks if -- I was just told that
16 the Coral Data Portal that is Item IV is not currently working.

17
18 Our Amazon server has crashed, and so we might need to move that
19 as well, so that we can give you an update on what the coral
20 portal looks like and where you can access the information that
21 we have on coral presence and the HAPCs. We are also using it
22 to house some decision support tools, and eventually we'll have
23 more information everything and not just coral, I'm guessing, or
24 that's the grand plan.

25
26 The next item, if we can skip that coral portal, Corky, until
27 the Amazon server comes back up, would that be all right with
28 you?

29
30 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Yes, go ahead.

31
32 **BACKGROUND AND PREVIOUS AP MEETINGS SUMMARIES**

33
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** The next item is to kind of go over the background
35 and the AP meetings that have been previous. In 2014, a working
36 group was convened of coral biologists and Coral SSC members to
37 try to look at areas in the Gulf that have documented coral
38 presence, and they came up with a list of forty-seven areas that
39 they know of documented coral presence, and that some of these
40 areas are coral gardens and have extensive corals.

41
42 They came up with some areas that were then presented to the
43 Coral SSC and Coral AP in May of 2015. The Coral AP and Coral
44 SSC made recommendations, and we also had Mr. Bosarge and Mr.
45 Nelson at that meeting, to kind of give some shrimp input on
46 what areas may be hot shrimping grounds and are currently used.

47
48 The Coral SSC and AP made some recommendations that some areas

1 needed further consideration, based on the boundaries, because
2 they were -- The shrimp ELB data show that right on the edges
3 were historic shrimping grounds. I have that for you today. I
4 will be presenting that for you today when we get to that
5 discussion, but that's just -- I have come prepared.

6
7 Anyway, this was presented to the council. The council asked
8 that other stakeholders be notified and given a chance to
9 provide input. Pretty much everybody, the Reef Fish AP, the
10 Spiny Lobster AP, and the Law Enforcement Technical Committee
11 were all presented with these forty-seven areas.

12
13 The Spiny Lobster AP did not see any areas that they thought
14 were contentious. The Law Enforcement Technical Committee just
15 requested that the boundaries be straight lines that are easy to
16 input, and the Shrimp AP wanted to have a discussion, and so we
17 are having a discussion, because a lot of these areas,
18 especially on the south Texas banks, and there's a few in the
19 northeastern Gulf, and a couple in the northwestern Gulf, that
20 are shrimping grounds, right on the edges.

21
22 We're having a discussion on how to best adjust the boundaries,
23 if necessary, and so all of this has happened, and, while this
24 is all happening, the Flower Gardens National Marine Sanctuary
25 has come up with draft environmental impact statement to expand
26 the sanctuary, and so a lot of the areas that were recommended
27 by the Coral SSC and AP overlap with areas that the sanctuary is
28 recommending to expand into, and so we're going to have the
29 discussion first, so that everyone knows what's in the draft EIS
30 and can see the boundaries that the sanctuary has proposed.

31
32 All of that happened, and, since there were forty-seven areas
33 recommended, it seemed like a lot, and so the council would like
34 us to prioritize areas that are really in need of protection, so
35 we can focus efforts on those areas. Forty-seven is a lot to
36 handle in one document, and a little overwhelming for the
37 council to go through.

38
39 It would probably be a full council day, and I don't know if
40 Reef Fish can move aside for a full council day on coral
41 discussion. I'm just kidding. We will do what we need to do,
42 but, anyway, the council asked us to prioritize areas that
43 really are needing special HAPC consideration. That's the long-
44 winded version of why we're here today and the background and
45 the AP summaries. Are there any questions?

46
47 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Just a comment. It might be a good time to
48 throw it in. I just, and I'm sure we all did, especially the

1 coral people -- Just recently, there were some news releases out
2 about some area of the Flower Gardens that they seemed to be
3 having some problems with something in the area there. Paul, do
4 you want to volunteer and tell the group a little bit about what
5 has just recently been discovered or whoever is --

6
7 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I think G.P. is probably better versed.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Can you just give us a quick synopsis
10 of what's been found?

11
12 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes, I can do that. This is a very recent event.
13 A week ago, we were out, and I was out on the vessel at the
14 time, doing our annual long-term monitoring activities at the
15 East Flower Garden Bank. As you may know, we have a long-term
16 monitoring program that has actually been in place since 1989.
17 It's one of the longest coral reef monitoring programs in the
18 world.

19
20 A dive charter boat that goes out there with recreational divers
21 reported a very strange event that was happening at another part
22 of the East Flower Garden Bank. When we went over there to
23 check it out, it's a -- It's a very disturbing event. It
24 appears that there is probably 50 percent or more coral
25 mortality in a relatively isolated part of the reef, or we don't
26 know the full extent of it yet, but, those of you who are
27 familiar with the Flower Garden Banks, it's a coral reef on top
28 of a salt dome, a mount, an underwater seamount.

29
30 It's interspersed with a number of sand channels. It appeared
31 that the concentration of this mortality event was associated
32 with one of those sand channels, one of the bigger sand channels
33 that runs through that portion of the reef.

34
35 The divers that first observed it described it as a white, milky
36 haze that seemed to be emanating from the seafloor and hanging
37 over a portion of the reef. Things that were in that portion
38 and in that hazy area appear, to be a great extent, to be
39 affected by it and killed, and it was not just a -- It wasn't
40 just the coral, but sponges and pretty much everything.

41
42 Longspine sea urchins that were making a recovery there, they
43 were dying. There were hundreds of brittle stars and there were
44 crustaceans of other sorts. There were bivalves of various
45 species that had fallen down from the overhangs and the
46 undercuts of this portion of the reef. Like I mentioned, the
47 coral mortality in that area ranged from 50 percent to 100
48 percent mortality.

1
2 We have not been able to do a full characterization of this area
3 yet. We were actually asked to stand down by our dive program,
4 because, in the beginning, there was a concern that there might
5 be some sort of toxic or disease event that may affect human
6 health, and so we weren't able to do a complete characterization
7 yet, but it appears to be localized, thankfully, to a certain
8 portion of the reef.

9
10 We don't know what the cause is yet. We did have a cruise over
11 the last several days, led by Texas A&M University and Dr. Steve
12 Demarco, to characterize the water quality around the area.
13 There is a freshwater runoff event that is occurring in the
14 northern Gulf of Mexico right now. You can see it on satellite
15 imagery. That does go as far out as the Flower Garden Banks,
16 which is a hundred miles offshore, but we don't know if that
17 runoff event is the source of the problem or not.

18
19 Unfortunately, I don't know -- I can't really say what the cause
20 is, but it is a disturbing event. The coral reef at the Flower
21 Garden Banks was pointed to as one of the standouts and
22 healthiest coral reefs in this entire region, with over 50
23 percent living coral cover that has not degraded in recent
24 decades, like many or most of the other coral reefs in the
25 Caribbean and western Atlantic region, and so we're watching it
26 closely. We will be conducting further research on it, and
27 hopefully we will have an answer sometime soon.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you very much.

30
31 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I've got a question. G.P., any observations
32 about invertebrates or fish?

33
34 **MR. SCHMAHL:** We did not observe any dead fish associated with
35 this event, although we did -- When we were doing our
36 characterization of the extent of it, we did both a fish count
37 and a benthic survey. It was very interesting that the fish
38 were in very low numbers in the area that was affected by this
39 event. I sooner believe they just left the area. It was
40 obviously and statistically very much lower in those areas, but,
41 like I said, we did not observe dead fish floating on the
42 surface or any signs in the immediate vicinity.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** One more from Dale.

45
46 **MR. DIAZ:** G.P., I might have missed it, but do you have any
47 estimates of how big the area is that's affected?
48

1 **MR. SCHMAHL:** We don't have a full extent yet. We know that it
2 covers an area of at least about 300 to 400 meters in length and
3 probably -- Like I said, it's kind of associated with this sand
4 flat, and so probably by a hundred meters or so. At this point,
5 that's kind of what I'm going on.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** One more.

8
9 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Is it top to bottom in that area of the water or
10 is it just a layer that's --

11
12 **MR. SCHMAHL:** The depth of the reef at this area is about
13 seventy feet in depth, and it's definitely associated with the
14 bottom several meters of the reef. In some areas, there is a
15 very distinct line, where you can see the coral mortality below
16 that area is very high. Above it, it looks okay.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I know you guys will be monitoring it pretty
19 closely, and hopefully we'll get some good news the next time
20 you're able to give us a report. It's troubling. One of the
21 articles I read, I was happy to read, in that article, that
22 Steve Giddings, Chief Scientist for the Office of National
23 Marine Sanctuaries, made the statement -- Now, I'm sure he
24 wasn't misquoted. The press never misquotes people, but, unlike
25 other areas of the world, the coral in the Gulf of Mexico, and I
26 quote, is healthy and stable. To me, that was very encouraging
27 to hear, other than, of course, this area that we just talked
28 about. Okay, Morgan, where do we go from here? What's next?

29
30 **DR. KILGOUR:** Next is to put G.P. on the hot spot, and he can go
31 over the Flower Gardens expansion document. I would suggest
32 that we let G.P. give his presentation and then follow it up
33 with questions, unless he wants to take questions while he's
34 presenting.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Which way do you prefer?

37
38 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I'm open to either one. It might be -- It's fine
39 to take questions while I'm going through it, as far as I'm
40 concerned.

41
42 **DR. KILGOUR:** I have one question. You asked for me to have --
43 Do you want me to make you the presenter, so you can show slides
44 from your computer, or would you like me to just have the
45 alternatives available and I can show them as people want to
46 discuss them, or how would you like to do that part, when you
47 wanted to talk about the boundaries?

1 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Can you make my computer the presenter? You have
2 already loaded the presentation, and that was the presentation
3 that I gave to the full council? Is that correct?

4
5 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes.

6
7 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** I have a comment on these maps. I had requested
8 that they put down the depth, and also, looking at these maps, I
9 don't know if Amerigo Vespucci did them or what, but it would be
10 very --

11
12 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Harris, I assume you're talking about the maps
13 in the handout?

14
15 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** Yes.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Go ahead.

18
19 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** It would have been easy to put the depths and
20 all. To a fisherman, that pinpoints it right there. These
21 little squares don't tell you how big they are in miles or
22 meters or whatever, and it wouldn't have hurt to put the cities
23 along the coast. I thought that could have been done. If you
24 give this to a fisherman, it makes it much easier when you see
25 the depths and the cities. You can kind of guesstimate where
26 the cities are, but they're just incomplete. It really doesn't
27 tell anything, just looking at the map.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, Mr. Lasseigne. Would anybody else
30 like to comment? Are we getting close for you to be able to
31 make your presentation?

32
33 **REVIEW OF FGBNMS PROPOSED EXPANSION**

34
35 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I will go ahead and start. Again, I'm G.P.
36 Schmahl at the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary,
37 and this is the presentation that I gave to the full council at
38 their meeting in June in Clearwater.

39
40 The Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary has released a
41 proposal to expand the Flower Garden Banks National Marine
42 Sanctuary. We released a draft environmental impact statement
43 on June 10, and that started a public comment period that runs
44 through August 19.

45
46 That's essentially what this is about, and I will back up just a
47 moment, just to make sure that everyone remembers that the
48 Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary is part of a

1 system of National Marine Sanctuaries around the waters of the
2 United States, including territories and associated entities.

3
4 There is fourteen National Marine Sanctuaries and one Marine
5 National Monument in the system. It's administered by the
6 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, under the
7 National Ocean Service.

8
9 All of these areas were designated to protect and conserve
10 certain marine resources of national significance, ranging from
11 kelp forests off of California and whale habitat off of
12 Massachusetts and Hawaii and coral reefs in various locations,
13 including the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, and
14 the Flower Garden Banks is the only National Marine Sanctuary in
15 the Gulf of Mexico.

16
17 The Flower Garden Banks, on this map, is in the left-hand side.
18 It's indicated by the area shown in red. It currently comprises
19 three separate areas, the East Flower Garden Bank, West Flower
20 Garden Bank, and Stetson Bank. The sanctuary was designated in
21 1992 as the East and West Flower Garden Banks, and Stetson Bank
22 was added by congressional action in 1996.

23
24 What this map is pointing out is that those banks that currently
25 comprise the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary are
26 only three of dozens of reefs and banks and other features that
27 lie along the edge of the continental shelf in the northern Gulf
28 of Mexico. There is a question.

29
30 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

31
32 **MR. SCHMAHL:** The East Flower Garden Bank is where the event is
33 happening. The West Flower Garden Bank is only twelve miles
34 away, and we went over there as well, and there is no sign of
35 that mortality event occurring at West Flower Garden Bank at
36 this time.

37
38 You are probably familiar with the geography of the northern
39 Gulf, because of what everyone does here, but the seafloor
40 gradually slopes off from the coastline at various distances
41 out, sort of gradually out to a cutoff point near the edge of
42 the continental shelf, and where it drops off very quickly into
43 the deep part of the Gulf of Mexico.

44
45 Right along that shelf edge break is where the series of reefs,
46 banks, and other features, most of which were formed by
47 underlying salt domes, are located. In the case of the Flower
48 Garden Banks, it's approximately a hundred miles offshore.

1 Stetson Bank is about seventy miles offshore.

2
3 The existing regulations that occur in the Flower Garden Banks,
4 in general, and this is a very generalized description, but,
5 essentially, they're there to protect the seafloor features, the
6 natural features associated with these bank areas, and some of
7 the primary ones is that anchoring is prohibited.

8
9 Any kind of disturbance of the seafloor in general is generally
10 prohibited. The taking of any coral or invertebrates or other
11 coral features, even rocks or anything essentially, is
12 prohibited, with the exception of fishing is allowed by hook and
13 line only, and so other types of gear are prohibited within the
14 sanctuary. Spearfishing is prohibited and any kind of bottom-
15 tending gear or bottom impact gear is also prohibited.

16
17 The regulations, as they are written now, also prohibit the
18 possession of those types of gears, prohibited gears, unless you
19 are passing through the area uninterrupted.

20
21 Discharges are also prohibited, with certain exceptions. One of
22 the big exceptions relate to oil and gas development. The
23 Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary regulations
24 actually allow for certain types of oil and gas development to
25 occur outside of previously designated no-activity zones, which
26 were established by what is now the Bureau of Ocean Energy
27 Management, previously the Minerals Management Service. The
28 proposal, in this expansion, would be to apply the existing
29 regulations to the expanded areas, and I will get to those areas
30 in a moment. Yes, Dale.

31
32 **MR. DIAZ:** Thank you, G.P. I just want to ask you about
33 anchoring a little bit while you're talking about it. I did
34 read in the DEIS recently that -- There's not a lot of comments
35 in there about small-boat anchoring, but it does say that
36 there's some areas that's been identified that's been damaged by
37 small-boat anchors, and I did try to do some searches online,
38 just to see if there was any research on damage to reefs on
39 anchoring, and everything I could find was basically talking
40 about ships doing damage to reefs, but I couldn't find a whole
41 lot of research on small boats.

42
43 Can you talk a little bit about what damage you all have seen
44 from the type of boats that we're going to see out there and
45 what impacts that's having, just so I can get maybe a little bit
46 better understanding of what damage is actually done by them?

47
48 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes, and obviously the major concern is related to

1 large vessel anchoring. This area just south of this whole
2 region is the safety fairway for vessel traffic in the Gulf of
3 Mexico, going in and out of the ports of Houston and New Orleans
4 and others. These are huge ships with huge anchors.

5
6 There have been instances in the past, including at the Flower
7 Garden Banks, before it was designated as a sanctuary, of large
8 ships coming in and anchoring. These are shallow spots that are
9 convenient anchoring points. Those anchors can be devastating,
10 especially to coral reefs and coral communities. That's
11 obvious.

12
13 There has also been a number of instances of anchor events at
14 the Flower Garden Banks and other areas of smaller vessels,
15 mostly in the -- This, again, was right prior to the designation
16 of the sanctuary, but related to oil and gas support vessels.
17 These are crew boats, supply vessels, from the 100 to 200-foot
18 range, and some of those anchoring incidents were specifically
19 documented and also caused serious coral injury.

20
21 The smaller vessels, in terms of recreational vessels, fishing
22 boats, both commercial and recreational vessels, have much
23 smaller anchors. Their impact is much less, but injury related
24 to those kinds of anchoring events also occur routinely.

25
26 Before I was at the Flower Garden Banks, I spent eleven years in
27 the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. We routinely
28 observed anchor damage from small vessels, as small as john
29 boats, and all up to any kind of vessels, anchoring in coral
30 areas. These are a little bit harder to document, because they
31 are the type that are fairly minimal for each incident, but the
32 number of incidences are extremely large, and so you have a
33 small bit of injury here and a small bit of injury here and
34 multiply that by thousands, or tens of thousands, or hundreds of
35 thousands, and you have a problem.

36
37 We have seen that, but you're right that there's not a lot of
38 good, hard data on those small anchoring incidences that I know
39 about, other than what I've seen personally over decades of
40 being on the reefs in the Florida Keys and other areas.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Are oil and gas supply vessels allowed to
43 anchor in the areas?

44
45 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Of course, not in the Flower Garden Banks. All
46 anchoring is prohibited. Right now, for these other areas
47 though, vessels are allowed to anchor in any of these other
48 banks.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** The council can only address fishing issues,
3 and so if the damage is coming from other sources, what is your
4 plans to do something about that? If the designation is put in,
5 then that would prohibit anchoring by any vessels?
6

7 **MR. SCHMAHL:** If the regulations were adopted, as they are
8 written right now, it would prohibit anchoring by any vessels.
9

10 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)
11

12 **MR. SCHMAHL:** That's correct. Yes, we have mooring buoys, and I
13 forgot to mention that. We do have mooring buoys at the reef
14 tops all three of the banks. It's a very different situation
15 than the Florida Keys, in that the number of vessel and demand
16 for the mooring buoys is quite a bit lower, but only on rare
17 occasions are all the mooring buoys filled or there's the demand
18 for additional ones, at this point.
19

20 **UNIDENTIFIED:** How is enforcement enforcing this presently?
21

22 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Enforcement is always an issue. As you can
23 imagine, a hundred miles offshore, it's a difficult thing. We
24 rely primarily on the U.S. Coast Guard. We work regularly with
25 them. They do patrol out there, both by air and by sea, but, as
26 I'm sure you're well aware, those patrols are relatively
27 infrequently. We have our own, of course, Office of Law
28 Enforcement in the fisheries that also do enforcement throughout
29 NOAA, and the special agents in the region work both for fishing
30 regulations and for sanctuary regulations.
31

32 We have made cases using VMS data, anchoring cases, for example.
33 You can tell if a vessel is not moving for a long period of
34 time, and you can assume it's anchored and then go out and check
35 it, and there's been a couple of instances where we've made that
36 kind of case. We do not have certified law enforcement officers
37 on our staff, and so we do rely on other law enforcement
38 entities to do our enforcement at this time.
39

40 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Transport of oil is done by a lot of foreign
41 vessels. Are they aware of the Flower Gardens?
42

43 **MR. G.P. SCHMAHL:** Yes, and that was a big concern in the early
44 days. In 2000, we worked with the International Maritime
45 Organization to have the Flower Garden Banks designated as an
46 international no-anchor zone, and so it is now and was adopted
47 at that time as a no-anchor zone, and so it is on international
48 charts. It is on the insurance maps, basically.

1
2 Most of the foreign vessels, as you kind of referred to here, do
3 not use domestic, U.S., charts. They use charts that are
4 provided primarily through the insurance companies, but, yes,
5 they are recognized internationally as no-anchor zones. In
6 fact, it was the first no-anchor zone established by the
7 International Maritime Organization, the IMO, for environmental
8 reasons.

9
10 Part of the reason that I came to the council in June was there
11 is a provision in the National Marine Sanctuary Act that says
12 that anytime we designate or expand a National Marine Sanctuary
13 that we must work with the appropriate regional fishery
14 management council and provide an opportunity to that council to
15 give input and recommendations to the sanctuary about fishing
16 regulations, as they would apply to the sanctuary designation.

17
18 The purpose of me presenting at the June meeting was to start
19 that formal consultation, and we have requested the council
20 provide input back to the Sanctuary Program within 180 days, and
21 that would be around the December timeframe, and I know that the
22 council has it on their agenda for this month, later this month,
23 to discuss fishing regulations in the proposed sanctuary.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Delaney.

26
27 **MR. DELANEY:** -- then it indicates that there is one exception,
28 and that's the use of conventional hook and line gear. I'm
29 wondering if that's interpreted to also apply to pelagic
30 longline gear. The reason I bring this up also is because the
31 council charge for developing fishing regulations does not apply
32 -- Let me reverse that.

33
34 The council doesn't have authority to manage the pelagic
35 longline fishery. That's a fishery that's managed directly by
36 the Secretary of Commerce through the Highly Migratory Species
37 Division, and I'm not here to speak on their behalf, but I just
38 bring that to everybody's attention. There's a pretty active
39 pelagic longline fishery for yellowfin tuna and swordfish in the
40 Gulf of Mexico. It probably operates in some of the deeper
41 areas of these areas that we're discussing, and so I'm just
42 curious how the regulations apply and whether the HMS Division
43 of NMFS has even been involved in considering fishery
44 regulations for this area.

45
46 **MR. SCHMAHL:** First, we are also required to consult with a
47 variety of entities during this DEIS, and we are consulting with
48 the Highly Migratory Species Group within NOAA, as well as the

1 Endangered Species and Marine Mammal Protection Act and all of
2 those relevant laws.

3
4 The way that the -- I don't have the exact language in front of
5 me, but conventional hook and line fishing gear does -- The way
6 it's written, it talks about a single line that is terminated by
7 one or more hooks. That has been interpreted to include things
8 like multi-hook vertical line gear like the bandit rigs that the
9 snapper grouper fishery uses, and so that type of gear is
10 considered conventional hook and line, because it's talked about
11 whether it can be electrically or hand wound.

12
13 If it is a line that has hooks all the way along the line, it is
14 not conventional hook and line, and so that would apply to both
15 bottom longline and pelagic longline gear. I guess the gear
16 term is "terminated by one or more hooks" and so that
17 termination can be a period of the length of the line, but, in
18 general, longlines, whether they are pelagic or bottom
19 longlines, are prohibited.

20
21 **MR. DELANEY:** Just as a comment, and not to belabor this, but
22 probably the fishing gear that would have the least possibility
23 of interaction with the benthic environment would be a pelagic
24 longline fish gear. Conventional gear is intended to interact
25 with the bottom, and so I just bring that to your attention.

26
27 Probably the average depth of the bait and the gear of a pelagic
28 longline would be twenty-five to fifty meters in depth, and so
29 they certainly aren't interacting with the bottom, and so just
30 something to -- I'm sure the HMS people will provide you with
31 the data.

32
33 **MR. SCHMAHL:** This action actually did not just come out of the
34 blue. It has been considered and in the works for quite some
35 time, and it directly arose from a revision that we did to our
36 management plan. All National Marine Sanctuaries are required
37 to have a management plan and are required to review and revise
38 them as necessary, periodically.

39
40 In 2007, we started a process to do that, to review and revise
41 our management plan. As always, it took a few years, but it was
42 finalized in 2012. During that period, the issue of sanctuary
43 expansion actually rose to the top as being one of the primary
44 issues that was considered both by the public, by our advisory
45 council, and within our agency as being important and something
46 that we wanted to pursue, and so we included it as, in fact, a
47 separate action plan in our management plan in 2012.

1 The actual language in that action plan was to evaluate and
2 expand, as appropriate, the network of protected areas within
3 the sanctuary and to develop a draft environmental impact
4 statement and evaluate alternatives for incorporating additional
5 reefs and banks in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico and to the
6 Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary, and so that is
7 what we are doing now with this action and the release of the
8 draft environmental impact statement in June.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Excuse me. Can you back up? As appropriate,
11 will be determined by a wide array of groups and individuals and
12 so on, like this. In other words, this group on this side may
13 say, rather than five to twelve additional reefs and banks, you
14 only need three. This group might say you need twelve, and so
15 your agency will evaluate all of the input from various sources
16 and then make your determination? Is that the process you're
17 going through now?

18
19 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes, it is the process. However, in this draft
20 environmental impact statement, we have sort of made the first
21 step of that process, and we have considered a range of
22 alternatives. You will see that it does range from doing
23 nothing, and I will go into that in a moment, to alternatives
24 that include a much larger number than the five to twelve
25 additional reefs and banks that were identified in our
26 management plan.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I guess that's where I'm going. You started
29 out at fifty, and you're down to five to twelve now, or you
30 started out at some number higher than the five to twelve, I
31 would assume.

32
33 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes, and I will show you that in a moment. We
34 were up in the forty to forty-nine banks or something like that.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Five to twelve is a pretty specific number,
37 and I'm just --

38
39 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes, and I will show you where that came from.
40 That came from a recommendation that we received from our
41 Sanctuary Advisory Council in 2007, and this just describes what
42 that council is. We have two representatives from each of these
43 eight constituent groups of recreational diving, diving
44 operators, oil and gas, recreational fishing, commercial
45 fishing, education and research, and conservation, as well as
46 some non-voting agency representatives.

47
48 They did make a recommendation in 2007 that we referenced in our

1 management plan in 2012 that would add nine additional reefs and
2 banks to the sanctuary. In that process, some of their
3 alternatives included several other banks. That's where that
4 five to twelve banks recommendation came from.

5
6 This process actually formally began in February of 2015. In
7 February of 2015, we issued what's called a Notice of Intent, an
8 NOI, that we as the agency were intending to move forward with
9 the expansion process, as recommended in our management plan and
10 to develop an environmental impact statement.

11
12 We took public comments through April of that year. Then,
13 between April of 2015 and June of 2016, we analyzed the
14 information that we got during public scoping and public
15 comment. We worked with other agencies, with subject matter
16 experts and with our advisory council, and we prepared the draft
17 environmental impact statement that is out for public comment
18 now, and so that's what happened on June 10 of this year.

19
20 Just, in general, the public comment on the Notice of Intent was
21 relatively -- We had about 200 specific comments, plus a couple
22 of petitions. At that point, of course, we did not have a
23 specific proposal on the table. Most of those comments were
24 overwhelmingly in favor of expansion. In fact, we only, at that
25 time, received one comment that was in total opposition to
26 expansion. However, there was a number of comments that were
27 conditional, of course, that they were in favor of expansion if
28 certain issues were addressed or if certain issues were explored
29 during the process.

30
31 **MS. BOSARGE:** G.P., you went out to public comment in 2015 to
32 the public to get comments and then you just went back out, and
33 you said then that it was very vague, your plans, and then you
34 came up with some alternatives and some possible boxes for
35 closures, and you went back out in June of 2016, just recently.
36 Is that the last time that you will go out for public comment
37 before the final rule is published?

38
39 **MR. SCHMAHL:** It could be or, depending on the type of comments
40 we get and depending on the issues that are raised, we may have
41 to do a supplemental DEIS or something that would require an
42 additional round of public input, but, as far as the
43 requirements, no, we do not have to go out to public comment
44 again. The public comment period that we're in right now could
45 suffice, and we could go directly to the final environmental
46 impact statement and regulations package directly from that.

47
48 **MS. BOSARGE:** I ask that to fall back on what Harris said

1 earlier, and you've heard me say this before, but not in this
2 room with this crowd, that when you go out to get public
3 comment, especially if you're trying to garner feedback from the
4 fishermen, if they had coordinates for these sites in that DEIS
5 and in what's presented to them or at least fathom lines on the
6 maps that they're given -- It's hard for them to say -- Yes,
7 generally speaking, they know where that box is in the Gulf of
8 Mexico, but a hair this side or the other for these borders for
9 these boxes may mean a lot to the different types of fishermen
10 that are out there working these areas.

11
12 I hope that that's not the last time that you will go out to the
13 public. I hope that at some point the document that's given for
14 review will have additional information, so these people could
15 truly evaluate it and tell you how it's going to impact them.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Delaney.

18
19 **MR. DELANEY:** The comment period is open right now, correct,
20 through August 19th? I apologize if you mentioned it.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Can you tell us a little bit about the
23 comments and how they come in? You know the easiest thing in
24 the world, with my experience on the Gulf Council, is if a group
25 is for or against a proposal, a form letter is put out and a
26 computer button is pressed, and all of a sudden we've got 2,000
27 for or against. 177 individual comments in general support and
28 one in opposition, was it form type of support or do you recall?

29
30 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Obviously this is just the very gross level of the
31 analysis. We have some detailed analysis of the comments that
32 came in, and you're right that it ranges. We had some that,
33 like you described, that were just general comments that may
34 have been promulgated by an alert from an environmental
35 organization and they say, yes, I'm in favor expansion and
36 that's all it says. Others were very detailed and got into very
37 specific information.

38
39 The primary constituent groups that are affected by some of
40 these actions are the oil and gas industry, and so I guarantee
41 you that the letter from the American Petroleum Institute was
42 quite detailed. It does range. It's not a numbers game. It's
43 not just let's take a vote and whoever comes out in front, but
44 it does gauge the level of support that's out there.

45
46 What is the most valuable comments though are the comments that
47 come in that provide specific concerns and specific areas that
48 we need to address and we are required at this stage, at the NOI

1 stage, the Notice of Intent Stage, we're only required to
2 address the comments generally, but the comments that are coming
3 in right now, as we go to the final EIS, we are required to
4 address all of those comments specifically, and that could -- It
5 doesn't mean -- A lot of these comments can be grouped.

6
7 For example, our main comment portal is regulations.gov, and you
8 can go on regulations.gov and make comments right now. We have
9 about 1,200 comments that have come in already. I will say, at
10 this point, they're overwhelmingly supportive of the most
11 restrictive alternative, but a lot of those are, like you
12 mentioned, probably generated from general interest without much
13 detail, and so it just depends.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Lasseigne.

16
17 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** Were these comments that were written or brought
18 in or did they go to specific cities? I read the paper a lot,
19 and I never did read anything about any comments or proposals in
20 our area. Maybe the newspapers didn't carry it, but I want to
21 point out again, and I don't know if we should make this into a
22 recommendation later on, but, again, there is no fathoms on
23 these maps right here.

24
25 They don't tell you -- When you put down the fathoms, it gives
26 the fisherman or the person an idea of exactly where these banks
27 are at. The little red squares, it doesn't tell you how big
28 they are, and I thought when we came into this meeting that we
29 would have this done, and also the buffers.

30
31 You all haven't proposed the buffers of how close you can get to
32 these banks, and the other thing that needs to be done is,
33 before you make comments, you've got to know what you're
34 commenting on and be specific, because I look at this and I
35 don't know what depth it is and I don't know how big these
36 little red squares are. I don't know where the buffer zone is.
37 Sometimes these proposals are passed after the fact, before the
38 fact is known.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, Harris. Julie.

41
42 **MS. FALGOUT:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

43
44 **MR. SCHMAHL:** These numbers I'm showing are the public comments
45 that were received from the Notice of Intent, which was in
46 February of 2015, and so the public comment period we're in
47 right now, we have not -- It's still open, and so we haven't
48 don't any analysis of those comments yet, because they're still

1 coming in. I will get to that, too.

2
3 We just finished holding a series of five public meetings in
4 Galveston; Houston; Mobile, Alabama; New Orleans; and Lafayette,
5 Louisiana. Those were just a week or so ago, and so none of
6 those comments are reflected in these numbers here.

7
8 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)
9

10 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes, and that's a whole different thing, because
11 now we have a proposal on the table. At this time, we did not
12 have a proposal. We just said, hey, do you think we ought to
13 expand, and that's what people were commenting on. Now we're
14 saying, hey, we want to expand like this, and that has generated
15 a lot more interest.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** What kind of turnout did you have at those
18 public hearings?
19

20 **MR. SCHMAHL:** We had a total of 165 people come out to all of
21 the public meetings. They generally ranged on the order from
22 twenty to forty people per meeting.
23

24 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Delaney.
25

26 **MR. DELANEY:** Harris is raising some important questions that
27 you would expect the shrimp industry to raise. It's very
28 difficult for them to evaluate, in any precise manner, how the
29 proposed expansions impact their traditional activity. They are
30 certainly not out there to trawl on coral bottom. That would be
31 the last thing they would probably want to do. What we've
32 found, in working in other councils -- John and I and probably
33 others here, worked together with the coral community in the
34 South Atlantic Council, for example, on a couple of big projects
35 involving deep-sea coral.
36

37 The only way that we were able to really come to any meaningful
38 resolution was to be able to look at the plots of shrimp fishing
39 effort, precise plots of that, using some technology. There, we
40 used a different one than perhaps we can use in the Gulf, but
41 that's the only possible way for us to evaluate, as an industry,
42 whether your proposed boundaries have any impact on our
43 activity.
44

45 Harris is absolutely right. Those charts without shrimp effort
46 overlaid on it is meaningless to them, because they may be able
47 to fish up to 100 yards or some distance close to that boundary
48 and can continue to conduct their traditional activities with no

1 impact whatsoever, and there may be areas where there is some
2 overlap, and that overlap, certainly in previous experiences,
3 always called into question whether there was actually a
4 presence of coral there, because, again, shrimp fishermen don't
5 go out of their way to trawl on coral bottom.

6
7 One of the documents that Morgan distributed to us as part of
8 the background documents is the Flower Garden Bank National
9 Marine Sanctuary expansion comparison. It's the PDF document
10 and not the Excel spreadsheet document, but it only addressed --
11 Let me make sure I'm looking at the right one here.

12
13 It does have visuals or graphics that show the boundaries, the
14 proposed boundaries, and it has overlaid on it the electronic
15 logbook data. I'm not sure what year that --

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Hold up, Glen, just a second. Morgan, do you
18 want to add to that?

19
20 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes.

21
22 **MR. DELANEY:** Anyway, I call everybody's attention that, because
23 you can very easily see the distinction between the boundary and
24 where shrimp fishing effort is. Frankly, to be this to be a
25 productive exercise, that's the only way we're going to come to
26 any kind of reasonable resolution.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** From the shrimper's standpoint.

29
30 **MR. DELANEY:** The sooner you get to that and start showing
31 charts with boundaries and shrimp effort, the quicker we're
32 going to come to a resolution. That's the whole core of the
33 discussion, and so we need to clarify what data is involved
34 there, and I'm sorry to jump ahead, but these questions are
35 legitimate, but they can be answered.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Go ahead, Morgan.

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** I didn't want to staunch the discussion, but I do
40 have all of that. I didn't print it, because it's fifteen
41 pages, but I'm going to print it now, because it seems that we
42 all need to see that in front of us, but I would recommend that
43 we let G.P go through the different alternatives while I'm
44 printing that, and then I will have those documents with the
45 shrimp ELB data plotted on there, so you can see where the
46 boundaries are in regards to where you've been shrimping, if
47 that's acceptable to everybody else.

1 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Yes, that's the direction I think we need to
2 go in, but I would like for the presentation to be completed
3 before we get to that, but we had a hand from Paul.

4
5 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I have three points that I would like to comment
6 on, please. The first is that we've done a tremendous number of
7 ROV videos on at least thirteen or fourteen of these banks in
8 the north central region of the Gulf of Mexico, an inordinate
9 number of these videos, and they have been assessed in great
10 detail back in the lab, taking virtually years to get through.

11
12 What we've looked at, in addition to that, is the relief of the
13 area. The relief of the area is how much relief there is from
14 the bottom. Is it a half a meter or is it two meters is it ten
15 meters that's going to catch your nets? There are data on these
16 banks, very succinct data, statistical data, on these banks that
17 will give you that information, and I think we're going to try
18 to make that available to all of you.

19
20 The other thing we've found is these communities, benthic
21 communities, that we're looking at -- Not so much the fish, but
22 the benthic communities are old. The substrate is old. In
23 other words, if you snag a net on something, it's probably a
24 piece of calcium carbonate that's been around for hundreds or
25 thousands of years, and the community on it isn't that old, but
26 the calcium carbonate is, and they are very fragile. They break
27 easily.

28
29 The other thing is about buffer zones. I think when we were
30 doing this exercise last time around, I think we drew the boxes
31 bigger than the actual reefs themselves, and so they may already
32 be built in. We would have to check on that, but the other
33 thing is, if they aren't, maybe what we could do is add some
34 standard amount, and I don't know whether it's a mile or a half
35 a mile or something like that, as a buffer zone around the
36 boxes. I seem to remember that the boxes are drawn larger than
37 the banks themselves, and, if anybody's memory serves better
38 than mine, that's great.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

41
42 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I want to try to get through this quick, because
43 the meat of this meeting is what you are referring to, and
44 getting into the details of the individual units, and obviously
45 looking at the maps and the broad scale, little tiny boxes, are
46 not very informative. I will direct your attention to the
47 appendix. We do have -- The second volume of our draft EIS goes
48 through each of the units that is proposed, and showing in quite

1 more detail where those locations are in relation to boundaries,
2 to other existing boundaries, to oil and gas infrastructure, and
3 to other management concerns.

4
5 You are correct that we do not have the actual latitude and
6 longitude of all the polygons published in this document, but
7 they are certainly available from our office and the shape
8 files, if you do GIS, are readily available from our office as
9 well, and the couple of support documents that we have show the
10 individual banks, especially for the preferred alternative,
11 again, in quite some detail that you can refer to as well, and
12 so I think the information is there and is readily available for
13 those who are interested.

14
15 When we looked at our charge, and that was to identify and
16 recommend areas in the Flower Garden Banks National Marine
17 Sanctuary region that deserve additional protection, we did step
18 back and considered a big larger area than was originally
19 considered by our Sanctuary Advisory Council and their
20 recommendation of five to twelve banks.

21
22 When we looked at biogeographic regions in the northern Gulf of
23 Mexico, we decided, and, saying we, this is within our agency,
24 in consultation with our experts and other scientists in the
25 region, of an area basically between the 87th and 95th longitude
26 parallel, basically from Pensacola, Florida over to Galveston,
27 Texas, and looking at the region in offshore areas of the
28 continental shelf edge and slope of the northern Gulf of Mexico,
29 and so that's what we considered our region to be as we put
30 together a range of alternatives we thought would be appropriate
31 for expansion of the sanctuary.

32
33 We came up with a series of five alternatives. The first
34 alternative essentially is the no action alternative. That's
35 basically we would leave the sanctuary boundaries as they are.
36 I apologize for this graphic. We did change the colors of the
37 boundaries, but, the version I used at the Gulf Council, we were
38 using these blue lines on a blue background, and so they don't
39 show up very well, but the three banks, the East and West Flower
40 Garden Bank and Stetson Bank, three banks, three polygons, the
41 existing areas of fifty-six square miles in size.

42
43 The second alternative is basically that one that was
44 recommended by our advisory council in 2007. It would adjust
45 the current boundaries of the existing sanctuary to incorporate
46 features that we have discovered since the sanctuary was
47 designated in 1992 and to add nine additional banks in six
48 polygons, for a total of twelve banks and a net increase of 224

1 square miles, for a total of 281 square miles in size.

2
3 The third alternative, which is what we have identified as our
4 preferred alternative, builds on the Sanctuary Advisory Council
5 recommendation of 2007, but adds several other features that we
6 have discovered since 2007, and Paul Sammarco just mentioned one
7 of the studies that was key to providing information of that.
8 He was the principal investigator on that study, and it was to
9 look at a number of reefs and banks throughout this whole
10 region. That was funded by BOEM for work that they were
11 concerned with, and so we had information on additional reefs
12 and banks that we did not have in 2007.

13
14 We analyzed those in the same way that we analyzed the areas
15 that were considered in the Sanctuary Advisory Council
16 recommendation. They fill out to be as important as diverse
17 biological communities as the other ones, and so we added those,
18 for a total of eighteen banks and eleven polygons, which would
19 be a total of 383 square miles, or an increase of 326 square
20 miles.

21
22 Then, again, and you will see on these that all of these
23 boundaries, we have taken the approach of trying to draw the
24 boundaries as close as possible around the topographic features
25 themselves without unduly incorporating areas. A lot of this
26 area around these features are mud bottoms that do not have the
27 types of biological communities that we are primarily interested
28 in. We tried to draw these boundaries closely around these
29 topographic features, while, at the same time, trying to make
30 them as square as possible for purposes of enforcement and ease
31 of the public to understand where they were.

32
33 You can see that our -- I will just back up to the previous one.
34 The advisory council recommendations in Alternative 2 were a bit
35 more irregular in shape around these features, and comments that
36 we got from our enforcement people, as well as others, were that
37 we needed to try to -- They actually like square boxes, but we
38 felt that square boxes were not appropriate for this exercise,
39 and so we squared off those boundaries, in those cases, and we
40 added, as you can see here, about six additional banks from the
41 2007 recommendation.

42
43 Our Alternative 4, we did step back and look at that bigger
44 region that I spoke of before, and so this does, of course, look
45 at a larger geographic area, and it includes a number of other
46 reefs and banks, some of which are very similar types of
47 biological communities in the eastern area of this region of
48 interest, including the areas off of Mississippi and Alabama

1 known as the Pinnacles, or the Pinnacle Trend.

2
3 Some of those features are very similar depths, very similar
4 biological communities, that occur in the northwestern Gulf of
5 Mexico. In addition to that, we included a number of deeper
6 water coral communities on the shelf slope, and these are deep-
7 water coral communities provided by the coral lophelia that
8 forms big, large mounds and a variety of important habitat for
9 fishery species of recreational and commercial importance.

10
11 In this scenario, these are forty additional banks and twenty-
12 six polygons, for an increase in size of 577 square miles, for a
13 total of 633 square miles in size, and the final alternative in
14 this range are Alternative 5. It's the same geographic area,
15 but it adds additional reefs and banks, both up on the shelf and
16 on the continental slope, and it also includes nine historic
17 shipwrecks.

18
19 Now, the National Marine Sanctuary Program also, throughout
20 their program, does provide protection to cultural resources in
21 addition to natural resources. From public comment, there was a
22 number of submerged cultural resources, primarily shipwrecks,
23 that were identified as important to be considered in the part
24 of the expansion, and so this alternative, Alternative 5,
25 includes the nine historic shipwrecks, including the USS
26 Hatteras, a Civil War ship, Union vessel, that was sunk by a
27 Confederate blockade runner in 1863, during the Battle of
28 Galveston, and the German U-boat submarine that sunk a number of
29 American merchant ships during World War II, as well as some of
30 its victims, as well as other historic shipwrecks on the
31 continental slope, some of which are extremely significant.

32
33 This alternative would increase the current size of the
34 sanctuary by 878 square miles, for a total of 935 square miles,
35 and so that range of alternatives run from three banks, which is
36 the existing, at fifty-six square miles, to fifty-four
37 additional banks and nine shipwrecks, which is in Alternative 5,
38 for 935 square miles.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** We've got a couple of questions, I think.
41 First off, shipwrecks, is that part of the Sanctuary program to
42 be including -- That is?

43
44 **MR. JAAP:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

45
46 **MR. SCHMAHL:** As Walt mentioned, the very first National Marine
47 Sanctuary was the wreck of the USS Monitor, the Civil War
48 ironclad.

1
2 **MS. BOSARGE:** You said earlier that most of the public comments
3 you had were in favor of expansion, and you said that, of those
4 comments, that most of them were for this, for Alternative 5?
5 They have been in favor of Alternative 5? Is that what you
6 said, G.P.?

7
8 **MR. SCHMAHL:** This is the current -- The public comment period
9 is right now. If you look on regulations.gov, and anyone can go
10 on that site and look at the comments that have been received,
11 we have -- If you're just scanning numbers, and, again, it's not
12 a numbers game, but we have had a large number of comments
13 received from the public in favor of the largest expansion
14 alternative that we have proposed. That is correct.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Paul first.

17
18 **DR. SAMMARCO:** G.P., you mentioned that Alternative Number 3 was
19 your office's preference. Is that because, if you go to
20 Alternative 4 or 5, that you sort of run out of resources to
21 monitor and regulate the area and enforce it?

22
23 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes, that's absolutely right. We identify in the
24 DEIS that -- We actually identify Alternative 5 as the
25 environmentally-preferred alternative, but, in terms of our
26 actual preferred alternative, it's essentially resource-based.
27 When I say resources here, I'm talking about money.

28
29 The probability of large increases in budget is very low, and so
30 the area that we have identified in Alternative 3 is the area
31 that we believe that we can provide at least a minimal level of
32 management oversight and protection with existing or modest
33 amounts of budget increases, and it actually takes into
34 consideration -- For example, we have a vessel, the R/V Manta,
35 which is our research vessel. If you look at the farthest east
36 bank, and in this case it's Alderdice Bank, that's essentially
37 the edge of the range of our vessel, and so we took those kinds
38 of considerations into account when we came up with our
39 preferred alternative.

40
41 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

42
43 **MR. SCHMAHL:** At this time, they are only in Alternative 5.

44
45 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

46
47 **MR. SCHMAHL:** That's a good point. Right now, of course, none
48 of these are -- These are only proposed, and so they're not in

1 existence, but, for the existing Flower Garden Banks Sanctuary,
2 we do not have boundary markers at the Flower Garden Banks. It
3 is a little bit different situation in the Florida Keys. It's
4 much deeper and much farther offshore, and it would be very
5 difficult to install and maintain those kinds of markers. We do
6 have mooring buoys on the shallow parts of the reefs, but there
7 essentially are no specific lighted navigation aids to mark the
8 boundaries of the sanctuary, and they would not be proposed in
9 this scenario as well.

10
11 What's not shown on this map, of course, and I think everyone is
12 well aware that this is a very intense area of oil and gas
13 development. There are literally thousands of oil and gas
14 platforms in this region, all of which are well marked, and so
15 vessels in that area have to take appropriate care to navigate
16 in among the gauntlet of things that are out there.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** We have a couple of questions. Mr. Delaney is
19 first.

20
21 **MR. DELANEY:** Thank you. In the -- Well, let's say all of the
22 alternatives. I was going to ask just about Alternative 3, your
23 preferred, but, in previous exercises to address this issue, the
24 regions, one of the more contentious issues that evolved or came
25 from those discussions was whether or not the coral habitat had
26 actually been observed, as opposed to predicted to exist or
27 occur at a particular place, based on, in some cases, some very
28 sophisticated analyses and, in some cases, some not so
29 sophisticated analyses, but, again, not observed versus
30 predicated, and how would you characterize these alternatives in
31 that context? Are these areas that have been actually observed
32 habitat or do they also include areas that are predicted to have
33 the same type of habitat, based on some analysis?

34
35 **MR. SCHMAHL:** All of these areas are based on actual
36 observations. especially when it comes to this alternative, all
37 of the areas that are identified in the preferred alternative
38 have been extensively studied with remotely-operated vehicles,
39 and we have specific data.

40
41 Again, as Paul mentioned, for most of these banks, there's very
42 precise quantitative data, where we have done surveys and
43 captured downward-looking photographs at intervals throughout
44 those surveys and analyzed those, both for percent cover, number
45 of colonies per square meter, and we have all of that data that
46 we can show you, that they're based on actual observations and
47 counts of biological communities in these areas.

1 When you get to some of the deeper sites, we don't have as
2 thorough observations, but there is specific observations. Eric
3 Cordes has worked extensively out there and others, but they're
4 all based on direct observations.

5
6 When you come to drawing the boundaries, since you don't have
7 full coverage of those observations, you do have to make some
8 assumptions about the types of bottom features and what you know
9 about the communities that are associated with those kinds of
10 bottom features, and so there's a little bit of prediction and
11 modeling going into that aspect of it, but all of these areas
12 have been documented as containing coral communities.

13
14 **MR. DELANEY:** That's really helpful. Thank you.

15
16 **UNIDENTIFIED:** G.P., I'm curious. For nine shipwrecks, how much
17 area is designated for those?

18
19 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I don't have a specific number off the top of my
20 head. I can get that information for you, for sure. That is a
21 little bit of an interesting aspect of this, because a lot of
22 the information on the shipwrecks came from BOEM, the underwater
23 archeologists there, and they recommended that we -- For
24 shipwrecks, you designate a larger area than the specific
25 shipwreck itself, primarily because of the concern about giving
26 out the precise location of a very sensitive cultural resource.

27
28 That is an issue that we would have to work out. In a lot of
29 cases, we used lease blocks, the BOEM lease blocks, and
30 designated the entire lease block that contained the shipwreck
31 of interest.

32
33 **UNIDENTIFIED:** You might indicate to those people that were
34 concern about that that, for example, the Hatteras, the
35 shrimpers gave the professors -- I gave them the coordinates, so
36 they could find it, in the 1970s, and that disconcerts me a
37 little bit, because we have such great navigation now, and, yes,
38 I think it's important to preserve those sites, but I think the
39 devil is in the details.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Mr. Diaz.

42
43 **MR. DIAZ:** Thank you, Mr. Perret. I am just trying to think
44 about this, how we can protect this area with having the least
45 amount of impact on user groups and not necessarily prohibit
46 activities that are not going to harm the resource.

47
48 I did read the law enforcement comments about liking straight

1 lines, and I used to be in law enforcement and I like straight
2 lines too, but technology has changed so much. I mean if I was
3 out there trying to enforce something in this area, I'm going to
4 have to go by my GPS and my plotter to figure out if people are
5 inside or outside the boundaries, and I think fishermen using
6 this area is going to have to use plotters and detailed
7 information too to figure this out, and so I don't know that
8 straight lines is that helpful out here.

9
10 I am thinking if we had some standard boundary that -- Is there
11 a standard boundary, G.P., that when you all drew these lines
12 here -- Did you stay a certain distance off of the perimeter of
13 the reef, and what is that, if there's such a thing?

14
15 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Actually, I'm not sure if it's this presentation
16 on or not, but we had actually an algorithm of how we identified
17 boundaries for these areas, and it was -- First off, on the
18 topography of the feature itself, using a GIS computer mapping
19 system, looking at relief of a certain amount and then grouping
20 those features together into what we identify, from what we knew
21 from our biological surveys that contained biological
22 communities. Basically, these are live-bottom areas or rocky
23 outcrops with attached biological communities.

24
25 Then we added a 500-meter zone to what we called the core
26 biological zone, and then we started drawing boundaries to
27 incorporate those areas as closely as possible while trying to
28 do that in such a way that it would be a polygon. As you can
29 see, these boundaries, they are not square, except in some
30 cases, but you still have to -- If you're a fisherman, you still
31 have to put in a series of points, in order to establish a
32 boundary.

33
34 It is extremely difficult, and we've been told almost
35 impossible, from the enforcement side, to base a boundary, for
36 example, on a depth contour. It's not enforceable, and to try
37 to describe that on your GPS unit is impossible, because you
38 would have to have thousands of points in order to describe a
39 circle.

40
41 So you have to make some assumptions there and draw a polygon
42 around it as tightly as possible, and that's what we tried to
43 do, but we also tried to use existing lines where they exist,
44 and that includes lease block lines, when that made sense, and
45 it included existing habitat areas of particular concern zones,
46 which already exist in this particular area, and sometimes the
47 ones that are square boxes are actually the existing HAPC
48 boundaries for those sites, like Sonnier Bank and Alderdice Bank

1 and Stetson Bank.

2
3 It was a variety of considerations that we did in drawing these
4 boundaries, but it was done. What we tried to do is do it in an
5 objective way and not just sit down with a Sharpie on a chart
6 and just kind of draw it out. It was an algorithm that we
7 developed that we could replicate and defend.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We've got a couple more. Dennis.

10
11 **MR. HENDERSON:** She gave us these papers with all these readings
12 and stuff on there, and where can I get a Gulf chart with these
13 things, an actual Gulf chart, where you've got readings and
14 stuff on it where all that is? Do you all have that? I know
15 you put the readings down on here, but --

16
17 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

18
19 **MR. HENDERSON:** Yes, but I would like to see it on a Gulf chart.

20
21 **MR. SCHMAHL:** We don't have that in that form. I mean we
22 certainly have that as a GIS layer and they could be put on a
23 navigational chart.

24
25 **MR. HENDERSON:** Do you think it will ever be on a navigational
26 chart? Are they going to make it like that, or are they just
27 going to give you these readings and -- The fishermen are not
28 going to know. They look at this here, and they would have to
29 put all of these readings in.

30
31 **MR. SCHMAHL:** If I was established as a National Marine
32 Sanctuary, it absolutely would be on a navigational chart, just
33 like the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary is on the
34 navigational chart now, and it's clearly on the charts. Of
35 course, it would be on the charts, but I think the important
36 point now is that people need to know where these things are
37 before they get established, so they can provide appropriate and
38 informed input to us, and I think that's the point you're trying
39 to make.

40
41 **MR. HENDERSON:** You're expanding this 200 to 800 more square
42 miles, and that's an awful lot of area.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Dennis is finished. Paul, you were next.
45 I've got several on the list.

46
47 **DR. SAMMARCO:** This is just to address a question that Mr.
48 Delaney asked before about predicting whether a bank will have a

1 lot of biodiversity or a little bit. One of the things that we
2 did for each of the banks that we have out there -- We looked at
3 thirteen or fourteen banks, and we have very, very detailed data
4 on relief, how much relief there is off of the bottom. The
5 other thing we have for those same banks is measures, very fine
6 measures, of biodiversity of benthic critters.

7
8 There is a paper I have now, which it's under review and
9 hopefully it will be published very soon, which puts those two
10 together and then statistically analyzes it and allows one to
11 predict the amount of bottom biodiversity there is based on just
12 the relief. If you know how bumpy the bottom is, you can be
13 able to pretty much predict how biodiverse it is, and there's a
14 positive relationship between the two. The more bumpy it is,
15 the more biodiverse it is, the more critters there are, and
16 that's not just because you have more area. It's per area, and
17 so I just thought I would let you know.

18
19 **MR. DELANEY:** If I could just clarify on that. Are you
20 referring to the areas that are in the alternatives, because
21 your answer seemed to be that we've observed this habitat, and
22 your answer is we have predicted this habitat.

23
24
25 **DR. SAMMARCO:** It's taking the thirteen to fourteen banks that
26 we looked at in detail in that north/central region, and I guess
27 it's not the western region. It's the north/central region, but
28 there's a lot of observations on video, which have then been
29 turned into quantitative data. There's a lot of pinging,
30 basically, that an ROV does as it goes over the bottom. There's
31 something like 190,000 points, and then we correlate the two, to
32 see is there any relationship between the two, and the answer is
33 yes, there is. It's strong. There's a lot of variance, but
34 it's there.

35
36 **MR. DELANEY:** So it is predicted then?

37
38 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Yes, it's predicted, and I can give you an
39 equation.

40
41 **MR. DELANEY:** Based on the correlation?

42
43 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Yes.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Harris, you were next.

46
47 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** I have a problem with the enforcement idea. It
48 seems like you want to make it easy for the enforcement, but not

1 for the fisheries, and it's the management of fisheries, and I
2 am not against enforcement, but just to draw a line square and
3 make us lose fishing bottom doesn't make sense. We lose fishing
4 bottom every year. As we speak, there are boats that are
5 sinking. When those boats sink, we can't fish there.

6
7 There are airplanes that crash into the Gulf of Mexico. I saw
8 it personally. I picked up the tail of an airplane, and I had
9 another captain who picked up a helicopter, and so we are losing
10 -- In a way, we're losing fishing ground, and you're killing the
11 fishing industry, the U.S. fishing industry, and then what do we
12 have? We have all these imports from other countries, and we
13 all know where that stuff comes from. In our fisheries, we
14 regulate our seafood, and we know that 99 percent of the seafood
15 that we eat here in the United States is safe.

16
17 We also regulate it under the Rigs to Reef. There is a
18 committee on that, on sunken boats, where they try to make these
19 reefs. They take these big Liberty ships and they sink them and
20 they make reefs, and so we've got the coral reef that we have to
21 go by regulations and the Rigs to Reef, and now you all are
22 talking about having vessels as coral reefs.

23
24 A fisherman will not go into a coral reef, because it's like a
25 razor blade. It cuts up your nets, and nets are expensive.
26 That's the last thing you want to do. You don't want to go into
27 a coral reef or an area where it's like a razor blade.

28
29 Getting back to the GPS, these things are so accurate that you
30 can get within a sunken rock or a sunken ship in fifty feet or
31 less. That's not very far. That's a little bit bigger than
32 this room here. They have missiles they shoot from the
33 Mediterranean, from the sea to land, and they hit their targets.
34 We have the GPS, and the fishermen use the GPS. The technology,
35 a lot of them have computers and they have plotting maps. We
36 didn't have that in the 1960s and 1970s and 1980s.

37
38 The fishermen can plot the direction they went and turn around
39 and follow the same line. In the old days, you went ten fathoms
40 and you would turn around, and you were still in ten fathoms,
41 but you weren't coming in the same direction that you were
42 going, and so to kind of discredit technology is a weak
43 response. Thank you.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. There is no question that we've
46 all got technology today that certainly wasn't available years
47 ago. Gary, did you have your hand up?

1 **MR. GRAHAM:** I just wanted to indicate that I did take nautical
2 charts and plot the areas from west of the Mississippi. Mr.
3 Nelson, I'm sorry, but I just didn't have time to get after the
4 other stuff, but if anybody is interested, any of the shrimpers
5 here, I know the charts are what you identify with, and I
6 plotted that, and I would be glad to share that with you. I was
7 more precise, Steve, down in south Texas. It looks like that's
8 going to be a little bit more controversial, but I would be glad
9 to -- Harris, it's right here, if that would help you.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Julie has been waiting. She's had her
12 hand up for a long time.

13
14 **MS. FALGOUT:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

15
16 **DR. KILGOUR:** Can we all make sure that we use the mics? Yes, I
17 have all of that for discussion, but just, like I said, I wanted
18 G.P. to have the opportunity to finish the presentation so we
19 could --

20
21 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Yes, and we're going to have that after this
22 presentation. Steve, you had your hand up?

23
24 **DR. ROSS:** Just a quick comment. It's pretty clear, from a lot
25 of comments, that we are lacking some important information
26 that's fairly easy to put on these GIS-type charts, and it may
27 be too late for this meeting, but, Corky, I would like to make a
28 recommendation that for all future AP meetings involving any
29 exercise with maps that we have, at minimal, the depth contours
30 put on the maps and any other information that might be useful.

31
32 That's something that I've had a problem identifying some of the
33 sites that I know very well here in relation to what's proposed
34 as an HAPC, versus where I have actually worked, and we will get
35 to that, I think, in a little more detail later on, but I think
36 that would be a good recommendation for all of our future work.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. I agree. Morgan, you've noted
39 that, I'm sure.

40
41 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just in a little defense here though, these are
42 small. We all have all of that that we can talk about, and I
43 have it all here, but, when you put that much stuff on a map,
44 you can't see it all, when you're talking about these large
45 areas, which is why I didn't put the depth contours. Instead, I
46 provided the coordinates for a lot of the HAPCs that we're going
47 to discuss, so people could put them in their plotter. I have
48 it on a nautical chart, and I have the depth contours. We're

1 ready to go, but I just -- When I'm sending you all this
2 information for forty-seven areas, it starts to look pretty
3 clunky, and so I just wanted to let you know that I have that
4 information.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** As much information as is available for the
7 group to deliberate on would certainly be helpful.

8
9 **DR. ROSS:** Corky, I would like to respond to that again. Just,
10 real quickly, we're not necessarily talking about all the
11 detailed contours that would define a reef, but even the 200-
12 meter contour or every hundred-meter contour would be useful.
13 Also, in terms of the text descriptions, a depth range must be
14 helpful, at least to identify the extremes within these
15 boundaries.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. So noted. Mr. Bosarge.

18
19 **MR. BOSARGE:** Steve, to your comment, when you say meters, there
20 is no fisherman working meters. Even, Morgan, if you do
21 contours, I mean, for fishermen, we love to see fathom contours,
22 the ten, twenty, thirty, forty, and fifty, but the meters, we're
23 in the wrong country for meters. I know you guys are used to
24 working with that, and, in looking at some of your stuff, I see
25 kilometers, and I'm like, what is a kilometer?

26
27 Anyhow it's just not something we're familiar with, but, just to
28 echo a lot of the concerns here, myself and Mr. Nelson were
29 invited to the last Coral Advisory Panel meeting, where went
30 over a lot of this information, and Morgan has it, and we looked
31 at -- She actually put some depth contours in the information
32 that was presented, and we were able to look at what ones of
33 these sites actually affected my industry, and that would be the
34 shrimp industry, and it took a lot of the pressure off of us,
35 in that a lot of these areas are outside of that sixty, seventy,
36 eighty fathoms.

37
38 These aren't really going to bottom us too much, except for like
39 Mr. Nelson, that does the royal reds, where he's out there in
40 that 1,000 to 1,200 feet or so. Anyhow, as we go on and
41 hopefully get into this a little bit more, we will see that a
42 lot of these areas won't affect my industry that much, but there
43 are some, in working with the boundaries -- We do endangered
44 species relocation work, which we call turtle trawling, where a
45 lot of times, if it's a beach replenishment job, we're in a
46 borrow site, and so it's almost the same thing.

47
48 At times, we have a beautiful, rectangular box that we get to

1 trawl in, but then, at times, this thing may be horseshoe-shaped
2 with a little thing in it, and so fishermen are used to that,
3 and it's an enforceable regulation as long as there are corners
4 to plot out. I would love to see though some of these,
5 especially that East and West Flower Garden Banks -- It would
6 really be nice if those corners were marked, because there are
7 those folks maybe that are a little bit -- Not much anymore, but
8 they didn't have the navigation equipment.

9
10 When I'm saying that, I'm talking about maybe recreational
11 fishermen or those guys that just go out every now and then.
12 They don't have a clue where they're at. They just know they're
13 close, and so, anyhow --

14
15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** That's why some of them don't catch any fish.
16 They're not in the right spot. Where were we? I didn't see any
17 hands. Go ahead, G.P.

18
19 **MR. SCHMAHL:** This was -- Actually, I skipped ahead a couple.
20 This kind of describes how we identified areas and how our
21 boundaries were drawn. If you kind of look on the left-hand
22 side of the screen, that series of maps, that one on top -- This
23 is actually the West Flower Garden Bank, just to show an
24 example. The first thing we did was to identify the features,
25 and those were identified in yellow here, and we just used an
26 algorithm based on both the -- It's basically the relief, a
27 certain amount of relief over the seafloor.

28
29 We checked that, basically using what's called the backscatter
30 data from multibeam mapping. That's shown on the bottom
31 actually, that gray and black and white image, because that will
32 show you whether or not the reflection that you get from the
33 seafloor is soft bottom or hard bottom, and so hard-bottom
34 areas, exposed hard-bottom areas, of course, is where the
35 attached biological communities are.

36
37 We aggregated the area shown in yellow. On the top, it's shown
38 in red. You can see in the middle image on the left-hand side,
39 that's the aggregated core sensitivity zones and how we
40 determined them, and then we added the 500-meter buffer, which
41 is shown as the white line around the red in that middle image.
42 Then we came in, using that white outlined image, which is
43 essentially the area that we wanted to protect, and identify a
44 boundary. In this case, it's shown in green.

45
46 You can see that we tried to follow those areas and incorporate
47 those areas while keeping those lines as straight as possible,
48 and so, in some cases, it included a little bit more area than

1 was identified by the core sensitivity zone, and some of those
2 times it was shown as less area, but that was our standardized
3 way of identifying the boundaries there, and I think you can
4 see, at least in this case, that these boundaries are drawn
5 pretty tight to these exposed rocky features.

6
7 If in fact the shrimpers are avoiding the exposed, rocky
8 features, then these boundaries should not be a problem, and
9 that is the purpose of this meeting today, is to go through
10 these individual maps, to make sure that's the case. If it's
11 not the case, they can be revised. We are not trying to
12 incorporate large areas of mud bottom, because that is not the
13 purpose of this action.

14
15 I just wanted to -- This is kind of a rough diagram showing
16 where the existing habitat areas of particular concern are.
17 Those are shown in the cross-hatched areas, and, as they relate
18 to the Alternative 3 boundaries that we have described in the
19 DEIS, there is a few cases that there are not previous existing
20 HAPCs, in the case of Elvers Bank and Parker Bank, for example,
21 and Horseshoe Bank, but most of these areas have already been
22 identified by the Gulf Council as habitat areas of particular
23 concern, although I will point out that, and this was done back,
24 I think, in 2006, that most of these areas do not have any
25 regulations that are associated with them, except for the ones
26 that have been designated as coral HAPCs, and that includes the
27 East and West Flower Garden Banks, Stetson Bank, and McGrail
28 Bank. The other HAPCs were designated, but there are no
29 specific regulations that go with them at this time.

30
31 This is just kind of describing -- There was a matrix and a
32 process that we did to identify the priorities of these banks.
33 We talked about the resource significance, and that was based on
34 the biological data, the percent cover and colonies, individuals
35 per meter squared, that type of data, for the diversity of coral
36 communities, in this case.

37
38 Connectivity was important. A lot of these features, if you
39 look at them in detail, they are not isolated topographic
40 features, but they are connected by ridges, scarps, and a series
41 of outcrops, and those provide habitat corridors between
42 features, and we tried to incorporate those, where appropriate.

43
44 There was basically a criteria that related to the potential or
45 the existing or perceived threat to these areas from a variety
46 of activities, including fishing and oil and gas and other
47 activities, and then there was a general category of scientific
48 or public interest.

1
2 You know some areas, for example, which are high-value diving
3 sites, were ranked higher sometimes, even though some of the
4 biological communities were not as high as some of the other
5 sites, and so there was sort of a matrix that was developed and
6 scores were given, and then the ones that ranked the highest
7 were the ones that were incorporated into the various
8 alternatives.

9
10 I already told you about the public meetings that we had. We
11 have conducted all of those at this time, and we are still in
12 the public comment period until August the 19th. Then this is
13 just an example. This document that I am holding up now, which
14 is the proposed action site descriptions, and this is for
15 Alternative 3, does go into more detail for each of the units in
16 the alternative, giving a little bit of background, giving a
17 more detailed map for each of the areas, some photographs of the
18 types of biological communities that are associated with each.
19 I am trying to find one that's kind of a good example.

20
21 This is what is called the Bright Bank Complex. It's actually
22 Bright Bank, Rankin Bank, and 28 Fathom Bank. You can see we
23 tried to show the existing HAPC boundary, for example, is the
24 line in blue. You can see our proposed boundary, which is in
25 purple, is actually less -- It incorporates less area than the
26 HAPC boundary, because we felt that the HAPC boundary, in this
27 particular case, incorporated some soft bottom that was not the
28 purpose of this action, and so you can see, while we tried to
29 follow the contours of this feature, in some cases, just for
30 purposes of keeping straight lines, some of those areas are
31 incorporated, and so I think that is the issue that we're trying
32 to talk about today, whether those areas are critical for
33 fishing or other activities or not.

34
35 I believe that is essentially, without going through in detail
36 for each of these individual maps, but this -- But if you are
37 interested, of course, this is -- This information is available
38 both in one form in the appendix of Volume II of the DEIS and in
39 the support documents that we have on our website and available
40 here. I think that's pretty much it. I think that's the basics
41 of the proposal, of the range of alternatives.

42
43 I would like to show at least one example, because it's come up
44 several times, in terms of the fishing, specifically in terms of
45 contour lines for the various depths and that kind of thing. We
46 have created those maps for all of the units, at least in the
47 preferred alternative, and I can show you an example of that,
48 and this is available from us.

1
2 This, for example, is a portion of the Bright Bank Complex.
3 This is Bright Bank here, and I think you can see my cursor, but
4 this crosshatched area that's on the top of Bright Bank is what
5 has been designated by the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management as
6 the no-activity zone, and so that's specific to oil and gas
7 operations, but that is a designation that typically follows the
8 eighty-five-meter depth line.

9
10 We have also identified on here though -- If you look over to
11 the right, there is both the thirty, forty, fifty, and hundred-
12 fathom lines on this particular map, and we have these maps for
13 all of the units. You can see the thirty-fathom line is the
14 purple lines that are inside the no-activity zone, in this case.
15 The yellow line, which pretty much follows the contour of the
16 no-activity zone is shown in kind of a yellow-orange color, and
17 so, if you kind of look at that cross-hatched area, which is a
18 no-activity zone, there is a yellow line there that you can see.
19 That's the forty-fathom line. The fifty-fathom line is slightly
20 larger, in red here, and that will give you an idea of the kind
21 of depth contours we're talking about.

22
23 The areas shown in yellow, which goes outside of the no-activity
24 zone, in this case, this is our interpretation of the Bureau of
25 Ocean Energy Management live bottom features. They have a
26 stipulation for companies that are operating in this area to
27 avoid low-relief live bottoms, and those are identified in that
28 yellow pattern.

29
30 You can look at this area, and this area is described by the
31 yellow area. Interior to that are essentially what we consider
32 to be the core biological zones. This is where the
33 concentration of sensitive biological communities are located,
34 and so, again, we have this information for all of the maps.
35 This is one for McGrail Bank. There is a coral HAPC.

36
37 There already is restrictions on bottom-tending gear and
38 anchoring at McGrail Bank, because it does contain a true
39 hermatypic coral reef community on the top feature of McGrail,
40 which, again, is the crosshatched area in the upper left-hand
41 part of this map, and so I just wanted to show you that we've
42 gone through that exercise, to identify these areas and putting
43 the fathom contours on there as a result of the requests and
44 comments that we've gotten from some of the fishing interests.
45 That's pretty much all I have at this point, unless there is
46 additional questions.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, G.P. I appreciate that. I think

1 I've got a hand over here from Mr. Bosarge.

2
3 **MR. BOSARGE:** I was just going to make one comment. When we
4 talk about the fathom curves, we were talking more or less not
5 so much as the structure that makes up the reef, but more the
6 fathom curves of where this reef is actually located. In other
7 words, the depth contours of the bottom, so the fishermen can
8 see, okay, well, let's see, this thing is outside of fifty
9 fathoms or this one is in thirty-five fathoms. Then that tells
10 you how it affects the industry.

11
12 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I will say that all of these areas, every single
13 one of them, are outside of the designated fifty-fathom
14 regulatory zone that has been established by the Gulf Council
15 for the longline fishery, if that's what you mean.

16
17 **MR. BOSARGE:** If I remember correctly, there were two that were
18 inside of that. One of them was the -- I will have to go back
19 and look.

20
21 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I'm sorry. You are right. Both Stetson and
22 Sonnier Bank are inside the fifty. I'm sorry. You're correct.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Again, thanks for that presentation. Any
25 other questions at this time? Go ahead.

26
27 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The question is not audible on the recording.)

28
29 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Any other questions or
30 comments at this time? Mr. Lasseigne.

31
32 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** Did I understand you to say that they were all
33 outside of the fifty-fathom curve? I think in Texas, Gary,
34 that's not the case. A lot of them are inside the fifty-fathom
35 curve.

36
37 **MR. GRAHAM:** This is the Flower Garden Banks now. These are two
38 different --

39
40 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** Now, to explain the fifty-fathom curve, the
41 fifty-fathom curve, if you looked at it on a chart, after you
42 get outside of fifty fathoms, you drop real quick. You drop
43 like sometimes 500 feet or a thousand feet, and so most
44 fishermen will not go outside of the fifty-fathom curve.

45
46 **MR. GRAHAM:** Harris, I hate disagreeing with you, old boy, but
47 we're starting to get out a little deeper now, and we're
48 dragging out off of Matagorda and some areas there in sixty-four

1 fathoms. It's really interesting, and, now, I don't want to use
2 much time, but that's the old bombing range from World War II
3 training, and that's presented kind of a problem with some of
4 the things we're catching out there, but, Harris, we're starting
5 to get out.

6
7 The thing is, and I'm not going to spend a lot of time right
8 now, but the landscape of shrimping is changing a little bit,
9 and I brought a price sheet, and I don't like showing price
10 sheets, but there's a big difference now between a medium-sized
11 shrimp and a large-sized shrimp, and people are starting to go
12 out and, instead of going out and catching 900 or 1,000 pounds
13 of medium-sized shrimp, it's more profitable to catch 400 pounds
14 of large shrimp, and you find those large shrimp in deeper
15 water, and so there's been new bottom opening up a little bit.
16 Thank you.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I could argue with you on that one, but I'm
19 not going to go there.

20
21 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I just want to point out that this is a map
22 showing the fifty-fathom line, which is this kind of straight
23 line that runs across, and most of these areas, as you can see,
24 are south of the designated fifty-fathom line. Even though they
25 rise, individual banks rise, to depths less than fifty fathoms,
26 you have to make sure that, when we're talking about fifty
27 fathoms, are we talking about the actual depths or are you
28 talking about the fifty-fathom line as the regulatory feature
29 that has been established by the Gulf Council, and so make sure
30 you keep that clear.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Nelson, did you have your hand up?

33
34 **MR. NELSON:** I would like to agree with him. It's been about
35 eight or ten years since I've been in Texas, but I've drug out
36 to sixty-five fathoms myself. There's plenty of dragging down
37 there at sixty-five fathom.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. All right, Morgan, is it time
40 to put those charts up of the shrimping effort? Is that where
41 you suggest we go next?

42
43 **DR. KILGOUR:** Sure. That's perfectly fine.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Some of the people in the room, like Mr.
46 Lasseigne, and you know he's getting older, may need a bathroom
47 break. Would the group like to take a ten-minute break so
48 Morgan can get organized? Okay. Ten minutes, please. Let's be

1 back at twenty after, please. Thank you.

2
3 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

4
5 **DR. KILGOUR:** I have all the information that I want to show you
6 on one graph or on one chart. All these black dots, the sea of
7 black, that's the Shrimp ELB effort. Now, it takes a while to
8 draw. That's two-gigabytes of data, and so, when I turn it off,
9 it will go away really quickly, but to put it back on is going
10 to take a while, and so you will have to be, hopefully, a little
11 patient with me.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Morgan, that's ten years of information?

14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, that's 2004 to 2013.

16
17 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Also, Morgan, to clarify, those are just points
18 now. These aren't tracks. These are point.

19
20 **DR. KILGOUR:** They are just points, but you can see the tracks
21 very easily. It's every ten minutes there is a ping and you can
22 see the lines. If I zoom in, which I am going to do right now,
23 I also put the nautical chart underneath all of this. You can
24 see where very clearly it's a line, and so, the way that this
25 populates is -- I have the nautical chart underneath.

26
27 Me, I have a hard time reading this, because that's a lot of
28 information on one little screen, and so, if you want the
29 nautical chart up there, I am just going to leave it up there
30 for discussion. If you want me to change the colors of the
31 boundaries so you can see them a little bit better, I can do
32 that as well.

33
34 This whole thing is the East and West Flower Garden Banks
35 Alternative -- I have Alternative 3, 4, and 5 highlighted, but I
36 think, for purposes of discussion, we should focus on
37 Alternative 3, since that's the Flower Garden's preferred
38 alternative, is that's all right with the group, because it
39 seems that they're not really truly going to be able to do
40 Alternative 4 or 5, and, in the DEIS, they say many times that
41 it's really outside the scope of the current capabilities, but I
42 will leave it up to the group on whether or not that's
43 acceptable, if we can just focus our efforts on commenting on
44 Alternative 3. Is that all right? Are there any objections?

45
46 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I think so.

47
48 **DR. KILGOUR:** Okay. You can see this is the East and West

1 Flower Garden Banks. This is Rankin Bank, 28 Fathom Bank, and
2 Bright Bank. Those are also areas that were recommended as an
3 HAPC with regulations. MacNeil Bank is up here. Is there any
4 discussion or comments specifically on these three, or do you
5 want me to move to a different section of the goals?

6
7 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Ms. Bosarge.

8
9 **MS. BOSARGE:** Before we get too far into it, tell me -- On that
10 screen, it looks like a green line. On this screen, it kind of
11 looks like a yellow line, but those yellow outlines are what is
12 being proposed as the new boundaries as the Flower Garden
13 Sanctuary? That's what we're looking at, and we want to compare
14 that to our black dotted line of shrimp effort?

15
16 **DR. KILGOUR:** Right, and I can change this to look a little
17 different, if you would like. I will change it to red, since I
18 have two competing greens on there, and the ten-fathom line
19 isn't going to show up on this. Like I said, this is a lot of
20 data that has to draw, and so it takes a while. These red
21 boundaries are the Alternative 3 proposed in the Flower Gardens
22 expansion, and this is just for a couple of the areas.

23
24 **MS. BOSARGE:** One more question. What you handed out to us --
25 You came by and handed us a stack of paperwork. We can kind of
26 see a very zoomed-in image of that same thing, but just it won't
27 have all the bottom contour information.

28
29 **DR. KILGOUR:** Exactly, but hopefully you guys understand now why
30 I didn't put the nautical chart underneath the four boundaries
31 that are on that little, tiny map. It's pretty confusing.

32
33 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Morgan, so we understand, the difference between
34 the expansion of the East and West Flower Gardens, right now,
35 because the East and West Flower Gardens have regulations on
36 them -- When we expand them, everything that you have in red now
37 would create a zone where there are no fishing regulations?

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, that's correct, but this was brought to the
40 APs and the Coral SSC to inform you about the draft
41 environmental impact statement that was produced by the Flower
42 Gardens National Marine Sanctuary. This is something we can
43 comment on, but we can't, as a fishery management council, we
44 can't change the boundaries. They can comment on the boundaries
45 and they can use your recommendations and comment on this, just
46 like the public comment period, but there is nothing we can do
47 as the Gulf Council to change anything that's being proposed.
48 We can just make a statement on whether you agree or disagree

1 with what's being proposed by the Flower Gardens.

2
3 Later this afternoon, when we talk about the HAPCs that have
4 been proposed, those are specific areas where we can say that
5 boundary doesn't make sense and we need to modify that boundary.
6 This is a different body that is producing this than the Gulf
7 Council is what I'm trying to say, and so this is basically for
8 your information and so that if there are specific areas that
9 the shrimping industry has an issue with that the Flower Gardens
10 is proposing, we can address that in the Gulf Council's
11 comments, if that makes sense.

12
13 **UNIDENTIFIED:** It does. I guess what I was trying to see, in my
14 mind, was not so much shrimping, but all fishing, whether it be
15 longline or bandit or whatever, and how it's going to change
16 what they may do.

17
18 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's a really good point, and I do have the VMS
19 data. It's not quite the same as the shrimp ELB data. The
20 shrimp data, I know these are tows. Every point that I have on
21 this map is where the shrimping industry has towed. The VMS
22 data isn't filtered that way. I just have every ping on a VMS,
23 and so it looks a lot different. In fact, if you were to do a
24 heat map, the hottest spots would be the ports, because that's
25 where the most points are, and so it's not quite as informative
26 as your shrimp ELB data, because we don't have the algorithm yet
27 to, and we're working on it, to discriminate between fishing and
28 non-fishing activity.

29
30 I do have the VMS data. I can turn it on, just so you can see.
31 It's very helpful. These are in grids, and so red is hot, which
32 means that there is a lot of effort, and purple and blue is
33 cold, and so we have somewhere between 172 pings with this dark
34 blue and the green is 800. It's not very useful as far as --
35 But you can see there is medium effort if you -- This is
36 probably pretty good effort, if you look at it, because, again,
37 these areas that are going to be red are the ports, which kind
38 of skew the data. If you like my abstract art here, there's a
39 lot going on.

40
41 Again, the green areas would be what I would consider -- It's
42 probably a pretty good bet that there's a lot of VMS -- This is
43 all VMS data, and so that's reef fish -- Let's see. We have
44 reef fish, snapper, lobster, and shrimp permits. I am going to
45 turn that off so we can get our vision back. If it's all right,
46 I can move to a different area.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Unless anyone has questions, I guess you can

1 just proceed. Leann has a question.
2
3 **MS. BOSARGE:** Morgan, as we go through them, can we zoom in? I
4 mean start off big, but, if we're really going to take a good,
5 hard look at it, let's zoom in and really look and see what we
6 have.
7
8 **DR. KILGOUR:** Sure. Why don't we start with the west and head
9 east? This is Stetson, and I'm going to zoom in really well to
10 that and turn on the fishing effort. You can see in the red box
11 is the proposed Alternative 3, and you can see there is a couple
12 of dots on the corners, but, for the most part --
13
14 **UNIDENTIFIED:** What is that?
15
16 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's Stetson Bank. Again, the black dots are
17 the shrimping effort. Are there any comments specifically on
18 Stetson Bank?
19
20 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)
21
22 **DR. KILGOUR:** Off Texas. This is all the Flower Gardens.
23
24 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Just the expansion?
25
26 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just the expansion, right.
27
28 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Help me with this. What is the broken purple?
29
30 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's a nav chart. Let me try and find out what
31 that means. I don't know. That's the nav chart that's
32 underlain.
33
34 **UNIDENTIFIED:** No, that's all right. The red is what we're
35 worried about or concerned about, right?
36
37 **DR. KILGOUR:** Right. That's that prohibited area. Like I said,
38 this is two-gigabytes of data, and so it just takes a while for
39 me to get there.
40
41 **MS. BOSARGE:** On that Stetson Bank, can we look at that bottom
42 right-hand corner? When you zoomed out, I can see where we're
43 trawling across and cutting that corner, but let's zoom in and
44 make sure that we don't have any dots inside the corner that we
45 might need to address that bottom boundary right there.
46
47 **DR. KILGOUR:** All right. I'm as zoomed in as -- I can zoom into
48 the corner a little bit more, if you would like. It looks like

1 there is three points.
2
3 **MS. BOSARGE:** So that Alternative 2 that the Flower Garden Banks
4 Sanctuary is considering would not take in that corner?
5
6 **DR. KILGOUR:** No, that's correct. In the Alternative 2 though,
7 that's the blue line that you can see.
8
9 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)
10
11 **DR. KILGOUR:** The Alternative 2 is the blue line. That's this
12 kind of circular shape. The current boundary is the light blue,
13 or this is the current boundary. I apologize.
14
15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I've got several that have got their hands up.
16 In the back.
17
18 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I'm good. I just wanted to understand what the
19 current boundary was compared to what was proposed.
20
21 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We've got one here.
22
23 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Is that an indication that someone has actually
24 stopped at that area or is it just the VMS ten minutes? Even
25 though there are dots there, it could be transit or it could be
26 fishing?
27
28 **DR. KILGOUR:** Let me be clear. The dots are shrimping effort
29 from 2003 to 2014, all of the shrimping ELB -- The shrimp
30 electronic logbook pings every ten minutes. It's then filtered
31 by NMFS for us through an algorithm that gives us only the
32 actively shrimping pings, and so all of those dots are from a
33 ten-minute ping of actively towing for shrimp, and so these are
34 active fishing dots. Like I said, you can draw a line very
35 easily through the dots to see the tracks, once you zoom out.
36
37 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Delaney.
38
39 **MR. DELANEY:** One thing, in previous exercises, that was helpful
40 to put it into context was to indicate what the total universe
41 of shrimp trawl effort is on the chart. I mean when we're
42 looking at three dots, it's three dots out of --
43
44 **DR. KILGOUR:** Out of twenty-million.
45
46 **UNIDENTIFIED:** What is the spatial extent of the twenty-million?
47
48 **DR. KILGOUR:** The whole Gulf of Mexico up to -- It's anyone who

1 has an electronic logbook, wherever they go. It even goes up
2 the east coast of Florida.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Ms. Bosarge.

5
6 **MS. BOSARGE:** When you say it's not that significant, you also
7 have to understand though that the whole fleet does not have an
8 electronic logbook. Everybody is not outfitted with it, and so
9 you only have a portion that's outfitted, and that's what you're
10 seeing, but then that has to be extrapolated to the entire
11 fleet. Although you may only see a few pings right there, when
12 you extrapolate it to the entire fleet, it is significant,
13 possibly, but when you look at the zoomed-out version of this,
14 you can see that that corner is probably going to be an issue at
15 some point.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** G.P.

18
19 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I do want to point out, and correct me if I'm
20 wrong, Morgan, but, in this particular case, that red line is
21 also the same line as the existing coral HAPC that already, to
22 my knowledge, prohibits bottom impact gear, and so I think
23 shrimping is already prohibited in this area, and so I don't
24 think we need to spend much time on this one.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. I don't see any more hands, but the
27 Chair is going to take a moment. I want to introduce somebody.
28 We've got somebody who is getting on the Gulf Council, a new
29 member, Dr. Tom Frazer. He's at the University of Florida. He
30 is Director of the School of Natural Resources and Environment.
31 As a former council member, I wish you luck. That's all I can
32 tell you.

33
34 The first vote I made in 1979, one of my fellow council members
35 from my state disagreed, and I caught a lot of heck about it,
36 and, over the years, I caught a lot of heck on a lot of votes,
37 and best of luck to you, and I know you will do a good job. Dr.
38 Frazer is a new council member. I guess you will make your
39 first meeting at the New Orleans meeting, and is that right?
40 Good luck. Thank you, Morgan. I am sorry to interrupt you, but
41 go ahead.

42
43 **DR. KILGOUR:** Not a problem. I moved on to the Flower Garden
44 Banks. Are there any specific comments that you would like me
45 to make here?

46
47 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Any specific comments anyone would like to
48 make at this time? Proceed, Morgan.

1
2 **DR. KILGOUR:** Excellent.

3
4 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Morgan, could you expand the scale on that again?

5
6 **DR. KILGOUR:** There is the entire Gulf of Mexico.

7
8 **UNIDENTIFIED:** No, in the opposite direction. Sorry. So we
9 could really see the boundaries.

10
11 **DR. KILGOUR:** No problem. We can get about this close without
12 having part of it leave the screen. I am not trying to rush
13 you, but I am trying to rush you. At eleven o'clock, we have
14 the Florida Keys. They're going to give their presentation, and
15 we're on a tight window for that.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Go ahead, Morgan.

18
19 **DR. KILGOUR:** Here we have MacNeil Bank, and I can zoom in on
20 that one. Then we have Rankin, 28 Fathom, and Bright Bank.
21 Again, these are -- I should reiterate these are areas that were
22 recommended as HAPCs by the working group and the Coral SSC and
23 AP.

24
25 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I'm sorry, but I want to understand this very
26 clearly, and pardon me. What I'm seeing is that we're outside
27 of that fifty-fathom curve and there is no real shrimping effort
28 going on around this, and is that correct?

29
30 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's correct.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Does your chart disagree?

33
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** You don't believe me?

35
36 **MR. GRAHAM:** I need some help with that, because this is a very
37 important area for shrimping, that inshore side of this, and I
38 looked at this, and I plotted it on a chart too and got a little
39 concerned, because I know that bottom a little bit.

40
41 I looked at what you handed out, and the inshore portion of it
42 is showing some effort. That's good shrimping in there, and
43 you're not seeing a lot of dots, because, quite frankly, you've
44 got to be careful about this. There are certain people that
45 don't know how to fish that bottom, and there are people that
46 know how to fish that bottom, and right now -- It's really
47 interesting to me. This AIS, I just pulled it off, pulled it
48 up, and Robbie Woodward is a mile-and-a-half from there right

1 now anchored up. He is fishing that bottom, that inshore piece
2 of bottom.
3
4 I would like to ask some people that have the knowledge of coral
5 how important that is that that particular piece, that little
6 strip in there --
7
8 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** That northern --
9
10 **MR. GRAHAM:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)
11
12 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Does anybody want to attempt to respond to
13 that that's familiar with that particular area?
14
15 **MR. SCHMAHL:** We do have data from MacNeil Bank, and I will have
16 to say, in relative importance to some of the other banks,
17 MacNeil Bank does not have quite the diversity and the density
18 of coral communities as a lot of the other banks, and so it's
19 kind of all a matter of -- It's all sort of relative, but there
20 are coral communities there. We have documented it, but at
21 least, in my opinion, it's not as dense and sensitive as some of
22 the other areas.
23
24 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Anything else, Gary?
25
26 **MR. GRAHAM:** Well, I would just like to state that I don't want
27 to damage any habitat here, but it might be worth considering
28 moving that a little bit further offshore, that line, just a
29 little bit.
30
31 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. I'm sure we'll have some more
32 discussion on that when we get to the prioritizing and ranking
33 and so on. Go ahead, Morgan.
34
35 **UNIDENTIFIED:** If you overlay the topographic complexity of that
36 or from the bathymetric maps, and not necessarily from the
37 nautical charts, but actually so that we could all see, in the
38 future, where that hard bottom actually lies in relation to the
39 boundary markers. You have that for some of the other areas,
40 but I think that would be really useful for everybody.
41
42 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** When it's time to rank and so on and so forth,
43 Morgan, all of that is available, and I'm sure that would be
44 helpful.
45
46 **DR. KILGOUR:** I just turned on the bathymetric map, where you
47 can kind of see the relief. I believe that there's some better
48 -- It just takes a long time to draw, and so I'm trying to make

1 it so that we can quickly go through these, but you can see the
2 relief of the feature, but, like I said, it's a lot of data for
3 my poor little computer to try and show you all at once, and you
4 can see all these dots here are coral points, and I turned off
5 the fishing, because it didn't show up in this feature anyway.
6
7 I have a note that will be in the summary that there was some
8 concern about the inshore boundary of this feature. Is it okay
9 to move along?
10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Go ahead and move on.
12
13 **DR. KILGOUR:** All right. We were just at Rankin and Bright, and
14 was it okay for me to move along from that one? Moving along,
15 this is Geyer and Elvers. Let me turn off the coral points.
16 Again, I can turn on the bathymetry, but it just slows things
17 down. It's up to the group what they would like to see.
18
19 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** What's your pleasure? Do you want to see the
20 bathymetry?
21
22 **DR. KILGOUR:** Or move along.
23
24 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)
25
26 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Any comments on these? Go ahead, Morgan. I
27 think those are further out, in deeper water.
28
29 **DR. KILGOUR:** maybe I should just zoom into Sonnier Bank,
30 because I'm not sure that you're going to -- I think that that's
31 probably going to be. Here we have McGrail, which is currently
32 an HAPC. Again, the striped is the current HAPC and the red is
33 the proposed sanctuary expansion. Let me turn on fishing, so
34 that you can see. Are there any questions or concerns?
35
36 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** No shrimping effort?
37
38 **DR. KILGOUR:** No.
39
40 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Go ahead. I don't see any hands.
41
42 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Is there any other fishing effort?
43
44 **DR. KILGOUR:** I can put on the VMS data, absolutely.
45
46 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Only because it is expanding.
47
48 **DR. KILGOUR:** It would be shrinking.

1
2 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Then that's fine.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Morgan, it looks like some of our longline
5 fishermen have moved on. Mr. Spaeth, I see three or four of you
6 guys have come in. I don't know how long you've been here. I
7 just noticed you in the back, but, as we're proceeding through
8 these areas, there may be some comments you or some of the
9 members of the longline group may want to raise your hand if you
10 have a question. Don't hesitate, and I would be glad to address
11 you, since it could impact you guys.

12
13 **MR. ROBERT SPAETH:** I brought them here because they extensively
14 use Pulley Ridge, and they were here to answer any questions
15 that you might have.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. I just wanted you to know that we want
18 as much information as we can get from as many people as we can
19 get, and so go ahead, Morgan.

20
21 **DR. KILGOUR:** I took it upon myself to move us along to Sonnier
22 Bank, and this is -- Again, this one is upwards of the fifty-
23 fathom line, and you can see there is shrimping effort right
24 along the edges and the corners. The blue is Alternative 2.
25 That was the advisory council's recommended areas, and the red
26 is Alternative 3.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Any questions or comments?

29
30 **UNIDENTIFIED:** This might be a good one to pull up the
31 bathymetry.

32
33 **DR. KILGOUR:** All right. To do that, I'm going to have to get
34 rid of something. There we go. You can see the feature pretty
35 well.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Go ahead, Mr. Bosarge.

38
39 **MR. BOSARGE:** In just looking at it, Morgan, it looks like the
40 biggest impact to our industry is that top boundary. If we have
41 maybe some recommendations, it would be to lower that boundary,
42 just so that it -- It looks like there is still plenty of room
43 there. If we could bring that boundary down just a little bit
44 to keep those guys from being right on the line.

45
46 **DR. KILGOUR:** What about that green boundary? Do you like that
47 green boundary better?

1 **MR. BOSARGE:** Your green boundary. Okay. I was going to say
2 that on here it's the same.

3
4 **DR. KILGOUR:** This was one that was recommended as an HAPC with
5 regulations. The current boundary for the Alternative 3 aligns
6 with the current HAPC, but it was recommended to look at the
7 data, and so I have moved the boundary to try and eliminate a
8 lot of the shrimping effort from there.

9
10 **MR. BOSARGE:** I mean your south boundary I don't think needs to
11 be there. Just the north boundary is the one that needs to
12 change.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Any other comments? Steve, you're going to
15 have an opportunity when we get to ranking and all that sort of
16 stuff, but I think you made a good point there. Go ahead,
17 Morgan. You told me that you wanted to get through by eleven,
18 and so I'm trying to push.

19
20 **DR. KILGOUR:** Thank you. I appreciate it. Let me turn off some
21 stuff that's making it slow down, so we can get to the next one.
22 All right. I think we have -- We are just to the last four, and
23 so let me turn this off, because that's a different discussion.

24
25 We already did McGrail Bank, and so we can just focus on Bouma.
26 I'm going to turn on the fishing effort. If it's all right, I
27 will just zoom into the northern portion, because that looks
28 like the only area that there is some shrimping points, and you
29 can see that there's three inside the boundary, probably along
30 this tow line.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Gary, have you got comment about that?
33 Anybody else? Steve.

34
35 **MR. BOSARGE:** Which bank are you on?

36
37 **DR. KILGOUR:** Bouma, Rezak, and Sidner. Okay?

38
39 **MR. BOSARGE:** Just that one top corner, again. It must be on
40 the Bouma Bank?

41
42 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes.

43
44 **MR. BOSARGE:** If there was an option of just changing the angle
45 of that line, instead of a square.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Graham.

1 **MR. GRAHAM:** I made the same note when I was reviewing this as
2 you just commented, and so I just wanted you to know that I had
3 the same note there.
4
5 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I think you summed it up pretty good a while
6 ago. We certainly don't want to destroy any habitat, but if
7 indeed there is some fishing activity that would not impact the
8 area, we can suggest modifying lines that would accommodate the
9 habitat and the particular user group, and I think we all want
10 to try and do that, and so good. Okay, Morgan.
11
12 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just so you can see the features right in here.
13 Then we have one last bank, I think, or Parker and Alderdice.
14 Are there any comments on either of these?
15
16 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Morgan, what's the blue line?
17
18 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's the fifty-fathom line.
19
20 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Any specific comments on this one?
21
22 **DR. KILGOUR:** I am making the assumption that Parker is not
23 going to have comments, and so I will focus in on Alderdice,
24 since that's --
25
26 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Paul.
27
28 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Just a note, a recommendation, for the trawl men
29 that work this area or anybody else, but Alderdice is a really,
30 really good one to avoid. It's full of basalt pinnacles in
31 there that reach up to fifty or a hundred feet or something like
32 that. They will just tear you up. We went in there with an
33 ROV, and I couldn't believe it. It looked like something out of
34 the first Superman movie, and so that's a good area to avoid.
35
36 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I guess they found that out years ago. Any
37 comments on this one? Morgan.
38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** I think that that completes Alternative 3, and so
40 we're right on time to start on the Florida Keys. I have, in my
41 notes, just to make sure that I have them, that MacNeil might
42 need some other information, although Gary tells me that he was
43 looking at the proposed HAPC line that was concerning him and
44 not necessarily the proposed Alternative 3. Now that I have
45 that information, if there are no other comments on that --
46
47 **MR. GRAHAM:** I still -- In looking at it, there is a few tracks
48 right at the tip. G.P., I would appreciate it, if it's not

1 going to create a major problem to the habitat, if you might
2 consider moving that line a mile or two offshore.
3
4 **MR. SCHMAHL:** We're talking about MacNeil Bank here?
5
6 **MR. GRAHAM:** Yes.
7
8 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Okay. We will take a look at that.
9
10 **DR. KILGOUR:** Then there was a recommendation to look at the
11 northern portion of the Bouma Bank boundary, just that one
12 corner, to maybe angle it to the top of the line. That's the
13 summary for this? Perfect. Also Sonnier Bank and moving the
14 northern portion of the boundary of Sonnier Bank.
15
16 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay, Morgan. We're on time, eleven o'clock,
17 and so does anybody have any comments or questions on what we've
18 just gone through at this time? Okay.
19
20 **MR. DELANEY:** Morgan, I think Leann had raised a slight concern,
21 and maybe not registered as strongly as we did subsequently on
22 that -- Was it the very first area that it was the bottom right
23 corner had three or four dots in it? I forget the name of it.
24
25 **DR. KILGOUR:** Right, and that was Stetson. G.P. clarified that
26 that's currently already an HAPC with regulations.
27
28 **MR. DELANEY:** So it can't be moved.
29
30 **DR. KILGOUR:** The council can modify that, and so would you like
31 me to include that in the --
32
33 **MS. BOSARGE:** As we move into our HAPC discussion later, we can
34 take a good, hard look at that, because it's not a one-way
35 street. It's not always closing more bottom. If we do see that
36 there is an area that at some point we closed, and maybe it
37 should not have been -- Maybe that corner down there, maybe that
38 border needs to be adjusted at some point in the future on that
39 Coral HAPC, and so we can always take a look at it both ways.
40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Now I think we've got a
42 presentation coming up that -- The people that are going to be
43 making the presentation, we have to do it now, because they have
44 to get out of here today.
45
46 **DR. KILGOUR:** I think Steve is going to be available for
47 questions, but Beth Dieveney, who is going to -- I am calling
48 her right now, but she is only available until 11:30.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Go ahead.

3
4 **FLORIDA KEYS NMS PROPOSED EXPANSION UPDATE**

5
6 **MR. STEVE WERNDLI:** Good morning. My name is Steve Werndli, and
7 I work with the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary down in
8 the Florida Keys. I'm actually based out of the St. Pete
9 National Marine Fisheries Service Office now.

10
11 My role at the sanctuary, I coordinate our damage assessment and
12 enforcement program, and so I work a lot with NOAA's Office of
13 Law Enforcement, NOAA's Office of General Counsel out of the St.
14 Pete Office, as well as the Offices of Protected Resources and
15 Habitat Conservation. I sit over there now to make sure that
16 we're better liaising with the other offices in NOAA that also
17 have a role in the Sanctuary.

18
19 What I'm going to give you guys a talk on today is a real quick
20 brief on a process that we're going through that's very similar
21 to what you just went through in looking at the Flower Garden
22 Banks expansion. We've been going through a process to look at
23 our zoning, the individual zones themselves, as well as the
24 larger boundary and individual regulations within those zones
25 and within the overall boundary of the sanctuary as well.

26
27 The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary was established in
28 1990. Our first management plan went into place in 1997. The
29 Tortugas Ecological Reserves were added in 2001. We had another
30 update to our management plan in 2007, and we are currently
31 going through another process to update that plan as we speak.

32
33 It's about a 2,900-square-nautical-mile area that runs from
34 offshore of Miami all the way down and around the Dry Tortugas.
35 We are adjacent to Biscayne National Park, Everglades National
36 Park. The Dry Tortugas National Park is within our boundaries,
37 but our boundaries don't overlap the National Park boundaries in
38 that area.

39
40 We have four National Wildlife Refuges within our boundaries,
41 Crocodile Lake up in the Upper Keys, off of Key Largo, the Key
42 Deer National Wildlife Refuge, the Great White Heron National
43 Wildlife Refuge, and then Key West National Wildlife Refuge,
44 going east to west. Our regulations do overlap their
45 boundaries, and so our regulations apply, as do the wildlife
46 refuge's.

47
48 In addition to that, you've got a number of state park

1 jurisdictions that are within the Keys as well as areas covered
2 by both the Gulf Council and the South Atlantic Fishery
3 Management Council, and so there's a lot of jurisdictional
4 things going on in the Keys, and so it's a very complicated
5 place.

6
7 Why the sanctuary is there, our first priority is protection of
8 the resources of the Florida Keys, and so we're looking at
9 everything from basically the high-tide mark out to the 300-foot
10 isobath on the Atlantic side, and then I'm not sure the distance
11 on the Gulf side, but we basically look at protecting every
12 single ecosystem from the shoreline out to the deeper reefs, and
13 so mangroves, hard-bottom habitat, seagrass beds, the corals
14 reefs, everything that's out there, including the cultural
15 resources.

16
17 There are hundreds, if not thousands, of shipwrecks throughout
18 the Florida Keys. Those are protected under various laws of the
19 state and the feds as historical resources, and so we manage
20 those as well, and we manage all of that with a second priority
21 of being able to utilize those resources, and so having those
22 resources available to the public, and so we try to balance that
23 protection of the resource while also allowing access to use
24 those resources that don't cause impacts or that minimize
25 impacts to those resources.

26
27 To do that, we've got regulations that apply throughout the
28 entire sanctuary, and so, everywhere you go within the
29 sanctuary, there are general regulations that apply. Then,
30 within individual zones of the sanctuary, those same general
31 regulations apply, but then there are zone-specific regulations
32 in some areas, and so some of our general regulations cover
33 things like discharges. You can't dump oil in the sanctuary and
34 you can't dump human waste into the sanctuary. You can't dump
35 construction debris into the sanctuary.

36
37 We have a couple of areas that regulate spearfishing. We have
38 some no-fishing zones. We have zones that are primarily there
39 to target protection of shallow-water habitat, and so we might
40 regulate vessel speed, so that your vessel is going at a slow
41 speed in shallow areas, so that you're not hitting the bottom.

42
43 We have areas that address and restrict personal watercraft use.
44 We have construction and dredging regulations that prohibit
45 those activities, and so near-shore construction projects, dock
46 building, large construction projects like bridge repairs and
47 things like that, we actually have regulations that give us
48 authority over.

1
2 We prohibit oil and gas drilling throughout the sanctuary, and
3 so these are just kind of some of the things that our
4 regulations cover and prohibit inside the sanctuary as a whole.
5

6 Within the sanctuary, I mentioned that we have smaller zones
7 that are within the larger boundary. We have the sanctuary
8 regulations that cover the entire thing and we have a few
9 existing management areas, which are federally-managed areas
10 that existed prior to the sanctuary coming into effect, and so
11 those are things like the National Wildlife Refuges that are in
12 the Keys as well as two previous National Marine Sanctuaries,
13 the Key Largo National Marine Sanctuary off the Upper Keys and
14 the Looe Key National Marine Sanctuary off the Lower Keys, and
15 so those existing managed areas, the regulations that were in
16 place within those areas when the sanctuary came about are still
17 in effect today.
18

19 We also have what are called Sanctuary Preservation Areas.
20 Those are areas along the reef line that the primary purpose is
21 to address user conflicts between fishermen and divers, and so
22 these areas give a place for divers to go where they don't have
23 to worry about somebody dragging lines on top of them and
24 impacting them while they're diving.
25

26 Some of those areas -- Those areas are primarily no fishing. We
27 do have some exemptions in our regulations. In four areas, you
28 can troll and catch and release fish. In some other areas, you
29 can get a permit to go in and collect baitfish, because there's
30 areas in there where the reef and the habitat is such that it
31 attracts ballyhoo, and so we wanted to kind of -- That use is
32 not going to be such a conflict with the divers, because they
33 are not hook-and-lining on the bottom or things like that, and
34 so we had a process to allow baitfish permits to go in and
35 collect bait in some of those areas.
36

37 We have two ecological reserves, which are also no fishing. The
38 one most folks are familiar with are the north and the south
39 reserves in the Tortugas, and then we also have a Western Sambo
40 Ecological Reserve, which is off the Lower Keys as well, and so
41 those are larger areas designed to protect habitat, basically,
42 from the shoreline to the outer reef and get all of that habitat
43 in between, rather than doing smaller pieces of areas throughout
44 the Keys.
45

46 We also have wildlife management areas. We have twenty-seven of
47 those that are primarily in the Lower Keys. We do have a few in
48 the Upper Keys, but those areas are designed to protect shallow-

1 water seagrass habitat, hard-bottom habitat, and then also bird
2 rookeries and nesting areas on some of the mangrove islands.

3
4 Most of those areas, about eighteen of them, fall within the
5 National Wildlife Refuges, and so we manage those. We kind of
6 do that in partnership with the Wildlife Management Area. The
7 access restrictions in those are typically idle speed, no wake,
8 or no access to -- They are closed to any kind of entry at all.
9 Like I said, they're primarily focused on their shallow-water
10 habitat areas.

11
12 We also have four special use areas. We can designate a couple
13 of different types of these, ranging from the research area to
14 restoration areas to completely closed areas, depending on the
15 purpose. The only types that we have designated right now are
16 research-only areas, and these areas designed to -- You can only
17 transit through them. You can't stop, and so it's basically
18 designed to give us sort of a baseline comparison to the other
19 zones, to be able to see if things are working, and so we've got
20 four of those. They're in basically each region of the Keys,
21 going Upper Keys, Middle Keys, Lower Keys, and Key West.

22
23 We also have areas to be avoided. The areas to be avoided are
24 generally offshore areas that actually extend outside of the
25 general sanctuary boundary, and these areas were designed to
26 keep large ships and tank vessels away from the coral reef, and
27 so all of these areas -- It's ships that are larger than fifty
28 meters or any kind of tank vessel is not allowed to go inside
29 that boundary.

30
31 Since those have been in place, knock on wood, we haven't really
32 had any large ship vessel groundings, and part of my job in
33 dealing with emergency response at the sanctuary, dealing with
34 the amount of shipping traffic that goes past the Keys, there
35 are numerous instances every year where ships have an issue
36 where they run out of power for some reason, their power shuts
37 off, or they have maneuverability restrictions and things like
38 that, and I think, because of this area, those ships are far
39 enough offshore that, by the time tugs are able to get to them
40 or another vessel is able to get to them to assist, that
41 prevents those vessels from lining up on top of the coral reef
42 when they're out there without power or maneuverability, and so
43 that's a pretty effective zone.

44
45 Now we're starting to get into our current review of the zones
46 and regulations. In 2011, we published a condition report that
47 basically took all of the science up to that date to look at the
48 conditions of the sanctuary and all of the different ecosystems

1 and the uses and impacts that were not occurring prior to 2011
2 that had started to occur in recent times and look at those
3 impacts on the sanctuary.

4
5 Basically, it was to kind of give ourselves a checkup on how
6 things are going within the sanctuary. Over forty scientists
7 provided input, and this document did undergo peer review. It
8 just kind of gave the overall history of the sanctuary from the
9 beginning up through 2011 and what it looked like at that time,
10 and so it looked at impacts, it looked at uses, and, long story
11 short, it basically said that there are some improvements that
12 can be made in the management of the sanctuary, due to a number
13 of factors of impacts, ranging from water quality to individual
14 human impacts from boating.

15
16 We took that document and basically took that as an awakening
17 that said we need to look at what we're doing with the
18 sanctuary, and so that's one of the reasons that we needed to
19 conduct this review. We also had community interest that said,
20 hey, maybe things have changed, and we want you guys to look at
21 your regulations and look at your zoning and see if you can make
22 some improvements. Have you missed stuff?

23
24 Like one of the things you guys said earlier about maybe the
25 zone was established and it was big and the activity is such
26 that it's not protecting a certain area and that you can
27 actually shrink it, and so do we need to make our zones smaller
28 or actually get rid of some?

29
30 It's always good to look at what you've got and be adaptive
31 about the management scheme that you have. The science that's
32 available nowadays is much better than it was twenty years ago,
33 and so we think we can make some improved management decisions
34 based on that science.

35
36 We have new threats that weren't present back when the sanctuary
37 first came around that maybe our current zoning scheme and
38 regulations don't address, and then there is always the legal
39 requirement that we have to do this under federal law, that we
40 have to evaluate our management plan every so often.

41
42 Sort of leading off with this effort was our Sanctuary Advisory
43 Council, and the advisory council is made up of representatives
44 of all of these different parts of the communities of the
45 Florida Keys, and so we got pretty good representation, I think,
46 of what the communities are made up of in the Florida Keys.

47
48 Going forward with the things that came out of that condition

1 report and with all of the other reasons that we needed to have
2 a review of our current status, we looked to the advisory
3 council to sort of give us some advice on where we needed to go
4 with this review and what did they, they the council, but also
5 representing the members of the community, the Keys, what did
6 they think that we needed to focus on during our process and
7 where would we need to look and focus our analysis on to find
8 out what needs to change, what needs to stay the same. Do we
9 need to add things? Do we need to take away things?

10
11 The timeline, we started this back in 2012. I actually think it
12 started in 2011. We went through a series of public scoping
13 meetings that were held in Key West, Marathon, Key Largo, Miami,
14 and I think Fort Myers was the other location, and so we took
15 public scoping comments to kind of give us additional guidance
16 on where to focus our analysis through this process.

17
18 After that scoping process, we went into advisory council
19 meetings in 2012 to establish goals and objectives and basically
20 tighten in and identify the specific things that the advisory
21 council wanted us to look at, based on their interaction with
22 the public, based on the results of that condition survey, and
23 based on the results of that scoping.

24
25 From there, we went into a series of public meetings in 2013.
26 The advisory council set up, based on those goals and
27 objectives, three different workgroups to focus on specific
28 areas of the sanctuary. We had a group that would focus on
29 coral reef ecosystem restoration, we had a group that would
30 focus on shallow-water habitat and wildlife and habitat
31 protection, and another group that would focus on coral reef
32 ecosystem zones and issues in a whole, and so we had one group
33 that specifically looked at coral reef restoration, another
34 group that specifically looked at shallow-water habitats with
35 seagrasses and hard bottoms, and another group that would focus
36 on the entire ecosystem of the Florida Keys.

37
38 We had a couple other working groups to look at artificial reefs
39 and also look at our permitting process, to see if there were
40 ways that we could improve and streamline the permits. With
41 that process, we went through about seventy different public
42 meetings over a couple of years. There was lots of engagement
43 with the public, with the working groups. The folks that were
44 on those groups gave up a lot of their time. Joe, I know you
45 were heavily involved in that, but those were mainly two-day
46 meetings that folks volunteered their time to come to and give
47 us advice on what they felt we should do with the zones and the
48 regulations in the Keys.

1
2 After that process, those working groups made their
3 recommendations to the advisory council. The advisory council
4 reviewed those recommendations over a period of time and then
5 came back to a final meeting and made a final set of
6 recommendations to the sanctuary on the specific tasks and
7 specific items that they wanted us to analyze through an
8 environmental impact statement.

9
10 Then, going on through the process, this has been very flexible
11 the entire time, and so we're a little bit behind schedule. We
12 were hoping to have things out in a draft environmental impact
13 statement in the fall of this year, but that's probably looking
14 like it's going to be early to mid next year at this point, and
15 so that's sort of our general timeline of where we've been and
16 where we're headed to.

17
18 These are the priorities that were identified by the advisory
19 council for us to address through this process, and a couple
20 that I will focus on today are in bold there, and so the
21 shallow-water, wildlife, and habitat protection, the ecosystem
22 protection, dealing with the ecological reserves and looking at
23 a larger ecosystem-focused preservation and conservation
24 measures, and then also a little bit on the study area and the
25 boundary modifications that we have proposed.

26
27 All of this information, the recommendations from the working
28 groups, the recommendations from the advisory council, are all
29 on our website, which will be at the end of the presentation,
30 and so, if you would like to look at any of those documents,
31 it's all there for folks to look at.

32
33 These are the makeup of the working groups, and so it was sort
34 of like we had little mini advisory councils. We had the same
35 makeup. We tried to get to the same makeup, to look at a very
36 large cross-section of the communities of the Florida Keys to
37 have represented on each one of these workgroups, so that
38 everyone could have a voice to be heard.

39
40 The two groups that I will focus on are the ecosystem protection
41 and the shallow-water habitat group. The charge that was given
42 to the ecosystem protection group was to review the zones that
43 addressed ecosystem-level protection, and so looking primarily
44 at large ecological reserve type of areas that would cover that
45 contiguous habitat from the shoreline to the deep reef, if that
46 was possible, if that's appropriate.

47
48 We had the shallow-water wildlife habitat group looking at zones

1 that would protect the shallow-water seagrass areas, hard-bottom
2 areas, the mangrove areas, sort of like the wildlife management
3 area type of zones that I mentioned earlier. They also looked
4 at identifying concentrated uses in those areas that may be
5 causing impacts to the habitat that could be possibly addressed,
6 and we also looked at evaluating marine salvage issues.

7
8 We have a very high number of vessel groundings in the Florida
9 Keys, and so you have impacts to the habitat, not only from the
10 grounding itself when it happens, but also during the removal
11 process, when you're going to tow those boats off of the reef or
12 out of the seagrass. That action causes some impacts as well,
13 and so we were working with the local towing and salvage
14 community to kind of identify some best management practices
15 that we might be able to implement, to make sure that you're not
16 having more impacts from responding to an incident.

17
18 Some of the ways that we looked at data, we looked at both
19 natural resource data and we also looked at human use data, and
20 so the working groups, in the very beginning of their process,
21 has basically set out and had discussions about what habitat
22 data did they want to have to look at, so that we could provide
23 them that scientific data, so that they could make better
24 decisions.

25
26 Were there areas of coral reef habitat that they wanted to focus
27 on more than others, so looking at resilient reefs versus just
28 all of the reef itself, looking at reefs that had high relief,
29 and so the working groups identified all of these different sets
30 of data that they wanted us to provide to them, so that it would
31 help them with their analysis. There were hundreds and hundreds
32 of datasets that we had available through this whole process,
33 and we would look at sort of analyzing our current zone and then
34 through, as the process went, some of the zones that were being
35 recommended by the groups.

36
37 You could take that data and overlay the zones and see the
38 difference in the coverage, and so, if you expanded it, did you
39 increase your cover of resilient reefs or did you lose coverage
40 of resilient reefs or, if you had a zone that you put this line
41 here because there were resilient reefs right there, but there
42 was a number of stands of endangered species of coral that were
43 right outside of that, where you recommended a line be, could
44 you shift that to cover and put some more protection on those
45 endangered species, shift the whole zone and make it bigger, and
46 so it was a long process to expand and contract, looking at how
47 we could better do things in the sanctuary.

1 Looking at human use, we had data on commercial fishing,
2 recreational fishing, recreational diving, marine debris, the
3 areas where we had vessel groundings.

4
5 As we were looking at different areas with that goal of
6 protecting natural resources and protecting the habitat in the
7 Florida Keys, we could take into account the use of those areas
8 and, if there were areas of high fishing or high use, maybe we
9 need to shift that around a little bit, just like you were
10 talking with the zones in the Flower Gardens, to continue to
11 allow those uses, or could we leave that boundary the same way,
12 but also change the access restriction to it?

13
14 For instance, you might have an area that is getting heavily
15 impacted by boating that's a seagrass area, and you might have
16 one option that could be just a no-motor zone, which would then
17 restrict everyone from going in there without having a trolling
18 motor or paddling or poling their boat, or you could just make
19 it an idle-speed zone, which would still let you go through with
20 the motor, but it would slow the boat down, and so looking at
21 all of the different ways that the regulations, the zones, and
22 the human use interact, to make sure we're getting the best bang
23 for our buck protection-wise, but still allowing the public to
24 use the resources.

25
26 The outcomes of those groups, the ecosystem protection group
27 recommended modifications to eleven of our existing zones. They
28 recommended modifications to the overall sanctuary boundary and
29 to the areas to be avoided boundary, which is different, because
30 that one actually goes outside of our existing sanctuary
31 boundary.

32
33 They proposed seven new marine zones. They removed certain
34 exceptions or exemptions in four marine zones, and so those were
35 the sanctuary preservation areas, where we had an exemption to
36 the prohibition on fishing that allowed catch-and-release
37 fishing by trolling. In talking with some of the fishermen and
38 the other user groups, they were accepting of taking those
39 exceptions out of those regulations, because they can stay
40 outside of the existing zone, or potentially expanded zone, and
41 still maintain their fishing effort.

42
43 Also, having that exemption makes it very confusing for the
44 public and difficult for law enforcement, because you have an
45 area that's designated as no fishing, but, under certain
46 conditions or with a permit, you can fish. If a visitor comes
47 down and gets a ticket for fishing in the sanctuary preservation
48 area and then the officer leaves and ten minutes later somebody

1 drives through there catch-and-release fishing in one of the
2 areas that they're allowed, you can see where that can cause
3 some problems, and so that was one of the things that the group
4 looked at as far as taking away from existing regulations.

5
6 In the recommendations, like I said, we looked at not only the
7 spatial component of it, but what the access and the use
8 restriction would be, and so they considered regulations that
9 would basically limit your access for things like anchoring all
10 the way up to completely closing an area to research only and
11 not letting anyone into those areas.

12
13 The shallow-water group, sort of similar to that, had a range of
14 access restrictions that they looked at. Two of the zones, they
15 recommended that we remove. Both of those areas were impacted
16 by hurricanes over the last few years, and so actually the areas
17 that were zoned are no longer there, and so there's a good
18 reason to get rid of them. If you don't need to have them
19 closed, because there is nothing there, take them off the books.

20
21 They looked at modifying nineteen zones, and they proposed
22 twenty-four new zones that were mainly looking at idle speed or
23 no-motor type of zones in shallow-water habitats.

24
25 In some instances, they looked at actually having a temporal
26 zoning or temporal restrictions to areas, and so, in places
27 where we were looking at zoning around mangrove islands that was
28 focused on bird nesting and bird roosting areas, that they would
29 only recommend that those restrictions be in place when those
30 species of concern were present in the area, and so that was
31 another creative way they looked at maintaining that access to
32 areas while also offering the protection.

33
34 The ecosystem group looked at some boundary modifications, and
35 so, in addition to looking at the existing sanctuary
36 regulations, the advisory council recommended, and the working
37 group recommended as well, that we look at areas adjacent to the
38 current boundary, to see if there were areas of high ecological
39 importance that would need to be included within the sanctuary
40 and either offer just the general regulations or make it a
41 special zone on its own.

42
43 Looking at that, as we will with everything, we will have to
44 evaluate the impacts, both environmentally and economically, to
45 the communities of applying those general regulations in those
46 areas outside of the existing boundary.

47
48 Should those new boundaries be adopted, they would most likely

1 have just that suite of general regulations in place and not
2 much in the way of specific zoning for like sanctuary
3 preservation areas or ecological reserves or things like that.

4
5 One of the areas that we are considering for boundary expansion
6 is the Pulley Ridge area. Right now, there is an existing
7 habitat area of particular concern in place out there, and some
8 of the science has shown that there are areas outside of that
9 existing area that are very significant deepwater coral reef
10 habitat that aren't covered by existing protections, and so,
11 with our goal to look, from the advisory council, to look
12 outside of our existing boundaries at significant ecologically-
13 important areas, this is one of the places that they wanted to
14 focus on.

15
16 This area, if we were to expand to it, would include the general
17 sanctuary regulations, and I think we also have alternatives or
18 different alternatives proposed in that area that would also
19 regulate anchoring of specific sized vessels or of any vessel,
20 going with the intent that the protection in that area would be
21 to the deepwater coral habitats, and so you would only really
22 need to restrict those activities that would impact that habitat
23 type.

24
25 Back to the timeline. Where are at now is -- Well, we just
26 started the fall of 2016, and we are still in the process of
27 taking all of the recommendations from the advisory council and
28 from the working group and bending those into a suite of
29 alternatives that we can then do the economic and ecological
30 analysis on, through the process of developing that
31 environmental impact statement.

32
33 We hope to have a draft environmental impact statement out
34 probably early to middle of next year, and it will go through
35 another round of public comment at that time. It will go
36 through agency review. The councils will look at it, and then
37 we will basically take those comments back and incorporate those
38 into the EIS and then publish a final EIS. Then, at some point,
39 a year or so after that, the final regulations and rules will be
40 published in the Federal Register.

41
42 Sort of, again, where we're at, we're in the process, again, of
43 developing and putting together those alternatives. Like I just
44 said, we will release a draft environmental impact statement and
45 there will be another round of public comment, as well as agency
46 comments. We will release the final environmental impact
47 statement, and then we will revise and basically put in place the
48 new and changed rules and marine zones.

1
2 There is our website. Like I said, everything that came out of
3 that working group process and the advisory council process, all
4 of the reports and recommendations from that process, are
5 available on the website. There is my phone number. Please
6 feel free to email me or call me if you've got questions, and I
7 will take some questions now, if you've got them.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you very much, Steve. We appreciate
10 that. I see one hand, and so go ahead, Paul.

11
12 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Steve, you mentioned early on all of the
13 different jurisdictions that you have that sort of regulate the
14 Florida Keys. You said that some of them are historical, before
15 FKNMS was around, and some of them are new or whatever.

16
17 This is very common in coastal marine waters around the world,
18 actually, but has there been any move by the National Marine
19 Sanctuary to say, hey, why don't we just combine these under one
20 umbrella and why don't you let us look after this, rather than
21 having all of these enforcement groups trying to look after one
22 poor guy spinning around in a boat that throws a beer can over
23 and gets shot by three different officers or something?

24
25 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Do you want to answer that?

26
27 **MR. WERNDLI:** I will try to answer that to the best of my
28 ability. I do know that there has been discussion between both
29 the Gulf Council and the South Atlantic Council with respect to
30 fishing regulations, that they entertained the possibility of
31 combining the Keys into one additional council or sub-council or
32 committee of those, but I'm not sure where that is at.

33
34 The rest of all of the alphabet soup that's in the Keys, there
35 is different entities that have different goals and objectives
36 into their management and what they're doing, and so, even
37 though you've got that complex jurisdiction that's there, the
38 law enforcement that's down there has the tools and the ability
39 to pick and piece the best tools from the laws that are in place
40 to address certain violations.

41
42 Part of what we've been doing through this process is making
43 sure that, if we are going to propose something, that we
44 consider other regulations that are already in place, and so we
45 looked at the lobster exclusion zones, the areas that are
46 prohibited to lobster by one of the fishery management plans,
47 and so, if we could -- If we had a zone that needed to go in a
48 certain place that would overlap that area, that we put in

1 regulations that are the same, if we want to have those
2 regulations under ours, or if we just want to make a zone there
3 with specific different regulations, but it would mirror that
4 existing zone, so that we're not taking up additional space.

5
6 We just might, through our process, have identified additional
7 layers of protection that are needed there and overlapped that
8 way, and so that's -- Looking at Pulley Ridge, specifically, we
9 were looking at the area that's already designated as the HAPC
10 to focus on, but, with the new science that's out there, it
11 shows that that might need to be expanded a little bit, and so
12 we're taking into account other layers of management as well
13 into the process.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Walter.

16
17 **MR. JAAP:** Steve, just for your information, and you're probably
18 aware of this, but the group from our Coral SSC has recommended
19 expanding Pulley to accommodate pretty much all of that
20 sensitive habitat that's down there, and so we'll be probably
21 talking about that later, but the other thing about the -- I
22 will use the word that's forbidden, but "turf wars" down there
23 in the Keys, and a colleague, a friend of mine, Geologist Gene
24 Shinn, has actually published a paper years ago about --

25
26 He put up the matrix of all the possibilities of county through
27 federal agencies that you would have to deal with to get a
28 permit to do some form of research down there, and it gets
29 pretty complicated for a person coming from outside to take care
30 of that kind of thing, when they have a limited budget and a
31 limited timeframe to get the work done.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Go ahead, Judy.

34
35 **DR. LANG:** Steve, operationally, I would like to ask you how you
36 define "resilient reefs", and specifically if any of them are
37 affected by the current outbreak of white plague that's rampant
38 in the Upper Keys.

39
40 **MR. WERNDLI:** For the purposes of this, the resilient reefs, if
41 I remember correctly, was defined by the -- I think it was the
42 Nature Conservancy's surveys that were -- It was their ongoing
43 monitoring of the coral reefs, and so their definition of
44 "resilient reefs" is that we used, and their datasets is what we
45 used to identify those areas throughout the Keys. There has
46 been the bleaching. I don't know so much about the disease, but
47 the bleaching this year has been pretty significant all
48 throughout the Keys.

1
2 **DR. LANG:** There's also a very significant outbreak of white
3 plague in the mass of corals and brain corals.

4
5 **MR. WERNDLI:** I don't think that's the one that is in Flower
6 Gardens. I don't think we've seen that in the Keys yet.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Leann.

9
10 **MS. BOSARGE:** Steve, thank you for coming. I'm Leann Bosarge
11 from the Gulf Council. Morgan is going to -- I was hoping that
12 your presentation might have a little more detail. I know
13 that's kind of hard to do at this phase of the game, but we've
14 seen some presentations that did give us some detail on things
15 you're considering.

16
17 I would make one suggestion. On your website, I did try and go
18 through it, to try and figure out what the management
19 recommendations were, and I spent numerous hours, and the only
20 way to figure it out is to essentially read the minutes of every
21 meeting that you've had over the last five years or so. If
22 there is some way to like summarize that this is what we're
23 looking at going towards and give some bullets and some
24 pictures, that would be real helpful.

25
26 **MR. WERNDLI:** I can send Morgan links to the individual reports,
27 so that you don't have to wade through the website to get to
28 them, so that you can go directly to the reports themselves, and
29 so I will give her individual links to pass out to everybody.

30
31 **MS. BOSARGE:** Okay. That would be great. What I asked Morgan
32 to put up on the screen, and I hope Beth is still on the phone,
33 maybe, but this was something that your group was considering
34 for closures in the past.

35
36 From what I could gather, looking at your website, it's not
37 completely off the table at this point, and so I am anticipating
38 this being in your scope of alternatives when your DEIS comes
39 out, and we've got all the main people in the room right now to
40 give input on this, and so a couple of questions.

41
42 I guess it would be kind of like that gray-colored area to the
43 top and then the little sliver of gray-colored area to the
44 bottom. Those are areas that were suggested as being closed,
45 I'm assuming to everything, as study areas. Number one, why is
46 it that if you want to study an area that you have to shut every
47 user group out of it and have no use in it just to study it?
48 That's a little frustrating, to me.

1
2 Number two is I would like to get some feedback from hopefully
3 the shrimpers in the room as to is this going to affect you? Is
4 this trawlable bottom for royal red, because we do have a royal
5 red representative, and regular shrimping, if you want to refer
6 it as such, and get some feedback from that, and the longliners
7 as well, if you have any use in this area.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Morgan, go ahead.

10
11 **DR. KILGOUR:** I just want to make sure that this is still under
12 consideration, because, when I talked to Beth, I had questions
13 about this, and I think she had told me that some of this was
14 removed, but if you could comment on that as well, that would be
15 really helpful.

16
17 **MR. WERNDLI:** I was only going to mention -- I was under the
18 impression that they were proposed areas for expansion of the
19 sanctuary, but that they would apply some of the same existing
20 rules that are in place now, where there are fishing activities
21 that are going on within the sanctuary, and that it would not be
22 entirely closed to fishing.

23
24 **MS. BOSARGE:** Typically, in a sanctuary, bottom trawling is not
25 allowed, and you're looking at a group of bottom trawlers, and
26 so it's definitely going to have an effect on us.

27
28 **UNIDENTIFIED:** If you close that area you have marked off, you
29 basically have ended shrimping in Key West.

30
31 **MR. WERNDLI:** Before we go any further, because there have been
32 some things that have changed on this map, and this represents
33 the areas that were recommended from the advisory council to the
34 sanctuary to consider for boundary expansion, the areas inside
35 and outside of the sanctuary. The lighter shaded areas at the
36 top and the bottom were considered, but have been rejected.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** So that is out now?

39
40 **MR. WERNDLI:** Those are out of consideration, and so we're
41 looking at that area of the darker blue area that goes up into
42 Florida Bay, adjacent to Everglades National Park, and then, on
43 the outside boundary, on the ocean side --

44
45 So the dark blue boundary is the existing sanctuary boundary and
46 this line out here is the current areas to be avoided boundary,
47 and so we would be looking to expand our general regulations
48 into those areas outside of the existing boundary. It would go

1 back up to the existing boundary along the south end. South of
2 that would be about southwest of the Marquesas, and then down
3 and then expand it out to the southern boundary of the Southern
4 Tortugas Ecological Reserve and then straight to the north from
5 there, to the existing boundary on the northern side that's
6 below that lighter-colored square. It's only the darker-blue
7 areas that are being considered at this time.

8
9 **MS. BOSARGE:** In your presentation, you said you were
10 considering modifications to the actual sanctuary boundaries,
11 which would be extending the sanctuary boundaries, but that you
12 were also proposing these research-only zones in addition.
13 That's what I'm asking. Are those gray boxes still being
14 proposed as research zones, aka study zones?

15
16 **MR. WERNDLI:** These areas that are on this map were never
17 proposed as closed research-only areas. These were only
18 proposed to give us a larger area to look at, areas adjacent to
19 the sanctuary, to identify other areas of ecological importance
20 that could need additional layers of protection.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Did you have another question?

23
24 **MS. BOSARGE:** No, and I don't want to get into a boxing match
25 with you, but I have it on the record that it was proposed. It
26 was a presentation by the Florida Keys National Marine
27 Sanctuary, and so that's where that comes from, is your own
28 sanctuary group that did present it, and so it has been on the
29 table. It's hard to get all of us in a room together, and
30 that's why, if it's even possible that you may do that, while
31 we're in the room, we want to talk to you about it.

32
33 **MR. WERNDLI:** Those two lightly-shaded areas have been
34 considered but rejected within this larger outline here with the
35 light blue, to there and then up to the Everglades along this
36 angle here. That is the area that's being proposed for
37 sanctuary boundary expansion. Within that area, there could be
38 smaller zones that would be closed for research only or idle
39 speed or whatnot, and so --

40
41 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Just quickly, why -- I can't understand. I mean
42 you're looking at a sliver of bottom that couldn't be maybe half
43 a mile wide there, and what possible -- I don't understand.
44 It's all shrimping ground, and it's basically, for the most
45 part, flat bottom. Why would you want to expand? It's almost
46 like you're trying to draw a line around it. I don't understand
47 the need and the purpose. Can you go into a little detail of
48 why you would actually want to close a little --

1
2 **MR. WERNDLI:** I think that that is a relic of the GIS, where the
3 two different layers are not matching up. I don't believe there
4 is any expansion proposed on that north side. I think that's
5 just a relic of two different shape files. The polygons that
6 are drawn, one is not matching up exactly to the other.

7
8 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I would have to defer to Mr. Nelson on the south
9 side expansion for royal red.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I've got two hands. Paul, since we're on the
12 shrimp thing, can Mr. Nelson go and then you're next?

13
14 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Sure.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Thank you. Mr. Nelson.

17
18 **MR. NELSON:** Just how far in that box, where it goes up and down
19 -- You've got a little farther over to the west and down at the
20 corner, the bottom corner, how far is that? Is that a mile or
21 two miles over or three miles over?

22
23 **MR. WERNDLI:** I think it's about a mile. There's been some
24 science that shows that that area of Riley's Hump is a little
25 bit more towards the west than was known back when the initial
26 boundaries for that ecological reserve were shown, and so it's
27 an extension of that boundary of about a mile to the west, to
28 give a little bit more buffer to the edge of that significant
29 habitat.

30
31 **MR. NELSON:** We drag right up to it, and not way in, but right
32 on the outside edge of that box.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Are we talking about the dark blue line now?
35 Is that what you're saying?

36
37 **MR. NELSON:** The blue box, yes, the dark one. We drag right up
38 to it down toward the bottom. I call it the southwest corner of
39 that box. Both sides of it, we drag right up to it, but not way
40 inshore. Just right out toward the edge of it, that way and the
41 other way. You know how that yellow line kind of tapers down to
42 a point at the southeast corner to, why couldn't that go
43 straight over instead of taper down?

44
45 **UNIDENTIFIED:** In other words, you get into some of this bottom
46 that he's talking about proposing?

47
48 **MR. NELSON:** Not way up there, but I mean it does come down to a

1 point, to where it will take some of it on both sides of that
2 box.

3
4 **MS. BOSARGE:** So you would rather see this line go like that is
5 what you're saying?

6
7 **MR. NELSON:** Well, it could go straight to the west, more like
8 that, and the west side not even be there, especially if you got
9 off a ways.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Dennis.

12
13 **MR. HENDERSON:** Can we do the same thing we did to the other,
14 put a chart up there and she could put the electronic logbook
15 tracking on there?

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Can you do that?

18
19 **DR. KILGOUR:** I don't have those coordinates for those files to
20 be able to do that.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** So that's not unavailable, unfortunately.

23
24 **MR. HENDERSON:** Well, can we get it?

25
26 **DR. KILGOUR:** The National Marine Sanctuary would have to
27 provide it.

28
29 **MR. HENDERSON:** If they provided the coordinates and we put it
30 on a chart and then we did the electronic tracking on there.

31
32 **DR. KILGOUR:** I understand what you're asking, but they would
33 have to provide the coordinates. I don't have them.

34
35 **MR. HENDERSON:** I thought I saw some of that data when you
36 overload the whole Gulf of Mexico.

37
38 **MS. BOSARGE:** She has the shrimp tracks. She doesn't have the
39 box.

40
41 **MR. HENDERSON:** But he's saying that it changed. What you
42 changed, do you have that and the coordinates?

43
44 **MR. WERNDLI:** We haven't changed anything at this point. We are
45 still discussing it.

46
47 **MR. HENDERSON:** So that's still --
48

1 **MR. WERNDLI:** It's still on the table, yes.

2
3 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Morgan, is there any way to have that for
4 later this afternoon, if the two of you work and get together
5 and maybe you could --

6
7 **DR. KILGOUR:** Steve?

8
9 **MR. WERNDLI:** We can try.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Dennis, good point. If we can get
12 that, hopefully we can get that available. Paul has been very
13 patient. He had his hand up.

14
15 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Two things. The first thing is we're not seeing,
16 from this -- Rightfully so, we're not seeing from this picture
17 where the reefs are, the reef tracks, which probably run right
18 up to the edge of the blue area, but who knows? We don't have
19 that information, and maybe we'll have it later or something.

20
21 The second thing is, with respect to the Florida Keys reef
22 tract, we're sort of talking about a patient that's been in the
23 ICU for ten years. The Florida reef tract has really taken a
24 hit from disease and from bleaching, more so than I think some
25 other areas of the Caribbean, which is probably, I would
26 imagine, some of the rationale for wanting to protect some more
27 of it.

28
29 It's not in good shape. If memory serves, the percent cover has
30 gone, over a decade or fifteen years, from something like 40 or
31 50 percent to 5 percent coverage, and is that right? It's
32 pretty low cover now.

33
34 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

35
36 **DR. SAMMARCO:** It's down pretty low now, and so I think that's
37 one of the reasons that there's been a lot of movement to try to
38 protect it. It's in pretty bad shape, and that's all.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I am glad that you brought that up. I am
41 puzzled that I was just reading, within the last week or two,
42 which contradicts what you just said. By the Chief Scientist at
43 the Office of the National Marine Sanctuaries, Steve Giddings,
44 that the coral in the Gulf is in pretty darned good shape and
45 stable and so on, and so now I'm puzzled. We've got a problem
46 in this area and we've got the problem with the milky, white
47 substance on the East Flower Gardens.

1 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I think what he's talking about, and he has
2 published that, is the Flower Garden Banks.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** So he was only talking about the Flower
5 Gardens?

6
7 **DR. SAMMARCO:** They are sort of the gem of the Gulf of Mexico,
8 because they are so far offshore, and they're really in almost
9 pristine shape, until last week.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** But he did say Gulf, and so I took that as the
12 entire Gulf of Mexico.

13
14 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

15
16 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** We had a legal fight over the boundary years
17 ago. That's a whole different issue.

18
19 **UNIDENTIFIED:** As we did in the meeting that we attended with
20 your group, where we overlaid the LGL tracks, the same thing
21 needs to happen down here, where you can actually see just what
22 the bottom actually looks like, in other words, where this coral
23 is and where it isn't and what maybe needs to be protected and
24 what doesn't, because I think, once you overlay the tracks, you
25 will look at it and say, okay, I see, simply because you're
26 going to be amazed at, like I say, how much of that bottom is
27 flat bottom with no coral. Where the coral is, we don't go.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Steve tells me that he's going to do his best
30 to work with Morgan to try and have something for the group to
31 take a look at today. I think that would help all of us
32 tremendously. Mr. Gregory.

33
34 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DOUGLAS GREGORY:** Good morning. That was a
35 good presentation. One of the things we did want to learn was
36 the time schedule for when the Draft EIS was coming out. It's
37 been five years now since the condition report came out. I
38 think you said it was 2011.

39
40 When I read it back then, one thing that struck me was there was
41 a lot of reliance on some publications that were put out during
42 the 1990s on the condition of some of the reef fish species.
43 Since then, those conclusions have been found in the literature
44 and through the NMFS stock assessments to be incorrect, and I
45 didn't see, if my memory is right, any reference to the National
46 Marine Fisheries Service stock assessments on the species that
47 are in the sanctuary, and particularly black grouper.

1 If you haven't don't it already, I would suggest going back and
2 looking at the condition report and updating it to include the
3 status of species, as indicated by stock assessments, rather
4 than a twenty-year-old publication. We've had a number of stock
5 assessments since that was done out of the University of Miami,
6 and I think that would be worth looking at.

7
8 One observation that has just kind of perplexed me about the
9 Keys is most of our fished populations are healthy. The coral
10 has gone to heck, but lobster is productive and yellowtail and
11 gray snapper and mutton snapper. Even black grouper, which the
12 condition report concludes is grossly overfished, the stock
13 assessment says it's relatively healthy.

14
15 Now, I am eager to see an updated stock assessment to see if
16 that's changed, and so it seems to me that a lot of the
17 productivity of the Florida Keys -- Clearly you can look at the
18 Everglades, and you've got a lot of nutrients coming in, and the
19 seagrass communities and the mangrove communities are
20 flourishing in the Florida Keys.

21
22 Our fish populations seem to be as much dependent on the
23 seagrasses and mangroves for their productivity as they are the
24 corals, and it has kind of perplexed me, because a lot of people
25 relate overfishing to coral death, and vice versa, and you would
26 expect, with the reef being in as bad shape as it is, that the
27 fish wouldn't be there either, and I think, if you look at
28 tropicals and moray eels, you will see that they have been
29 decimated along with the corals, but those aren't species that
30 we fish and harvest.

31
32 It's just an interesting observation, that we have these
33 productive fisheries at the same time we've got this
34 dramatically declining coral, and I agree with you that some
35 places it's like swimming through a graveyard, with these big,
36 monster boulder corals that are completely dead. It's
37 depressing, and so thank you very much.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I had two hands. Who was first? Leann.

40
41 **MS. BOSARGE:** I just wanted to say that I know you weren't here
42 earlier for the conversation that we had with G.P. with the
43 Flower Garden expansion that's going on, but G.P. has been
44 really good about working with the fishermen and coming to these
45 types of meetings and showing us what he anticipates doing, and
46 I think we made some good progress earlier.

47
48 There were just a few boxes that we had issues with, and G.P. is

1 going to take a look at it and see if there is any way to come
2 to a common ground on it, and I would encourage you to do that
3 as well with the shrimping community. I was a little concerned,
4 because all your meetings are taking place in the Keys, and even
5 your at-large members, some of it is specified that they have to
6 be from a certain area in the Keys, Upper Keys or Lower Keys or
7 this or that.

8
9 The shrimp fleet that's shrimping down there is not necessarily
10 ported and/or the gentlemen and women that work on the boat
11 living in the Keys. In fact, most of them are not, simply
12 because of the environment down there. That's a tourism
13 environment. The shrimp boats that used to be there are no
14 longer there. They moved elsewhere. Tourism kind of took over
15 that waterfront.

16
17 When you take this out to public hearings, all of your meetings
18 have been centered down there, but you're going to have to take
19 this throughout the Gulf of Mexico, because there are shrimpers
20 that are ported out of Texas and Louisiana and Mississippi and
21 Alabama that every year we go down there, and so would you just
22 keep that in mind?

23
24 You only have two commercial fishermen on your group, and I'm
25 sure neither one of those are shrimpers, I would venture to
26 guess, and I did reach out and ask your group to please at least
27 let the Gulf Council maybe sit in, have a staff member sit in,
28 on being a member on your committee, and we haven't gotten any
29 feedback, and maybe you haven't gotten much input from
30 shrimpers, but that's because everything you've been doing is in
31 the Keys. We don't live in the Keys, and so just please keep us
32 in mind, and if you will work with us on the frontend, I think
33 it will be a lot smoother process.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you.

36
37 **MR. JAAP:** Steve, if you can clarify, I think, really for us
38 what that polygon that was showing up there is and make sure
39 that everybody gets a good answer that it is or it is not going
40 to be an area that's going to be shut down, because I think it's
41 important, for two reasons.

42
43 One is that area up there, as the people have said, is an area
44 that actively gets shrimped, and I think that position between
45 Riley's Hump and the Dry Tortugas National Park and west of
46 there, there's a lot of coral in there. There is, because I
47 have worked down there. I've run submarines through there, and
48 I would say that you should document it pretty well, but, if you

1 are going to expand into that area, that you do have a resource
2 that needs protection, and I think we'll all benefit from that.

3
4 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)
5

6 **MR. WERNDLI:** This is the area that you're talking about? This
7 light yellow, pale yellow, cream-colored, whatever color area
8 you want to call that, and then this other area at the bottom
9 that's the same color was considered to be part of the study
10 area, but, since it was considered, it has now been rejected,
11 and so we are not looking at anything in these two areas.
12

13 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)
14

15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Did we have any other hands?
16

17 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)
18

19 **MR. WERNDLI:** Again, our focus is not just on coral. It's
20 protection of the entire ecosystem, and so hard-bottom
21 communities, seagrass communities, coral communities, that's
22 what we're looking at, in general.
23

24 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** In the back, go ahead.
25

26 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I sat on that committee, and none of the
27 decisions were made, and what Steve is saying is true about the
28 -- They have considered that and rejected it, but I sat on that
29 committee, and the space that you're seeing, the extension
30 between Riley's Hump, which is below Tortugas Bank there in the
31 southwest, and that line that's drawn up to the edge of the
32 current sanctuary, one of the issues driving consideration of
33 that space was that there is a lot of hard coral bottom in
34 there, and there's been a problem with freighters anchoring in
35 there, because it's real shallow, and there is some pretty
36 graphic video of the big anchor chains scooping up all the live
37 coral. A lot of that was part of the consideration.
38

39 It was a coral consideration, and they looked at fisheries, and
40 it was mentioned in the group that the commercial fishermen that
41 are in there, mostly yellow-tailers out of Stock Island. They
42 sat on the committee, but there were no shrimpers in the group,
43 and I think the input is appropriate.
44

45 The big consideration there was it's real shallow, and the dead-
46 heading freighters heading up into the Gulf or people waiting
47 for a load were dropping their hooks there was the problem.
48

1 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Harris.
2
3 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** I'm a little confused how come this area right
4 here wasn't explained like the other areas. What's the reason
5 and when is all of this going to come to a head? Is it going to
6 be all done together or is it going to be done separate? I am
7 kind of confused on the process.
8
9 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** When did you start this process? What was the
10 timeline?
11
12 **MR. WERNDLI:** We started with public scoping in 2011, and this
13 is a process that's separate from the Flower Gardens process
14 that you guys discussed this morning.
15
16 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Nelson.
17
18 **MR. NELSON:** I can't quite understand that data looking at where
19 we drag. The boat I've got now, I don't go down there very
20 much, but I do know -- Years ago, I had my other boat, and we
21 drove right up to the box. We didn't have no tracking devices
22 or nothing on us, but I do know that you can drag right up to
23 that box on both sides and catch good shrimp. I've got it shown
24 on my plotter to where they dragged straight on through that
25 corner, and so I know it's good shrimping there, because that's
26 where I was talking about that point coming down to it. You can
27 drag right up to that box.
28
29 I mean it's showing no data, giving them that information, but
30 there is -- We've had old paper plotters and stuff like that.
31 We didn't have no tracking devices, and I know you can do it. I
32 ain't been down there in a long time to work it.
33
34 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Any other hands at this time?
35 Morgan, I don't see any hands. It's twelve o'clock. Do we want
36 to do anything now? I think they delivered the food, and so
37 what do we need to do now, prior to having lunch?
38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** I guess now is the time to ask Steve any more
40 questions that you may have for him, so that he can have lunch
41 and go back.
42
43 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Steve, are you going to be around the rest of
44 the day?
45
46 **MR. WERNDLI:** I can be if you want me to.
47
48 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Any questions for Steve at this time?

1 I am going to ask you, if your schedule allows, if you wouldn't
2 mind sticking around, please. I don't see any hands for
3 questions.

4
5 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I would just like to follow up on that last
6 comment and ask Morgan, can you put up the bathymetry coincident
7 with your chart showing -- Your GIS showing the location of the
8 Tortugas south? Then we can find out where it really is
9 shallow.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Can you do that, Morgan? Are we working on
12 it?

13
14 **DR. KILGOUR:** I'm working on it. Could I do it after lunch?
15 Okay. I will have it ready to go right after lunch.

16
17 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I think that just would help add some perspective
18 to the conversation we've just been having.

19
20 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, and I think I might be able to finagle some
21 shape files to get that expanded box, potentially. I might not
22 be, but that will be my goal.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** We've got Leann now.

25
26 **MS. BOSARGE:** I just wanted to make sure that Steve is going to
27 be around, because I know we do have the longliners. Are you
28 staying until after lunch?

29
30 **MR. WERNDLI:** Yes, ma'am.

31
32 **MS. BOSARGE:** Then I'm good.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Steve has committed that he's going to be with
35 us most of the day, I guess.

36
37 **MR. WERNDLI:** Until you let me go, I guess.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. I am going to call a thirty-minute
40 lunch break. It's five after twelve, and so twenty-five of. I
41 understand there is sandwiches and soft drinks over in the
42 corner. With that, Harris will be first.

43
44 (Whereupon, the meeting recessed for lunch on August 3, 2016.)

45
46 - - -

47
48 August 3, 2016

1
2 WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION
3
4 - - -
5

6 The Joint Shrimp Advisory Panel, Coral Advisory Panel, and Coral
7 Scientific and Statistical Committee of the Gulf of Mexico
8 Fishery Management Council reconvened at the Gulf Council
9 Office, Tampa, Florida, Wednesday afternoon, August 3, 2016, and
10 was called to order at 12:30 p.m. by Vice Chairman Steve
11 Bosarge.
12

13 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I would like to make a motion. The Shrimp AP
14 requests that the discussion and comments made pertaining to the
15 Flower Gardens Banks boundary expansions be included in the Gulf
16 of Mexico Fishery Management Council letter to the Flower Garden
17 Banks National Marine Sanctuary.
18

19 **MR. BOSARGE:** Let's make sure that she gets it. This will be a
20 Shrimp AP motion. Now that Corky is gone, if you remember, we
21 had this conversation on how this was supposed to go, without
22 answering the question. We have a motion. Is there any
23 discussion? We have a motion and we have a second.
24

25 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I would like to offer that the Coral SSC would
26 join in that motion.
27

28 **MR. BOSARGE:** That sounds pretty good. I haven't a clue as to
29 how this is supposed to work, especially now that we have the
30 Coral SSC -- Go ahead, Morgan.
31

32 **DR. KILGOUR:** We can do this two ways. If it's just the Coral
33 SSC and the Shrimp AP, then we will just make two different
34 motions and the two groups will individually vote, or, if all
35 three groups wanted to make this motion, then it could be a
36 motion of the committee as a whole and, therefore, everybody
37 would vote. That would have to go through the Coral AP as well.
38

39 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Can I make the motion that the Coral AP is
40 involved in the motion?
41

42 **DR. KILGOUR:** To make it really complicated, it needs a second
43 from each individual group.
44

45 **MR. BOSARGE:** That's what I'm -- Do we have a second on the
46 Shrimp AP's motion? Okay. Johnny seconds the motion. Now, do
47 we have a second from the Coral AP?
48

1 **MS. SAPP:** I second the AP.

2
3 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay. Portia seconds the AP. Now, any discussion
4 on the Shrimp AP's motion? All right. Go ahead.

5
6 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Why don't we do all of them?

7
8 **MR. BOSARGE:** All of --

9
10 **UNIDENTIFIED:** The Florida Banks and the South Texas Banks.

11
12 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Because it's specific to the sanctuary expansion.

13
14 **MR. BOSARGE:** We're going to get to that. Right now, I think --

15
16 **MS. BOSARGE:** It's really critical that the Flower Garden
17 discussion be submitted formally to the sanctuary, because,
18 right now, that's in a regulatory public comment phase, and so
19 we've got to get that into them if we want it to be seen by that
20 sanctuary group officially, and so that is why this particular
21 motion is important. Then, as we continue later on through the
22 other discussions, if there is a formal comment period that is
23 open that we can submit those comments to, we can definitely do
24 that there, too.

25
26 **DR. KILGOUR:** As your shrimp staff member, I will make it a
27 priority that, when the Florida Keys DEIS comes out, that the
28 Shrimp AP be made aware of it, and, at the next meeting, be able
29 to comment on it, if that's what the timeline looks like it's
30 going to be, which it sounds to me like it is, but, if the
31 timeline is shorter than the next Shrimp AP meeting, then I will
32 make sure that those comments are included in the letter.

33
34 **MS. BOSARGE:** Okay, but we're going to continue on with our
35 motion. We're going to vote on the AP motion first. **All in**
36 **favor aye; opposed like sign. The motion carries.**

37
38 **MR. JAPP:** Any discussion from the Coral SSC on this motion?
39 **All in favor. It carried.**

40
41 **MR. BOSARGE:** The motion carries. Good. Now we will give it
42 back to Corky.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Why isn't the Coral AP in that --

45
46 **MR. BOSARGE:** Hold on. We're getting there, but you can take
47 over.

1 **MS. KRUEGER:** Any discussion for the Coral AP? I will call for
2 a vote. **Coral AP, all in favor; any opposed. The motion**
3 **carries.**

4
5 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you very much, and I apologize for being
6 late, but I am going to apologize to you all again. I am so
7 frustrated. I am dealing with the IRS, not for me, but I am
8 handling an estate for a friend, and you know the government
9 gets a bad rap, but, in some cases, you understand why, when you
10 deal with these people. I have been on hold and -- We passed a
11 motion. Thank you, all. I appreciate your patience with me.
12 Where are, we Morgan? The motion carried with no opposition.
13 Then go ahead and tell me where we are, please.

14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** I think we finished. We're done, right?

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** See how when you've got a good Vice Chair how
18 things can get done?

19
20 **DR. KILGOUR:** The Flower Garden Banks is taken care of. I have
21 got official notification that I will not be able to have access
22 to the boundaries of that region that we saw for the Florida
23 Keys until the draft environmental impact statement comes out,
24 and this is not -- This happened with the Flower Garden Banks
25 too, and so it's just across-the-board this is how that goes.

26
27 I can just keep it on my radar and make sure that I update the
28 Shrimp AP and the Coral AP and the Coral SSC as soon as that
29 comes out, if that's acceptable to the group.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** So this motion that passed, the comment period
32 ends on August 19, and so this will go out prior to August 19,
33 at least this motion?

34
35 **DR. KILGOUR:** There is a draft letter being presented to the
36 council at the next meeting, and it will go out before that
37 council meeting is over.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Then we will proceed.

40
41 **DR. KILGOUR:** Okay. I guess now we're into Agenda Item X, where
42 we're actually going to talk about -- Now we're talking about
43 the Coral SSC and Coral AP recommended HAPCs that are going to
44 be included in a scoping document that will be presented to the
45 council in October.

46
47 This is where I think the bulk of the next day is going to --
48 This is it. This is where we need to talk about boundaries and

1 what areas need to be prioritized and go area-by-area. Dr.
2 Codes is here to give us some scientific --

3
4 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Did I miss Item VI?

5
6 **DR. KILGOUR:** No, you didn't. The portal will happen, but this
7 is priority right now, because Mr. Nelson and Dr. Cordes are
8 both going to need to leave this afternoon, and so, Dr. Cordes,
9 if you're ready to give us the scientific information about the
10 northeastern Gulf of Mexico or are you doing the whole entire
11 Gulf?

12
13 **DISCUSS RECOMMENDED HAPC AREAS WITH AND WITHOUT MODIFICATIONS**
14 **DEEPWATER CORAL PRESENTATION**

15
16 **DR. CORDES:** Hi, everybody. I am going to mostly focus on the
17 northern Gulf of Mexico, because that's mostly where I worked.
18 I am going to kind of just give you a quick overview and show
19 you what some of these habitats look like. I think the deep sea
20 has sort of been out of sight and out of mind in a lot of cases,
21 and so I thought -- We're going to step through these, but,
22 rather than taking the time to do that right now, I just want to
23 kind of give you an overview and a sense for how we find these
24 habitats and what they look like, and I will be happy to answer
25 any questions.

26
27 These are some of the sites that we've worked on over the last
28 fifteen years or so across the northern Gulf. Much of this is
29 funded by MMS and NOAA Office of Ocean Exploration and Research,
30 and we were basically looking to validate some of the
31 predictions that MMS was making from some of the 3D seismic
32 data, which show high reflectivity on the seafloor, and, Mr.
33 Delaney, to some of your points before, as to predicting coral
34 distribution.

35
36 We certainly can't lay eyes on all of the seafloor, and so we
37 use some of these predictive models, qualitative models, and
38 some quantitative models that I will show you to help guide us
39 when we're down there. This, of course, is of relevance to this
40 group, just to give you an idea of some of the different types
41 of species.

42
43 I don't know if you guys can read all of that, and I will show
44 you some images of these, but these are roughly broken into some
45 depths between about 230 and 300 meters, which is shallow for
46 us, and so that's about 150 fathoms. Then mid depth ranges are
47 in 300 to 400 meters, and that's where we get into some of the
48 big lophelia reefs that I will show you, and then deeper waters

1 of 450 to 500 meters, we have sort of a different group of fish
2 species.

3
4 I am a coral person. I don't know my fish particularly well,
5 and I'm sorry to disappoint all of you. Steve, I hope, will
6 step in and pinch-hit and ID some of these fish for you if you
7 have any questions as we go through.

8
9 These are the shallower sites. These are some of the, just to
10 give you an idea, some of the data that exists for the Pinnacles
11 sites. These are at Alabama Alps and Rough-Tongue Reef, which
12 we will get to a discussion of in a little bit, but these are
13 just some of the surveys that have been done over the years on
14 some of the high-resolution bathymetry, the maps, that we have
15 of some of these pinnacle sites.

16
17 This is deeper waters. This is actually one of the sites that
18 is under discussion today. You can see the squares on here are
19 the BOEM lease blocks, and so this is square right here is
20 Viosca Knoll 906, and that's Viosca Knoll 826 right above it,
21 and so that's Viosca Knoll 826 on the northern part and Viosca
22 Knoll 906 on the bottom.

23
24 This is the industry-generated seismic reflectivity of the
25 seafloor that's housed at BOEM, and we have gotten access, been
26 granted access, to all of these data, and we can see where there
27 are reflective surfaces on the seafloor. This mostly
28 corresponds to authigenic carbonates that are related to oil and
29 gas seepage, and, as Paul remarked before, these are very old.
30 A lot of these have been dated to about 15,000 years, and so
31 they've been around for a long time.

32
33 Some of them are still forming in areas of active seepage, but
34 we don't see a whole lot of active seepage in this particular
35 area, and so this will help us find the hard grounds that the
36 corals like and a lot of the fish like, and then we can come in
37 with some other tools.

38
39 This is some multibeam bathymetry that was shot with the Nancy
40 Foster. That's the first time that I met Morgan, actually, was
41 on this cruise, back almost ten years ago now. Anyway, we can
42 get a better look at the seafloor here. You can see some of the
43 mounds in the southern part, which I will show you some more
44 video from in just a minute. The mound up at the top, which is
45 up here, is Viosca Knoll 862. I will also show you some images
46 from -- It's these areas that we're particularly concerned
47 about, although there is some interesting stuff over on this
48 side too, which, again, we can get into a little bit later.

1
2 When we see something of particular interest, like that mound in
3 the bottom, we can take an ROV down, and this is multibeam
4 bathymetry that's shot from the ROV, about twenty meters above
5 the seafloor, and this has a fifty-centimeter resolution, and so
6 this is incredibly high resolution, and the texture that you're
7 looking at in there are actual individual coral heads down on
8 the deep-sea floor.

9
10 This is the Viosca Knoll 826 site, which is probably the best
11 studied of these lophelia reefs, at least in the northern Gulf
12 of Mexico. It's a very large site. This is just an example of
13 three dives, but there have been dozens, over a hundred,
14 probably, dives on this site over the last twenty years, and
15 we've seen a substantial portion of the seafloor here, but these
16 are just some of the observations of corals at some of the
17 individual points along the ROV track.

18
19 We can take a lot of that information and feed it into some of
20 the quantitative models that can help us predict coral
21 distribution. When you do that at a large scale, my personal
22 opinion is these are somewhat less informative. As you can see
23 on the left there, this model is basically predicting that the
24 entire shelf break of the Gulf of Mexico is good coral habitat,
25 which doesn't really tell us a whole hell of a lot, but the
26 individual models for specific sites, and these are models that
27 -- These sites are a lot of the sites that we have a lot of
28 information, and these are under consideration today, some of
29 the sites we'll be discussing.

30
31 This is Viosca Knoll 826, 906, Mississippi Canyon 751,
32 Mississippi Canyon 885, Garden Banks, a couple of Garden Banks
33 sites. Anyway, we do have finer-scale predictive habitat models
34 that allow us to make some better informed conclusions about
35 what the seafloor is going to look like if we haven't been over
36 every square foot of the bottom.

37
38 Let me just give you -- This is a very large black coral,
39 Antipatharia coral. This is about five or six feet across, and
40 these have been aged at about 4,000 years old. These are
41 incredibly long-lived corals. This is right at about -- This is
42 the northern part of that Viosca Knoll 862 site, and this is at
43 about 300 meters, about 900 feet, and it provides really good
44 habitat for a bunch of fish that are later in this video that
45 you're not watching right now.

46
47 This is just another example. These are some barrelfish and
48 just a broader habitat scale view of what that looks like, these

1 large, rocky outcrops with those very large -- They are white,
2 but the skeleton is black. It's black corals growing in a lot
3 of these areas. This one is actually from Green Canyon 140,
4 which is quite a ways further to the west. This is just another
5 example of that kind of habitat type that we're looking at.

6
7 This is also a tilefish. This is from about that same depth
8 range, about 250 or 300 meters, and so about 900 feet. There's
9 a little coral in the background, but this is sort of
10 interspersed. Even though some of this looks like flat bottom,
11 it would be interspersed with a lot of those rocky outcrops all
12 around in this type of area.

13
14 There's a lot of sea fans and gorgonian corals that are living
15 here and creating and adding a lot of complexity to the
16 habitats. Some of these species -- These sea fans are on the
17 order of a hundred to 200 years old, at these depths. Then,
18 when you get deeper, the same genus, but a different species,
19 has been aged to over 600 years, and so these are very long-
20 lived colonies. This is just another example of the habitat and
21 the diversity of these gorgonian corals that we run into in a
22 lot of these places.

23
24 We will try playing this video. This is one of the lophelia
25 reefs in the Viosca Knolls area. This is a survey that we did
26 just a couple of years ago with the Nautilus and the Hercules
27 ROV, and so this is a healthy coral reef. I know it looks --
28 Most of the framework is made up of dead lophelia. They grow
29 very slowly.

30
31 This mound, which is in the bottom of Viosca Knoll 906, we took
32 a piston core through it, and this is 300,000 years old, and so
33 the piston core was sixteen meters deep at the base of that, and
34 so sixteen meters down, whatever that is, fifty feet or so, is
35 300,000 years old, and so this has been growing for an extremely
36 long time. It grows very slowly, and you get these bits of live
37 corals. The sort of puff-ball things you're looking at are
38 small black corals, and then the framework that's in the
39 background there is lophelia. It's the hard coral that's
40 growing these reefs.

41
42 This is just going to -- I don't know what to say here, but it's
43 just to give you another idea of some of the habitat and the
44 type of fish habitat that we're looking at. We see these large
45 aggregations pretty frequently, and a lot of different types of
46 species.

47
48 **UNIDENTIFIED:** This is Viosca?

1
2 **DR. CORDES:** This is Viosca Knoll, yes.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** This is prior to Deepwater Horizon?

5
6 **DR. CORDES:** This is post-Deepwater Horizon. This is 2013.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** How far is Viosca from the actual --

9
10 **DR. CORDES:** That's approximately twenty nautical miles due
11 north of where the Deepwater Horizon was. This was under the
12 oil slick. We did not see any clear visual evidence that there
13 was exposure here, although traces of oil were measured in some
14 of the sediments, and we didn't see impacts here. We saw a lot
15 of impacts deeper down, at about 1,300 to about 1,900 meters,
16 with a lot of the sea fans.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Is that when they used the dispersants?

19
20 **DR. CORDES:** That is one of the possible pathways of exposure.
21 What we think that a lot of the deep corals were exposed to oil
22 marine snow, and so it probably went up to the surface and you
23 had dispersant applications. It got all stirred up and made
24 this emulsification and hit the marine snow, and these big,
25 flocculent particles rained back down.

26
27 **UNIDENTIFIED:** They also were using dispersants at the wellhead.

28
29 **DR. CORDES:** That's correct. They were also applying
30 dispersants at depth. There are varied opinions on how
31 effective that was, but there was a sub-surface plume of
32 microdroplets of oil as well that was centered around about
33 1,100 meters of depth. That went primarily to the southwest,
34 and may have also -- It likely interacted with some of the sites
35 where we saw impacts, but it's not clear that that was the
36 ultimate cause or the direct cause, of the impacts that we
37 found. Just to give you an idea of some of the terrain -- This
38 one may not play either, but this was --

39
40 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Erik, this is a species that's fished
41 commercially in other parts of the world, but we don't fish it
42 in the U.S. We see these around these reefs a lot, but that's a
43 big difference between the U.S. fisheries and some of the other
44 parts of the world. We do have potentially commercially-
45 exploitable species on these reefs.

46
47 **DR. CORDES:** This is a school that followed us around for -- We
48 couldn't get them out of our way. It was actually pretty hard

1 to work. We ended up chumming some of them in the thrusters of
2 the ROV, and they sacrificed themselves for science, but they
3 followed us around for about sixteen hours on the seafloor in
4 our ROV. That's also from the Viosca Knoll site.

5
6 **UNIDENTIFIED:** In your experience, in that last video you showed
7 with the lophelia, how would you categorize or classify that?
8 Do you see other reefs that are just completely white and have a
9 lot more living lophelia or do most of them commonly look like
10 that?

11
12 **DR. CORDES:** That appearance -- I don't know if you guys heard
13 that, but he was asking if there were other reefs that had more
14 of the living coral on it, and, in this image, you can see that
15 some areas have a much higher cover, but that appearance is
16 pretty typical for the lophelia reefs in the northern Gulf of
17 Mexico. I would say there's probably higher live coral cover on
18 the West Florida Slope. Would you agree with that, Steve, in
19 some of those mounds?

20
21 **DR. ROSS:** Yes, I think there's a lot more live coral on the
22 West Florida Slope.

23
24 **DR. CORDES:** Again, as you wrap around into the Atlantic, there
25 is higher coral cover on the coral mounds that's out there, but
26 that appearance is pretty typical, like this. This is in the
27 western Gulf. You generally have a lower percent cover of live
28 coral as you go out west. This is, I believe, Green Canyon 354,
29 or it may be one of our Garden Banks sites, but this is the
30 typical appearance.

31
32 This is another chain catshark, and we see these -- This is a
33 little bit deeper down, but those are the eggs of the chain
34 catshark that are being laid on some of these sea fans. This is
35 at about 650 meters, and this is a site, Mississippi Canyon 885,
36 that's also on your list, and every time that I've been to this
37 site over the past fifteen years, we have seen this high density
38 of egg cases here, and so this is a recurring spawning ground
39 and nursery for this species. You occasionally see these egg
40 cases at other sites, but never in this density. There is
41 something special about this one site that they return to year
42 after year.

43
44 This is even deeper. This is a little over 1,000 meters, and,
45 if you look closely, this is another hard coral. This is a
46 madrepora, and you can see the high densities of red crabs that
47 are all over them. This is another potential fishery that is
48 not open now, that is currently not being fished, to my

1 knowledge, in the Gulf of Mexico, although we have some evidence
2 that there has been some trapping for golden crab over on the
3 West Florida Slope. We have direct observations of it impacting
4 some of the lophelia sites over there, but you can see just the
5 really high densities, and some of these crabs are carrying eggs
6 underneath there. This is the Mississippi Canyon 118 site that
7 is also on your list.

8
9 Just a couple more observations. This is one of the sites that
10 we were looking at for potential impacts for the Deepwater
11 Horizon, and it was sort of on our -- We saw some evidence for
12 some impact of the corals, but we couldn't actually tell exactly
13 what it was, because we found pretty high abundance of fishing
14 line wrapped around a lot of the coral colonies, and so we
15 weren't sure exactly what the cause of the impacts at this site
16 were. This is at about 1,300 meters depth.

17
18 There's some more trash covering one of the colonies down at
19 those depths. Could you play this one, please? This is at the
20 Viosca Knoll sites. This is at about 500 meters depth. On the
21 periphery of the site, which looks, from the bathymetry to be
22 flat, mud bottom, but it actually has a lot of these individual
23 boulders and gorgonians.

24
25 Hiding in there is a lost fishing net. You can see that sort of
26 stripe on the seafloor. I think we zoom in in just a second and
27 you can see it hung up in there. This is, again, in the Viosca
28 Knolls 826 site. Even though these aren't -- Well, I will let
29 you make your own conclusions. I will leave that alone.

30
31 That's it. That was just to give you a quick tour of some of
32 these places. If you have any other questions, I would be happy
33 to answer them, or otherwise we can talk about some of the
34 individual sites as we go through.

35
36 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

37
38 **DR. CORDES:** Which site? That was this one, this Viosca Knoll
39 826. It's about -- That location was at about 525 meters.

40
41 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Can you say it in fathoms?

42
43 **DR. CORDES:** That's about 250 or 270, something like that.

44
45 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Do you have it in feet?

46
47 **DR. CORDES:** Come on. It's about 1,700 feet. If you go back,
48 or I can do it, I think, I can show you pretty much exactly

1 where that was on the map. It was down here. It wasn't this
2 dive, and so I don't know if it was right along that track, but
3 it was definitely that type of area down here. This is the
4 really high concentration. This is all coral cover, and up
5 around here and up there and sparser at the top of the mound.
6 Then this whole ridge over here has a lot of live lophelia, and
7 then there is two more big patches that are just up north of
8 this, and this is about -- Well, this is 320 meters. That's not
9 very helpful, is it? This is about 1,000 feet, to give you an
10 idea of how big that area is.

11
12 **MR. JAY LUCAS:** Back in the 1990s, I used to fish that area all
13 the time, and one of the things I didn't see on it is I didn't
14 see one grouper or one tilefish on it, there were you were
15 showing the post-BP thing there, and it used to be just covered
16 with them.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Other questions or comments? Thank you very
19 much. Go ahead.

20
21 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I would just like to say where the webbing was,
22 we don't drag out that deep. Somebody years ago -- They done it
23 thirty years before me. There was boats that tried, and they
24 might have done that, but the boats -- Because, like I said,
25 there ain't but about six or seven that drags that, but we don't
26 drag right in there.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Is there any other deepwater crab fishing
29 still going on? There was very little effort years ago, but I
30 know a couple of times they tried it, but basically it's --

31
32 **UNIDENTIFIED:** They don't care for the crabs, because they
33 consider them dirty crabs. They don't turn red like the king
34 crab and opilio and stuff like that, those up north there. They
35 just stay the same color, and they kind of look -- The market is
36 not so good for them.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Thank you. We've got one more from
39 Lance.

40
41 **MR. NACIO:** I had a question for him. When he said something
42 about the sea snow, I worked on the Deepwater Horizon spill. We
43 were part of the burn unit, and they sent us back out when they
44 did the final kill, and there was something different going on.
45 The water had -- The whole water column, as far as you could
46 see, had little bitty droplets of oil in it, and it was like
47 dispersed oil, and we hadn't seen that the whole time of the
48 spill. It was just like at the final kill, when they were

1 getting rid of the oil, and I don't know what they did to make
2 it do that, but I mean it looked like Johnson grass seeds or
3 something. It was little bitty droplets of oil throughout the
4 water column.

5
6 **DR. CORDES:** Yes, and a lot of that was probably -- That can be
7 caused by some of the flyovers and the dispersant that they were
8 applying on the surface. That will cause that. It will get re-
9 suspended.

10
11 **MR. NACIO:** When we first went out there, we were able to burn
12 oil like crazy. I mean it burned all the -- I mean we burned it
13 all, but, the further we went into this operation, it was harder
14 and harder to burn the oil, and the oil became like a tea on the
15 water. It was like diesel. I mean it was just really, really
16 thin, and I think it was just the progressive use of dispersants
17 is what did it.

18
19 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Can you mention your name when you
20 talk, because we're going to have verbatim minutes of this
21 meeting, and it would help the transcriptionist to know who is
22 talking.

23
24 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I would just like to say, when you was talking
25 about that oil and BP, we caught -- We set out right at the
26 Viosca Knoll 862. We set out right on top of it and dragged
27 west, and we had nets fill up, and so I know some of it, or a
28 lot of it, had to get in it, too.

29
30 **DR. CORDES:** It was definitely on the surface. You could see it
31 on the bottom too? We didn't -- Because you can see the low
32 percentage of live coral, but it was really hard to tell if
33 there had been any damage in a lot of those sites. There was
34 damage deeper and to the south, and there was damage in some of
35 the mesophotic reefs shallower and to the north, and this is
36 right in between.

37
38 There was oil on the surface all the time, and you're saying you
39 saw oil at depth. I mean I think there was exposure. It was
40 just very difficult, using just visual tools, for us to see if
41 there was any kind of impact to lophelia.

42
43 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Yes, we saw it. As a matter of a fact, a trip
44 for this one, I caught a big old chunk of it, and that's what it
45 was, just big old chunks.

46
47 **DR. CORDES:** Yes, it's still down there.

1 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Yes, it's still there.

2
3 **DR. ROSS:** Yes, and I was just going to add to Erik's
4 observations. We had surveys out there on the West Florida
5 Slope and Viosca Knoll, just a couple of months after the well
6 spill shut down, and we had no visual observations of damage in
7 those depths, and there still aren't any, as far as I know.
8 Now, of course, some of the concern is more subtle, long-term
9 impacts like to the water column and the trophic food web chain,
10 but we didn't see any overt sort of damage there.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Paul.

13
14 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Just on that same note, one of the things that
15 happens with the oil, and it's not just the BP oil spill, but
16 it's pretty much any in the marine environment, but the oil
17 comes up and you lose the very, very light petroleum
18 hydrocarbons to the atmosphere. They vaporize. That's the
19 really valuable stuff, the stuff that makes gasoline and stuff,
20 but the medium PAHs and the heavier stuff goes down into the
21 water column, and, after a while, the heavy stuff, the big
22 molecules, sink to the bottom.

23
24 That's the stuff that gets into the sediment. That's probably
25 what we're seeing here and dragging up. That lasts a long time,
26 and it will actually retain its toxicity for a long time,
27 because it gets weathered on the outside, like a tar ball, but
28 not so much on the inside.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Any other hands? Okay. Morgan, do you have
31 your portal up?

32
33 **DR. KILGOUR:** Not yet. We're going to work on these areas
34 first, if that's okay.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Do you have a certain procedure you
37 suggest we use?

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** I would recommend that we start off with Viosca
40 Knoll 862, because that's what Mr. Nelson is here to discuss.
41 That's the prime royal red shrimping grounds, and it's also
42 something that Dr. Cordes has just presented a lot of
43 information on. We can start talking about that.

44
45 This afternoon's discussion is based on the recommendations of
46 the HAPCs from the Coral SSC and AP back in May of 2015. There
47 were several that need more data. Designations on those were
48 basically, based on the discussion, something that was to let me

1 know that I needed to look at the shrimping data and the coral
2 data and potentially revise the boundary, as appropriate, and so
3 I have done that in the meantime, but 862 was not one of those.
4 However, I think it is going to be one that we really need to
5 discuss here, because we have the people that need to talk about
6 it in the same room, and they will not be here tomorrow.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Well, we certainly appreciate Mr. Nelson and
9 the others being here, and so get it up and we will have some
10 discussion.

11
12 **DR. KILGOUR:** Right here, this is the Viosca Knoll 862/906. It
13 overlaps two different lease blocks. The orange is the proposed
14 boundary, based on the lease blocks and the Coral SSC/AP. As
15 you can see, we have a lot of shrimping that goes right up to it
16 and right on the other side of it, and so if we could start off
17 the discussion with this one and then we can move on to other
18 things.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Viosca Knoll 862/906, shrimping
21 affected. Who put this together, Morgan? Did the council staff
22 do this?

23
24 **DR. KILGOUR:** I did that. Staff did that just as a comparison
25 between the Flower Garden Banks and the proposed HAPCs. It's
26 not all-inclusive of all the proposed HAPCs, but that was just
27 to compare the Flower Garden Banks expansion.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay, and is this the one with Alternative 3
30 as the preferred alternative?

31
32 **UNIDENTIFIED:** No, this is one of the HAPCs.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay, because I am looking at the Xs of that
35 Alternative 3, but, on Alternative 4, the amount of shrimping
36 area impacted or affected is 15.9 square miles, and so that's
37 what we're dealing with. Anyway, and so --

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** That information is correct. This Viosca Knoll
40 862/906 was in -- Is that Alternative 4 or Alternative 5 or
41 both?

42
43 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** That's Alternative 4.

44
45 **DR. KILGOUR:** And 5. The information on the recommended area,
46 that 15.9 square miles, that is what was recommended by the
47 Coral AP/SSC, but I was just comparing that to what was
48 presented in the Flower Garden Banks, and so, if you look at

1 just the first two columns, that will help.
2
3 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Just the first two columns, okay.
4
5 **DR. KILGOUR:** The first five columns.
6
7 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** The first five, all right. I think we all
8 have the handout, and so this was a recommendation that came
9 through the Coral AP and SSC and now the Shrimp AP is having an
10 opportunity to comment. Morgan has got it up on the board.
11 We've got shrimping effort up there.
12
13 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Morgan, is the Flower Garden Banks alternative
14 boundary the same as the HAPC boundary for this one?
15
16 **DR. KILGOUR:** The purple is what was in the Flower Garden Banks.
17 It's a smaller boundary.
18
19 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay, Shrimp AP or anybody, any questions or
20 comments? Mr. Bosarge.
21
22 **MR. BOSARGE:** I think Mr. Nelson can probably address this
23 better, but his concern with the royal red is, if you look at
24 the points, those are points from the position of the vessel,
25 and, over the years, they have figured out and learned how to
26 avoid this spot, and we discussed this, if you recall.
27
28 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)
29
30 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, and when it becomes an HAPC, is there
31 regulations put on it at that point, Morgan?
32
33 **DR. KILGOUR:** Not necessarily. The regulations are only put on
34 it if the council chooses to do so. Right now, we have a
35 handful of HAPCs, and I can't remember the number off the top of
36 my head, that have no regulations. They just have that HAPC
37 designation, but there is no regulations associated with them.
38
39 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay. Mr. Nelson gave a presentation at the
40 meeting that I was invited to with the Coral AP, and he showed
41 his tracks and explained how they have a line on each side of
42 it, what they call their pick-up line and their set-out line.
43 When they drag up to it, to a certain point, that's when they
44 stop and start lining back.
45
46 Of course, retrieving that gear is about a thirty-minute
47 process, and so they know when to get their gear up, and then
48 they know when -- It's what we call dump his bags. In other

1 words, get his catch out and swing around and set back out, and
2 he knows, when he gets to a certain point, he can start setting
3 his gear again, and they basically jump that bottom.

4
5 I thought we had a pretty good understanding with the Coral AP
6 that, by all the trips that they've made down there and looked
7 at this coral, there has been no damage that they could see, or
8 very little damage done, by what would be considered a shrimper,
9 and that all of these boats -- I say all these boats, but
10 there's only about six or seven or eight or ten of them left
11 now, but know where this spot is at and they know how to --

12
13 Anyhow, we came to the conclusion that, at least I thought at
14 that last meeting, that this area was pretty much taken care of,
15 but I guess Mr. Nelson's concern probably would be that, if we
16 do this HAPC designation, will there be restrictions put on it?

17
18 What happens is, now that they've also put an offshore pipeline
19 from those ultra-deep rigs right up across through the bottom of
20 it, and so now, when he sets overboard what used to be a -- I am
21 telling a story, but what used to be a four-hour tow or so --
22 You tell them what you're up against.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Go ahead, Mr. Nelson. We appreciate you being
25 here, sir.

26
27 **MR. NELSON:** We pull 3,600 foot of cable. We can't turn around
28 or nothing. We have to drag straight, and even the people that
29 comes out there that does come, they've all got my stuff. Like
30 I say, I've done it for thirty years, doing the same thing.

31
32 Like I say, we start picking up and we've got them coming up,
33 and they come off the bottom and you can see -- Well, I don't
34 know. I have a picture here, which I don't know if you all can
35 see, but we have them up, and we right there -- It's almost to
36 where get over the top of that, or close to it, but when we turn
37 around, we start setting, and by the time we get through
38 setting, we're a ways away from the coral, because your nets
39 just don't hit the bottom. You might be dragging, by the time
40 your thirty minutes is up, you still might be ten or fifteen
41 minutes before your rigs ever settle down on the bottom.

42
43 **MR. BOSARGE:** If I'm not mistaken, a normal towing time in that
44 deep water is about six hours would be your --

45
46 **MR. NELSON:** We used to drag ten hours, until the pipeline.

47
48 **MR. BOSARGE:** If they close this box and tell him, okay, you

1 can't get within these boundaries, by the time he starts at that
2 boundary and starts setting his gear, now that two-hour-and-
3 forty-five-minute tow is --
4
5 **MR. NELSON:** It would be about an hour-and-forty-five minutes.
6
7 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, it would be about an hour-and-forty-five
8 minutes, and he gets to where it's not practical to be able to
9 only make an hour-and-forty-five-minute tow and it takes thirty
10 minutes to retrieve your gear.
11
12 **MR. NELSON:** That's one of my best bottoms in royal reds there.
13 On both sides of that coral is the best, where I do most of my
14 royal red shrimping.
15
16 **MR. BOSARGE:** I think my suggestion would be a motion from the
17 Coral AP to --
18
19 **MR. JAAP:** My recollection is that, when we discussed this
20 before, as you said, that this was talked about and we made a
21 decision, because there was no practical way to put a line into
22 that area and still allow the shrimping activity to occur, and
23 so it was language that was made that said that it was
24 satisfactory for shrimpers, as long as they recalled their gear
25 before they got into the high topographic relief. I don't know
26 if you have that language back there, Morgan, but --
27
28 **DR. KILGOUR:** I am going straight to the motion, so that we're
29 all clear on what the motion was.
30
31 **DR. CORDES:** While she looks at that, that was going to be my
32 question. Was there no -- There is no boundary that you could
33 draw in that area that you could avoid and still be able to
34 trawl through there?
35
36 **MR. NELSON:** No. You see this right here? You see this blue
37 line right here? This red line is our pick-up line. That's the
38 box right there. We're picking up -- We come and we start
39 picking up, and they come off the bottom right in here. There
40 is no coral there. We never hang up. We wind the bags in and
41 turn around and start setting out at that same line. If you all
42 put that box there, I would have to start picking up way down
43 here.
44
45 **DR. CORDES:** I guess what I was asking, if we could look at the
46 map, the areas that we know, that we've worked at, are pretty
47 well defined. I mean I could draw a much smaller box around
48 that that maybe would be mutually agreeable, and I'm wondering

1 if that -- This is not my area, and so I'm definitely open to
2 hearing what everybody else has to say, but it seems like we're
3 setting a precedent here that we might not want to set, and I'm
4 just wondering if we could draw a mutually-agreeable box rather
5 than putting these kinds of exemptions in.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** What did the council do with that SSC/AP coral
8 recommendation on that motion? Have they addressed that yet?

9
10 **DR. KILGOUR:** They addressed it by saying that I need to convene
11 the Shrimp AP and the Coral AP and Coral SSC.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay, and so they bounced the ball back. With
14 everything the Coral SSC and AP has heard thus far, is that
15 still the position of the two committees?

16
17 **MR. JAAP:** I would like to ask the rest of the committee or the
18 SSC if you have any other ideas right now or if you're still
19 satisfied with that particular result. Paul.

20
21 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I would like to support Dr. Cordes's suggestion
22 that we consider redrawing those lines so that it accommodates
23 both protection of the bank and doesn't interfere tremendously
24 with the commercial activities in the area.

25
26 **DR. LANG:** I would like to second that motion, because I trust
27 Mr. Nelson. That's not my concern. My concern is what might
28 happen in five or ten years from now, when you have retired and
29 some boy comes down from Minnesota or Alberta or somewhere and
30 doesn't have your experience.

31
32 **MR. NELSON:** Everybody has got this -- This ain't like regular
33 shrimping. I help people out if they come out there. This
34 stuff goes down to whoever comes out there. They've got this,
35 but, if you box this, that's the problem right now. You've got
36 a box, and that box ain't no good. If you went at an angle like
37 we did, that's -- I don't know if you can see, but this is a
38 box. This paper is a box. That coral would be more in there at
39 an angle.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Can we get it back up on the board here? Mr.
42 Nelson, do you want to come up here and point things out for us,
43 please? Some of us are a little slow, like me.

44
45 **DR. CORDES:** If you can put that back up, let me show the two
46 areas that I am really concerned about. They're pretty small
47 and pretty well defined, and I think we might be able to draw
48 you an agreeable box. This is almost entirely live coral. This

1 is not and this is not. They look very similar, but this is the
2 piece that I am really nervous about and this on the top.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** And you can see they're not in there.

5
6 **DR. CORDES:** Right, and so what I'm suggesting is -- I have been
7 all over here. This is sparse, and they're boulders. They are
8 little sea fans, and they're sort of scattered around. It's not
9 as valuable, and I'm talking to me, as some of these other
10 areas, but I can draw a box right here and a box right here and
11 I would be pretty satisfied.

12
13 **MR. NELSON:** Just looking at it, I can't really tell where them
14 boxes are unless I had it on that plot. Just looking up at
15 that, I could say, yes, but it might be where it's not good. Do
16 you understand what I'm trying to say? I can't tell exactly
17 where that's at.

18
19 **DR. CORDES:** I do. I think the plot that you were showing was
20 mostly looking at the northeast corner of the box that is drawn,
21 the purple box, I believe, that's drawn on here. Basing it on
22 the points here, I think the two smaller boxes that I was
23 suggesting don't have any of these points inside of them.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Go ahead.

26
27 **DR. ROSS:** I would like to add to that. I agree, Erik, that I
28 think we can draw smaller boxes, but I have some concern. There
29 are some topographic highs, like you said, that may not, right
30 now, have live coral on them, but they are certainly candidates
31 for potential settlement areas, and so we're looking at a really
32 long-term view of these things.

33
34 A lot of those places would fall into the same ecosystem, and,
35 even though there's not live coral there, there are reef
36 communities using those topographic highs, but I think, even so,
37 we could still draw much smaller boxes that would satisfy
38 habitat community protection and we wouldn't totally eliminate
39 the problem of setting trawls, because I do the same thing with
40 research trawls. Where we set them in the water column is not
41 where they hit the bottom, but there is no way around that, but
42 I think we can reduce this problem significantly.

43
44 I would draw a rectangular strip that goes from that top box,
45 which is a snowy grouper habitat, to that bottom area, which you
46 call Robert's Reef, I think, and that would include most of the
47 area and significantly reduce the overlap.

1 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Mr. Bosarge.

2
3 **MR. BOSARGE:** Morgan, could you look and see if you have -- I am
4 pretty sure that I saw some of those LGL tracks also that you
5 could overlay on that, and we could look at where the effort is,
6 because that's a very steep edge, and it's not a wide piece of
7 bottom they are working.

8
9 **DR. KILGOUR:** The difference is that I have a scan of one
10 picture and the map document is different, and I would have to
11 georeference, and I don't have that ability right this second.
12 Here are all the tracks, and I feel like I should make these
13 bigger.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I have hands up, but obviously everybody is
16 trying to work something out and accommodate habitat, but Mr.
17 Delaney has got a question for Morgan when she is -- Are we
18 getting anywhere, Morgan?

19
20 **DR. KILGOUR:** We're getting there. It's just a long process.
21 If you look, here is the proposed box. The purple one is the
22 Flower Garden Banks, and so I'm going to turn that off. The
23 proposed box is this blue box. I have tried to make the
24 shrimp points a little bit bigger, so you can see them
25 easier. Here is the corner of that box.

26
27 **DR. CORDES:** I mean it looks to me like that's not -- The areas
28 that I was suggesting, and I like Steve Ross's suggestion of
29 just a north/south sort of rectangle over there. It looks like
30 those are not conflicting with the lines that Mr. Nelson was
31 showing, but, without them drawn on there, it's hard to know.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Where is this on that?

34
35 **DR. KILGOUR:** From what I understand, and Mr. Nelson can tell
36 me, but --

37
38 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Carrie wants to offer something.

39
40 **DR. CARRIE SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just
41 wondering if it was possible to make two separate boxes, the
42 northern area and the southern area, so, when they pull across,
43 they are potentially not in a box when their nets are up,
44 because that was the -- The way the corals are set up in that
45 rectangle -- No matter how small you get, it seems like their
46 nets are going to be over it at some point, unless you make two
47 separate boxes, potentially.

1 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** We've got a couple of conversations going.
2 Mr. Nelson is going to supply his information to Morgan, and
3 Morgan is going to work with Erik and others to see what we can
4 come up with, whether it's one rectangular box or two
5 rectangular boxes or whatever, to try and accommodate all
6 concerns. Yes, ma'am, Ms. Nelson.

7
8 **MS. NELSON:** Corky, I think that was why they made the whole
9 motion the last time, is the fact that Johnny is trying to get
10 over to them that wherever they put that box, his boat has to be
11 inside of that box in order to get our gear up, and I think, no
12 matter where you -- If you make it into a triangle or whatever,
13 and I think that was the only reason why made the
14 recommendation, that just for the royal reds, because he's the
15 only one out there. If they still put the lines in there, it
16 still -- It's going to cost us.

17
18 **MR. NELSON:** What if I go over into that? Is this box going to
19 be one of them like down at Key West, that long one down there,
20 that you're not allowed to -- If you've got shrimp trawls on,
21 you're not allowed to run across it, and is this box going to be
22 that way? If we put them lines like we talked about with
23 Morgan, we would be fine.

24
25 **MR. WERNDLI:** I believe the box that you're talking about to the
26 south is the Tortugas Ecological Reserve to the south, and, yes,
27 that has prohibited entry for just about everyone, unless you
28 have a specialized permit.

29
30 These habitat areas of particular concern, there is a lot more
31 flexibility, in terms of the rules and regulations that are in
32 it, and, like Morgan said, in some of those, there is no
33 restrictions at all with them and they are just an area of
34 special designation, in which anybody can transit and other
35 activities can go on, but this is not like an ecological reserve
36 in the Tortugas, and so you would still have plenty of access.

37
38 **MR. NELSON:** I believe that would be the best thing, if we could
39 just give her the readings and taper it across it.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Thank you. Yes, Paul.

42
43 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Steve Ross had mentioned about being concerned
44 about some relief between the two areas of concern, that he is
45 aware of some other things. I just wanted to show you, if
46 Morgan has got it ready, a graph, which is to show you why --
47 Even though I think those areas have not been surveyed, and is
48 that correct?

1
2 **DR. ROSS:** No, they've been surveyed. Pretty much that whole
3 area has.

4
5 **DR. SAMMARCO:** This shows the relationship between relief on the
6 bottom, the lumps and bumps, and the size of the lumps and bumps
7 versus the number of species. Each of those dots represents a
8 bank, and so this is a -- That's a bank level of resolution, and
9 it's not centimeters or anything like that. It's just whole
10 banks. If you're aware of a lot of relief, there is a high
11 probability that there is high biodiversity of benthic species
12 there, and I presume that's what you are concerned about.

13
14 **DR. ROSS:** Yes, and we're concerned about two things. We're
15 concerned about that, the biodiversity, but also those spots
16 represent potential additional expansion areas for the coral,
17 which don't expand very rapidly. There is a limit to settlement
18 substrate, and so that's additional settlement substrate that we
19 would want to protect, and so there is the two issues involved.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Delaney.

22
23 **MR. DELANEY:** This is just a general comment on this whole HAPC
24 process, to Morgan and others on the council and council staff.
25 As I recall and understand it, HAPCs are a subset of essential
26 fish habitat designations, and essential fish habitat is
27 something that the councils are supposed to identify and
28 designate for the purposes of enhancing fisheries conservation,
29 really, and HAPCs are in the regulations that implement
30 essential fish habitat as areas of special concern and
31 ecological significance. You may have to designate EFH first,
32 and maybe you've already done that. I don't know.

33
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** Coral is tricky, in that, wherever coral exists,
35 it's considered coral EFH. That's how it's written now, and so
36 the fact that corals are here, this is automatically EFH.

37
38 **UNIDENTIFIED:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

39
40 **MR. DELANEY:** Right, but HAPCs are codified in the regulation
41 under EFH.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I don't see any other hands up at this time.
44 Are there comments? Morgan, go ahead.

45
46 **DR. KILGOUR:** I am still -- I'm confused. I was trying to do
47 twenty-five things at once, and so I'm a little behind, I think.
48 Am I supposed to be doing this behind the scenes or are you, as

1 a group, going to tell me where to draw these boundaries or is
2 the recommendation to have this be, from the previous meeting,
3 to be exempt from the proposed boundaries? I was trying to do
4 too many things at once, and I am sorry.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I have heard nothing to change the previous
7 motion, but I also heard that Mr. Nelson is going to provide you
8 with his information, and I think you're going to work with Erik
9 and others to see what you can come up with one or two or
10 whatever it takes to draw -- If it can be done. It's extremely
11 difficult to, of course, accommodate all interests, but we're
12 going to do the best we can. Go ahead, Steve.

13
14 **DR. ROSS:** Corky, we were just talking that it may be
15 appropriate to change that motion. One suggestion I could make
16 is that Erik and I could take a stab at drawing a box and then
17 pass that to Mr. Nelson, or work through the council with Mr.
18 Nelson, to then adjust the box to some final proposal for
19 consideration.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Absolutely, but please work with Morgan also.

22
23 **DR. ROSS:** That's what I meant. We could start that process
24 very quickly and then pass it on to Morgan and Mr. Nelson.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I know Mr. Nelson is going to be anxious to
27 get his information to the appropriate people. I guess Morgan
28 would be the contact person.

29
30 **DR. ROSS:** Procedurally, I guess there needs to be a motion to
31 dismiss whatever motion is now on the table and replace it with
32 a new motion, correct?

33
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** We didn't actually get the first motion on the
35 board. Everyone talked so quickly that we never made it
36 officially. It was seconded, but it never made it to the board,
37 and it was never voted on.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Is that when Steve and I changed chairs?

40
41 **DR. KILGOUR:** Sure.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** It must be my fault then. I thought it
44 passed.

45
46 **UNIDENTIFIED:** It passed, but not that one.

47
48 **DR. KILGOUR:** There was one quickly said and somebody said they

1 wanted to second that motion, and we never made it onto the
2 board, and so if we could get a true motion this time.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** What was the motion?

5
6 **UNIDENTIFIED:** It was Paul's motion.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Paul had a motion? Do you recall your motion?

9
10 **DR. SAMMARCO:** It was that we change the boxes or whatever to
11 accommodate both protection of the bank and also to accommodate
12 the commercial fishing needs. That's all it was. There were no
13 names or anything.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Consider redrawing the boundaries to
16 accommodate commercial fishing and the --

17
18 **DR. SAMMARCO:** And protection of the bank.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We've got a motion. Do we have a
21 second?

22
23 **DR. LANG:** I originally seconded that motion.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. I don't know where I was when all of
26 that was going on. Now, Morgan, do I handle the coral motions
27 or I am handling all motions or does the coral -- We've got a
28 motion on the floor. Is there any discussion?

29
30 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I am just a little bit concerned. I think this
31 area that we're talking about is one of the most significant
32 deep coral sites in the Gulf of Mexico, and so it is one of the
33 most sensitive areas. The purpose of the HAPC is to protect
34 these kinds of areas, this area probably more than almost any
35 other area, and so a blanket statement that would exempt a
36 fishery, I do have a concern with.

37
38 I think that, as Judy mentioned, the existing fishery has dealt
39 with this for many years and seems to be successful in avoiding
40 it, but is there a -- I guess is there other ways we could
41 address this? Could we grandfather existing fisheries, but look
42 to the future to restrict this area, because it only takes one
43 mistake to wipe out an area that has taken thousands of years to
44 grow, and so that's my concern. I think we should think about
45 that before we just exempt a fishery in general.

46
47 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** It only takes one motion to ruin a person's
48 business and his income.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Is there discussion on the motion? Mr.
3 Delaney.

4
5 **MR. DELANEY:** Is there a basis, and I apologize if I missed some
6 of the discussion, for specifying the royal red shrimp fishery
7 or is that addressed by --

8
9 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I guess I was kind of going back to the original
10 motion that our committee made that specifically would exempt
11 the royal red fishery. This motion obviously does not do that.
12 All this motion does is consider redrawing the lines, but to
13 accommodate the fishing, and we've basically been told that
14 there's no way to accommodate it, because the boat has to be in
15 whatever box you draw. I think this is a great motion, but I'm
16 not sure how it's going to be resolved.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Is there other discussion? Steve.

19
20 **DR. ROSS:** I guess a point to that or two points. If
21 potentially we can adjust these boxes that are of concern to the
22 royal red fishery, that exemption language doesn't have to be
23 there, which would be good.

24
25 I am not too concerned, if we draw these boundaries correctly,
26 that we will not be protecting habitat. I think we can.
27 They're not as expansive as -- Sanctuary boundary issues are a
28 whole other thing. You may come up, if you get the expansion at
29 Viosca Knoll, with a different system entirely. The second
30 point I wanted to ask about is semantics. Are we going to
31 consider redrawing the boundary or are we going to redraw it?

32
33 If we're going to redraw it, then just change the language then
34 to say we're going to redraw that boundary to consider other
35 interests and hopefully come up with a compromise that works,
36 because if we're considering it, as it reads now, I'm not sure
37 what that means and who is going to consider it when.

38
39 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I will accept the amended motion like that.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Paul has agreed for editorial license on his
42 motion to take "consider" out. Does that do it? I see heads
43 shaking.

44
45 **UNIDENTIFIED:** One question I would have is do we want to
46 specifically say the royal red shrimp fishery or do we want to
47 have it more open with the commercial fishery?

1 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** What's your pleasure? Paul.
2
3 **DR. SAMMARCO:** My feeling is to keep it general. I don't think
4 getting specific to any one fishery is a help.
5
6 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Is there other discussion? Are we
7 ready to vote? The motion is the Coral SSC --
8
9 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just to keep us on the up and up, is this just the
10 Coral SSC making this motion or is this all three groups making
11 the motion?
12
13 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Paul is a member of the SSC. Who is chair of
14 the AP? Does your group want to -- Are we going to do three
15 separate motions or does the chair of the AP poll your group and
16 do you all want to be part of the motion?
17
18 **MS. KRUEGER:** Does the Coral AP want to be part of this motion?
19
20 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Yes, let's be part of the motion.
21
22 **MS. KRUEGER:** Yes.
23
24 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you very much. What does the Shrimp AP
25 want to do?
26
27 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, let's be part of the motion.
28
29 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay, and so the motion is the Coral SSC,
30 Coral AP, and the Shrimp AP motion is to redraw the boundaries
31 to accommodate the commercial fishery in the bank on the Viosca
32 Knoll 862/906. **All in favor, signify by saying aye; opposition.**
33 **The motion passes.** Thank you very much. Morgan, it's yours.
34
35 **DR. KILGOUR:** All right. I think that was the only bank that
36 was a royal red shrimp issue. Is that correct, Mr. Nelson?
37 Okay. So now I guess we should start where the longliners might
38 have some issues, and that's on the West Florida Shelf. Is that
39 correct? Okay. Is that all right with you, Mr. Perret?
40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I am with you. You give us which one on the
42 list and on the map, please.
43
44 **DR. KILGOUR:** I might need a little guidance, but I believe it's
45 Pulley Ridge that we should start with and work our way north,
46 if that's correct.
47
48 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Work our way west?

1
2 **UNIDENTIFIED:** North and west.

3
4 **DR. KILGOUR:** The other direction. We're going east. Work our
5 west, that's correct. I need more coffee.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Go ahead, Morgan.

8
9 **DR. KILGOUR:** I am ready to do whatever you guys tell me to do,
10 but I have some reiterations that we needed to prioritize the
11 areas for HAPC status, make sure that we're working together
12 well, and look at some areas, and so I am starting in Pulley
13 Ridge, unless somebody has a priority area somewhere else, and,
14 also, to keep in mind that just because we're considering these
15 for HAPC status, it does not mean that all fishing is going to
16 go away. There is different management options for each one of
17 these, and so if there's a particular recommendation for a
18 particular area, this would be an opportune time to make those
19 recommendations.

20
21 **MR. JAAP:** As a strawman, I put out a document the other day at
22 a number of sites, and I will say, just to kind of prime people,
23 for the Florida region, we have suggested South Reed, Pulley,
24 and Many. These are straw. They are not written in blood or in
25 granite, but they were just something to get something started,
26 and we used some sophisticated multivariate statistical analysis
27 of species presence and absence to come up with these things,
28 and I can go over that if you want, but it may not be very
29 valuable right now, and so just to make you aware.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Let's hold up on that. Since these gentlemen
32 with the demersal longline fishery came in, let's go through
33 this area. I assume that's one of your chief areas that you're
34 interested in, and, while you're here, I think it would proper
35 for us to take this one up now. Morgan, do you have anything to
36 say before we get some comments? Okay. Go ahead, sir, and
37 identify yourself. Thank you.

38
39 **MR. LUCAS:** We have an issue with basically each and every one
40 of these. We are kicked basically offshore, from 120 feet out
41 to 230 feet there, every year in June, July, and August. What
42 it does is the areas that you have listed right here are areas
43 that we have to use to go offshore to catch the yellowedge
44 grouper, tilefish, et cetera.

45
46 It's basically the -- We call it the Big Break. It runs all the
47 way up the coast there, and, if you take that away from us or
48 kick us out of these areas in any way, what it's going to do is

1 it's going to send all the boats inshore, into the forty
2 fathoms, and it's going to put undue stress on the forty break,
3 and not to mention -- I mean you've got these areas classified
4 as coral, but, from sixty to seventy fathoms is the biggest
5 coral head, and it basically runs all the way up the coast of
6 Florida. You've got thirty-foot coral heads. I don't see them
7 listed on here anywhere as a protected area. You can't fish
8 them.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Anybody else want to say
11 anything?

12
13 **MR. SCOTT DAGGETT:** My name is Scott Daggett, and I'm a longline
14 fisherman out of Madeira Beach. I see that Pulley Ridge that
15 you want to do is three-hundred-and-thirteen-and-a-half square
16 miles. Is that correct?

17
18 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Is that right, Morgan?

19
20 **UNIDENTIFIED:** 313.57, yes.

21
22 **MR. DAGGETT:** That's square miles, right?

23
24 **UNIDENTIFIED:** That's correct.

25
26 **MR. DAGGETT:** Okay, and so, really, our main thing is, like Jay
27 said, is this time of year, we're crushed into such a small
28 area, because we've given up so much bottom before, because most
29 of our bottom really lies from forty fathoms in or twenty
30 fathoms in.

31
32 We've already given up from twenty fathoms in, and now, this
33 time of year, we're thirty-five fathoms out, and so it's -- With
34 computers these days and with the technology we have, we all go
35 in the same areas and we keep hitting the same stuff over and
36 over and over again, and like I won't go to forty fathoms until
37 at least January, because it gets so stressed from the boats
38 staying in one area and hitting the same bottom over and over
39 again.

40
41 Now you close these things on the big break out here, and that's
42 predominantly where we fish for the larger yellowedge. You go
43 inshore, you get the juveniles. On that break right there, it
44 holds all the bigger fish. In June, July, and August, we all
45 sit out there in that same spot. If you close that, now we move
46 in again, and, really, from there to about twenty-five miles
47 inshore, what Jay was talking about, if you get to seventy
48 fathoms, you can't fish it. Sixty fathoms, you can't fish. You

1 don't get your gear back. There's huge coral heads. It looks
2 good and there is plenty of fish there, but you can't get it
3 back.

4
5 Part of the reason we are out there is because of the turtles,
6 to keep us away from the turtles. That's what originally
7 happened. They pushed us offshore in the summer so the turtles
8 could come in and spawn, so we don't catch them, and that's why
9 we're out there. Thank you.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Any questions of these
12 gentlemen? Okay. Walter, have you got something?

13
14 **MR. JAAP:** I would just say that I appreciate your concerns and
15 your interests. A number of us have worked Pulley, from the
16 research side, and I've done submersible work out there, and
17 there's a lot of fragile, fragile resources out there that are -
18 - If you can imagine a plate that's about as thin as a piece of
19 tin, and that's the typical kinds of coral you see down there,
20 they're really living at the extent of their light.

21
22 They're living at less than 1 percent of surface light, and they
23 are actually what we call reef corals, because they have the
24 zooxanthellae or the symbionts in them, and so it's a real
25 important area to -- It's south of most of the other parts of
26 Pulley Ridge.

27
28 The rest of Pulley Ridge, as you say, has got lots of big ridge
29 and a lot of drops and a lot of fish, and it's an important area
30 for the fisheries, and I think we need to work on this area and
31 make it best possible for both sides, if it's possible, and so
32 that's my comment on it, and I think we respect the fishermen
33 who have to go out there and make a living, and it's important
34 that we work with them rather than work against them.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you for those comments, Walter. Okay,
37 Morgan. Pulley Ridge.

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** Are there any boundary modifications that the
40 group would like to make to Pulley Ridge, any recommendations
41 about Pulley Ridge? We have gotten some information from the
42 longliners that go out there.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Morgan, has the council's whatever the
45 appropriate committee or advisory panel that would be
46 represented by this fishery, have they been involved in this
47 exercise?

1 **MR. SPAETH:** There is no longliners on the reef fish panel.

2
3 **MS. BOSARGE:** Yes, and that's the reason that they're here
4 today, is because, when this is being presented to the Reef Fish
5 Committee and AP and things of that nature, from this area down
6 in Florida, we don't have a lot of representation from that
7 group right there. In fact, we don't have any representation
8 from that group on that AP, and that's why they're in the
9 audience listening in today and giving us some comments.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Well, I would hope you important council
12 people would put at least one member on that panel. Go ahead,
13 Mr. Bosarge.

14
15 **MR. BOSARGE:** I know you guys are here to try to come to some
16 kind of a compromise. Morgan, can we put this up on the
17 overhead and let one of these guys come up and say, okay, this
18 is where we fish and -- Let's get some minds together here.

19
20 **DR. KILGOUR:** Absolutely. I should have gone over what we're
21 looking at here. Pulley Ridge is currently an HAPC with
22 regulations, and that's this striped area. The area that's in
23 the red-dashed line, that's the proposed expansion of Pulley
24 Ridge from the Coral SSC and AP, based on a bunch of work that
25 was done by John Reed, where he found lots of -- I think it was
26 *Agaricia* and red grouper pits that were being invaded by
27 lionfish, actually, but also provide opportunities for *Agaricia*
28 to expand into those hard pits.

29
30 This is another site that John Reed found that had a lot of
31 coral that was recommended by the SSC and AP, and so these are
32 two areas that were recommended for HAPCs, and I guess they need
33 to be prioritized by this group for the council to consider in
34 its scoping document of HAPCs. The giant green box is the
35 current Pulley Ridge HAPC that doesn't have regulations, and so
36 just this small striped portion has regulations associated with
37 it.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Yes, sir, go ahead.

40
41 **MR. DAGGETT:** Where you see the stripes now, that's our closed
42 area now. Now, literally, you just come a couple of miles off
43 of that closed area and it's literally -- It just rolls down.
44 We call it the corner, because that's as far as we can go. It's
45 pretty much the end of the Earth for us. If you drop off of
46 that, I mean it drops quick. You will go from 240 feet to 800
47 or 1,000 feet within a quarter or a half of a mile. It just
48 drops.

1
2 If you cut that out there, we usually come down from the north
3 and work our way around that, around the box, and then go back
4 up inshore and then fish for mutton snappers. There's a lot of
5 species down there that we fish for that we've been regulated so
6 much with the IFQs. I know you guys don't know about IFQs, but
7 that's what we fish under.

8
9 We go down there and catch species that we don't have to lease
10 from other people. There's a lot of species down there that we
11 catch right on that ridge, like ball bats and porgies and all
12 kinds of stuff that we don't have to pay for, that we don't have
13 to lease IFQs from.

14
15 As you come up, if you cut it off right there, it's really going
16 to be just nothing left down there, and that's a big area. If
17 you've got guys coming out of the Keys, they have really no
18 place to fish out there.

19
20 **MR. LUCAS:** What it's going to do is it's going to drive all
21 those people that fish down south out of the Keys, out of Fort
22 Myers and whatever, that come down there, it's going to push
23 them all further south and put more stress on the northern Gulf.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, gentlemen. Ms. Bosarge.

26
27 **MS. BOSARGE:** While we're on this particular slide here, when we
28 had the coral meeting, where we had Mr. Johnny Nelson was there
29 and Mr. Steve was there as an invited guest, the John Reed site,
30 and I think the royal red community will have to do a little
31 more research on their computer plotters and see where their
32 tracks are, but they had some concern that that could be somehow
33 -- A corner of it or something may be some royal red activity,
34 and so I think they're going to take a look at that and get back
35 with you.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Morgan.

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** They already did, and I was told that this was no
40 longer a concern for the royal red, that these boxes were not
41 being used for royal red shrimping, and so I followed up on
42 that.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Go ahead.

45
46 **MR. DAGGETT:** I just wanted to make one suggestion with you
47 guy's charts and stuff. If you could put the latitude in the
48 future, it would probably go a lot smoother, especially when you

1 have fishermen here. If you could put latitude and longitude up
2 there, to where you know where you have it closed and your
3 proposed places, because I could just look at it and tell you if
4 it's going to affect us barely or a lot. You make these boxes,
5 and I can't tell how far that goes to the west. I don't know if
6 that's ten miles or sixty miles.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Yes, we've heard that concern.

9
10 **MR. DAGGETT:** Okay. I just wanted to throw that at you. Thank
11 you.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you for that. That reiterates what some
14 people said earlier, I guess. Yes, Walter.

15
16 **MR. JAAP:** We do have a sheet here with all the coordinates if
17 you want them, but I understand the fact.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Mr. Delaney.

20
21 **MR. DELANEY:** It seems like the premise of this discussion is
22 that this HAPC designation would close it to fishing, and I
23 don't know what the basis of that is. Is there some
24 documentation that this fishing activity is degrading this
25 habitat? I mean essential fish habitat is all about fisheries
26 and fish resources.

27
28 I understand the coral aspect of it, but is this a threat to the
29 coral habitat there? Why is it a presumption that they're going
30 to be closed? HAPCs don't necessarily close the area to
31 fishing, or is the fear that down the road, once you establish a
32 HAPC, that the next thing is a fishery closure or a National
33 Marine Sanctuary?

34
35 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Steve, did you want to address that? You had
36 your hand up.

37
38 **DR. ROSS:** What I was going to say is that it's really difficult
39 -- We're getting some good information from the fishing
40 community, but it's really difficult for me to evaluate these
41 boxes without the equivalent habitat or community data. I don't
42 know what is that proposed expansion in the red box, whether
43 there were five days there or one transect, whether that area is
44 completely filled with good habitat. It's really difficult to
45 comment and discuss these.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Walter.

1 **MR. JAAP:** The data processing so far has shown about sixty-six
2 species, mostly corals and octocorals and black corals. There
3 is a lot more data. USGS has worked the area. John Reed has
4 done work down there. There has been quite a bit of science
5 accommodating Pulley Ridge, and I would say that certainly the
6 HAPC could be sanctioned off, like sanctuaries are, for some
7 areas open to fishing and some areas that are really sensitive
8 and at risk for habitat injuries could be closed. I think
9 that's part of the process of going through this HAPC exercise.

10
11 **DR. SAMMARCO:** It seems to me like, on this one, we probably
12 need, once again, sort of a little mini subcommittee of people
13 who are familiar with the community aspects of that area and the
14 geomorphology of that area and fishermen that work that area to
15 redraw those lines so that they're realistic and they can work
16 for both protection of the bank, deriving an HAPC, and then also
17 allowing the fishermen to get in there and do what they have to
18 do.

19
20 Boxes are boxes. They can tend to not be very helpful at times,
21 and I also seem to recall that it was John Reed and Sandra
22 Brooke who were doing a lot of work in this area. Didn't they
23 do Pulley Ridge work, Walter?

24
25 **MR. JAAP:** There was a whole crew of people who were working
26 down there. The University of Miami has got cruises going on
27 down there and you've got the USGS group doing work down there.
28 Sandra, I think, and John are doing work down there, and so
29 there is quite a bit of published work already out there.
30 Perhaps it doesn't have quite the resolution we would like, but
31 it's good enough, I think, to probably work something up.

32
33 **DR. SAMMARCO:** It seems as though that's the sort of -- The
34 information is there. I think the information is there from
35 both the fisher persons and also from the scientific community
36 to be able to work that out, but it's just that this might be
37 first rough-cut, and maybe it's not working that well.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I think that's an excellent suggestion, and
40 hopefully we can get that in the process, even though we're at
41 this stage now where the council bounced it back to this group
42 to try and do something. I've got a number of hands up. Leann,
43 you're up.

44
45 **MS. BOSARGE:** Just to answer Glen's question, I have to say that
46 the coral scientists were very upfront with us in the last
47 meeting that they had as a group, and they said that ultimately
48 they would like to see not just the HAPC designation, but some

1 regulations that complement that designation at some point, that
2 that would be their ultimate goal, and so they were very upfront
3 with us about that, and that's why we're kind of all sitting
4 around this table today to have a better understanding of how
5 each stakeholder uses these areas, these boxes, to see if we can
6 come to sort of agreement and make some tweaks, where we can.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. In the back.

9
10 **MR. LUCAS:** On your designations that you have there, one thing
11 that the panel needs to keep in mind is that we primarily fish
12 from 120 feet to 170 feet, nine months out of the year. Three
13 months out of the year, we might move offshore and target these
14 areas. There is minimal pressure on those areas there.

15
16 If there is a good, healthy coral population out there right
17 now, what's going to change? I see boxes, but then the boxes
18 get bigger and then there's more boxes. When do the boxes stop?
19 I mean, nine months out of the year, and only three months
20 targeting that area right there, it's not going to make that big
21 of an impact on it.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Go ahead, Joe.

24
25 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I have worked out in the Tortugas and out by
26 Pulley Ridge on and off for years and years as well, and I
27 recognize that it's a sensitive area, but I'm still kind of
28 struggling with -- There is data there, but I can't see the
29 data, and I can't see where the box is relative to the
30 topographic map and then see Erik's video as to what's out there
31 that could inform a decision.

32
33 I struggle with it a little bit, and, again, I am with the
34 preserving of the habitat, but I've been a longliner. I have
35 longlined that area out there, although it was years ago, and so
36 I would find it a little more helpful for me to have these
37 decisions made against a backdrop of how big is that area? What
38 does it look like relative to the topographic? What are the
39 species there?

40
41 If there is a way to do it temporally or close it at certain
42 times of the year or -- I don't even know what the fishing
43 pressure is or how many boats are even working out there, and so
44 I mean I have an appetite for setting aside sensitive areas,
45 especially in regard to coral, having watched it disappear in
46 the Florida Keys, but I would like a little more meat on the
47 bone for the evaluation process, I guess, and I'm still
48 struggling with that. Pardon me for saying it that way.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Gregory.

3
4 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Morgan, correct me if I misspeak,
5 but the purpose of this meeting is to identify ten priority
6 areas for us to work on to compile that information to put into
7 a draft document for the APs to look at with the data, with the
8 analyses, and for the council to look at, for us to take to
9 scoping meetings and public hearings, to determine what the
10 specifics are for each of the areas.

11
12 There is no way we can do that today, and so today is really
13 just to identify what are the top priority areas for us to look
14 at and analyze, because we have forty areas, and we certainly
15 can't do them all, and so, if we can not worry too much about
16 specifics at this point, we might make more progress.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I agree with you in part, but I think these
19 first two areas that we've taken up is because we have input
20 from other user groups that we may not have had in the past, and
21 so I think -- These gentlemen said that they fish in a lot of
22 these areas, in their operations, but I think these are some of
23 the more difficult ones that we kind of need to discuss and see
24 what we can do with.

25
26 I think everyone is certainly willing to accommodate the others'
27 desires and wishes as best we can. We are never going to get
28 everybody to agree, because there is too many different
29 factions, but I think it's good to have these sorts of
30 discussions, because we're going to come out with a better
31 product in the long run. In the back, Kim.

32
33 **MS. CHAUVIN:** I think that we need to realize that the gentleman
34 on those royal reds came in after five days running twelve hours
35 to get to this meeting. Then you have these other fishermen
36 that are here, and it's important, while they're here, to get
37 the information, glean all that information, that we can from
38 them, because they can't make these meetings. They have to be
39 out there on that water.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Walter, did you have your hand up?

42
43 **MR. JAAP:** I just think that we ought to entertain a motion to
44 say that we need to do more work here, and I think I agree that
45 this is the point where we're trying to identify some sites for
46 consideration and they're not being written in granite right
47 now, but there is a good chance that we could get some of these
48 into the bag, and that would be a good thing.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** How did you outsmart me and I get to chair
3 this thing and not you? Go ahead, Judith.

4
5 **DR. LANG:** Thanks, Corky. I would just like to ask the longline
6 fishermen where exactly in the Pulley Ridge area you are fishing
7 relative to our boxes and polygons up there, and does your gear
8 ever touch the bottom? We're concerned about those plate
9 corals. That's what we're trying to conserve, and I don't think
10 you want to destroy them either.

11
12 **MR. LUCAS:** No, we don't. As far as where our gear goes, I mean
13 it's hard for us to tell right now, because, like Scott said,
14 you don't have any latitude and longitude up there, and,
15 basically, that's how our brain works when we look at something
16 like that.

17
18 We know exactly where we fish. We can look at the latitude and
19 longitude and tell exactly what depth it is, but I mean we don't
20 fish past 150 or 160 fathoms. That's about as deep as we go,
21 and, going the other way, we fish up as close to that boundary
22 as we can get. A lot of guys -- I mean, if you get on the west
23 side of that boundary, and for some reason we always get a call
24 telling us that we're in a closed area, when our boundaries tell
25 us that we're not, but I mean we try to get as close to the
26 boundary as we can, because that's where all the fish are at.

27
28 I mean we've had guys that don't know what they're doing and
29 have screwed up and strung a line through Pulley Ridge, and I
30 mean it's like virgin territory now. It's unbelievable the
31 amount of fish that are in there, and the fish migrate out all
32 around the edge there, and that's where our guys work, all
33 around the edge.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Shelly.

36
37 **MS. KRUEGER:** Morgan, if you could pull up page 3 of the Coral
38 AP and SSC Summary, it does have some latitude and longitude and
39 some depth, if that would be helpful.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Does that help you out any?

42
43 **DR. KILGOUR:** It's between twenty-seven and fifty-five fathoms.
44 This is the twenty-seven fathom and this is the fifty-five-
45 fathom line.

46
47 **MR. LUCAS:** That's pretty much the gist of where we fish. We
48 fish from basically out to where it rolls off. Some guys fish

1 out there to where it rolls off, like Scott was talking about
2 how it rolls off to -- You can go 200 feet in just a little way
3 there, but, for the most part, we all try to stay up on top.
4 There's a few guys that fish that edge, but not too often,
5 because that's where all the black coral is. It's pretty hangy
6 right in there, and so not a lot of people try to fish off that
7 edge.

8
9 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just for reference, these blue lines are the
10 fifty-fathom lines right there that are running through.

11
12 **MR. LUCAS:** Basically, the blue lines takes almost that whole
13 box that you guys put in there.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** All right. What's your pleasure? Frank.

16
17 **MR. HELIES:** Just a question. Can we overlay VMS onto these
18 maps, because all those guys are hooked up to VMS, aren't they?

19
20 **DR. KILGOUR:** It's done. I did it already. Here is our
21 beautiful picture again, and, again, remember that, just because
22 it's not red, it doesn't mean it's not hot, but you can see
23 these green areas are where the -- I am not allowed to show you
24 the individual points. I had to pretty much swear on my kids'
25 lives not to show you guys points, but I can show you grids.

26
27 These are the hot spot areas. These aqua areas are anywhere
28 between 173 and 900 points, and this is for the same time period
29 as the shrimp ELB data that was available. I think the VMS was
30 a little bit later. I think it started in 2005 or 2006, and I
31 might be wrong on that, on when they were actually able to give
32 it to me. I should clarify that.

33
34 **MR. LUCAS:** You say the green areas are the hot spots? That's
35 where most of the traffic has been. That's right on that break
36 there, right before it rolls off to fifty fathoms.

37
38 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, exactly. This is that fifty-fathom line
39 right there.

40
41 **MS. BOSARGE:** I have a question for the longliners. Are you
42 only doing IFQ species off of there? I'm trying to make sure
43 that the VMS data is encompassing all the fishing effort out
44 there.

45
46 **MR. DAGGETT:** We do IFQs, but the point is about the Dry
47 Tortugas -- Like, for a boat like mine -- I own two boats, one
48 with IFQs and one that doesn't. The boat that doesn't have

1 IFQs, I fish down there more, because there is a bunch of
2 species down there, like ball bats and yellowtail and yelloweye.
3 That green, where you see that green, that's the roll. That's
4 where it breaks off. Really, past that, you're either going to
5 lose your gear or the tide runs so hard that you're never going
6 to get it back.

7
8 You stay up on top and you will catch yelloweye and ball bats.
9 As you work your way further, it's going to get deeper and
10 deeper, and that's why we fish down there, because there is non-
11 IFQ species down there, where we don't have to pay to catch
12 fish. They are free fish. Instead of having to pay a guy a
13 dollar lease to go catch his fish for him, I can go down there
14 and catch them for free, which makes it a more profitable trip.

15
16 **MS. BOSARGE:** The reason I ask that is because IFQ species,
17 you've got to have the VMS onboard the boat.

18
19 **MR. DAGGETT:** If you have a reef permit in our fishery, you have
20 VMS.

21
22 **MS. BOSARGE:** Right, and so, if there's boats out there that are
23 not doing IFQ species, then their effort and their hot spots are
24 not going to show up on this map. I just kind of wanted to get
25 a mindset that there may be a little bit missing from the map.

26
27 **MR. DAGGETT:** I don't think a commercial boat in the Gulf
28 doesn't have a VMS anymore. I think we all have VMS.

29
30 **MR. LUCAS:** But there's a lot of recreational people that target
31 that area out of there too, out of south Florida. That's a big
32 area.

33
34 **MR. DAGGETT:** You will see a lot of guys come from the Keys
35 trolling that whole area out there, a lot of guys, a lot of
36 recreational guys.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Are there questions or
39 comments or motions or suggestions?

40
41 **DR. LANG:** Morgan, can you remind us what those circles
42 represent?

43
44 **DR. KILGOUR:** Those circles are known coral locations, and so
45 coral has either been collected there or observed there by ROV.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Frank.

1 **MR. HELIES:** Just to move this along, I'm not sure if I'm even
2 allowed to second the motion that Walter may or may not have
3 presented, but this obviously should be a high-priority area to
4 reevaluate, for everyone involved.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Walter, do you want to make that motion again?

7
8 **MR. JAAP:** I make a motion that the Pulley Ridge proposed
9 expansion for HAPC be given a place on the priority list and
10 that it will be considered and various regulations -- I don't
11 need to put that in there.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Can you get that up on the board, please?

14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** One moment, please. We're working on that.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. You may have to make it again.

18
19 **DR. KILGOUR:** Our computers aren't as fast as we want them to
20 be.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Lord help us if the power ever goes out during
23 a meeting.

24
25 **DR. LANG:** While you're pulling that data up, I don't know if
26 Pulley Ridge has been recently reexamined by the state, but I
27 was told last night that some of the oil remediation money has
28 gone into a huge amount of multibeam sonar and ROV work on the
29 mounds in the southwestern Gulf and that information should be
30 available within the next year or so, but there is potentially a
31 lot more data that can be made to bear on this allocation
32 problem.

33
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** Thank you very much. I will look for it.

35
36 **DR. LANG:** I can give you some names later.

37
38 **DR. KILGOUR:** Perfect.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Walter, is that your motion?

41
42 **MR. JAAP:** If somebody would like to amend it, it's fine, but
43 that's the general gist, yes.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** A clarification. What do you mean by just
46 giving priority? The first issue we took up, we didn't put any
47 priority on it, I don't recall. This is fine, but I'm just
48 wondering, on the priority list, high on the priority list or --

1
2 **MR. JAAP:** For the Florida area, among the six sites that were
3 proposed, I proposed, in this little report I did, that three of
4 them be considered, based on their diversity as well as the
5 experience of working those areas and seeing what's there, and I
6 would say that this is -- I think, of the three areas in Florida
7 that are on my list that don't necessarily make the final list,
8 this would be one of the highest.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Thank you. We have a motion. Does
11 somebody want to second it within the Coral SSC? The motion has
12 been made. Is there a second?

13
14 **MR. RUZICKA:** I second that motion. Walt, should we add to that
15 that we develop a working group, in terms of trying to redefine
16 or define what priority means, that we actually form a working
17 group, in conjunction with a longline representative or longline
18 representatives, to better define potential HAPC areas for
19 expansion at Pulley Ridge? Would that be a possibility?

20
21 **MR. JAAP:** I would like some advice from Morgan here. Do you
22 think at this point in time that it's reasonable to go there, or
23 do you think the list of priorities is -- Then we would move to
24 that direction or not?

25
26 **DR. KILGOUR:** Is Doug Gregory here? I am uncomfortable with
27 giving a recommendation one way or the other on this. I know
28 that the council has been cautioned against doing working groups
29 at their last council meeting that aren't appointed by the
30 council. Am I wrong, Leann? I think we were kind of chastised
31 for having working groups that weren't specifically appointed by
32 the council, and so if you could make this motion specific on
33 who the working group should be, so that it could go to the
34 council, so that they might make that recommendation, instead of
35 having it this general, I would appreciate that.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** This is no different than what we did
38 previously with the -- It's just for the royal red guy to get
39 involved with Eric and you to come up with a suggested
40 modification. I assume what you're saying is for the longline
41 guys to get with Morgan and appropriate people involved with
42 Pulley Ridge to see if you can come up with a better suggestion.
43 Shelley.

44
45 **MS. KRUEGER:** I would like to remind people that this area is
46 also under consideration by the Florida Keys National Marine
47 Sanctuary to be included and added into their new management
48 plan.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Okay. Walter.

3
4 **MR. JAAP:** Just to answer Rob's question, then I would recommend
5 that we probably should have a panel of maybe John Reed and from
6 USGS, probably one of those people, yourself if you want, and
7 the longline representatives to help work out the details.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** With Morgan.

10
11 **MR. JAAP:** Yes, with Morgan.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Morgan, do you have a comment?

14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** Like I mentioned earlier, we were chastised by GC
16 about not having specific names mentioned in our working group,
17 and so that's my only request, is, if you would like to make
18 that motion, to please put specific names in the working group
19 instead of generalities.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Leann.

22
23 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think we're going to get verbatim minutes on
24 this, Morgan, and so I don't know that it necessarily has to be
25 in the motion itself. As the council takes it up, we'll have
26 the verbatim minutes, right, of who Walt wants in the, or that
27 the group in general was thinking about putting in the working
28 group, and I think the council can then convene that group,
29 right?

30
31 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay.

32
33 **DR. KILGOUR:** I will just add it to the report, Leann, so that
34 there is a list there.

35
36 **MR. JAAP:** We would include Sandra in the group.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We've got a motion on the floor by the
39 Coral SSC. Does the Coral AP want to be part of this motion?

40
41 **MS. KRUEGER:** Does the Coral AP want to -- Yes, Mr. Chairman,
42 they do.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** That's a yes.

45
46 **MS. KRUEGER:** Correct, yes.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. So we add the Coral AP. I don't think

1 it's appropriate for the shrimp guys and ladies to be involved
2 in this one, but -- This one would be just a Coral SSC and Coral
3 AP motion. The motion is that the Pulley Ridge proposed
4 expansion for HAPC be placed on the priority list and convene a
5 working group, and it's understood that that working group would
6 be made up of the appropriate longline gentlemen that were here,
7 Morgan, USGS, Sandra. That's the motion. Is there discussion
8 on the motion?

9
10 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I second it.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I think we had a second from Judith. It's
13 moved and seconded. Did you need to speak on this motion, Jay?
14 You had your hand up.

15
16 **MR. LUCAS:** No, and you just said the longline gentlemen that
17 were here, but sometimes there might come a point where he and I
18 are offshore, and we might have somebody come and fill in for
19 us. Would that be appropriate there?

20
21 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Don't send Spaeth. All right, Morgan.

22
23 **DR. KILGOUR:** I am kind of going to be a thorn again. I have
24 been advised once more that we need a specific list, and so the
25 folks on the working group are not interchangeable. Whoever is
26 designated on the working group -- Corky, we needed you on the
27 council at the last June meeting, so you could have told us, but
28 that's just how we've been directed now.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Let's see if we can get that list then.

31
32 **MR. JAAP:** The working group, you can put my name down there,
33 Sandra Brooke's name down there, Rob's name down there, Morgan's
34 name down there.

35
36 **DR. KILGOUR:** No.

37
38 **MR. JAAP:** You don't qualify. All right. Then a representative
39 of the longline fishing community.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Who should that be?

42
43 **MR. SPAETH:** Let me ask you a question. I could be the name,
44 but, a lot of times, I like to bring somebody to that working
45 group along with me for advice. Is that allowable?

46
47 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** It's public meetings. I don't think we can --
48

1 **MR. JAAP:** Right now, I would say there's no problem.

2
3 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Doug Gregory is going to tell me something.
4 Go ahead, Mr. Gregory.

5
6 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Anybody can come to the meeting.
7 Like I invited these guys here, but we can't pay their way or
8 pay them a per diem unless the council preapproves them. We
9 were told by General Counsel that we've been pushing the
10 envelope a little bit in this regard, and so, forming ad hoc
11 working groups up and down, for whatever purpose, is not
12 something we can do anymore. That's why we're asking for a
13 specific list of names of people, but anybody can come to a
14 meeting and participate as a member of the public. It's the
15 question of paying people we invite to come.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Leann.

18
19 **MS. BOSARGE:** Doug, can we put maybe the two longliners names
20 down that are here today and put their name and then a hyphen
21 and say or their designee or their designated -- In case they're
22 offshore fishing. Can we do that, and they would have to tell
23 us who that would be?

24
25 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** We need to ask General Counsel.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Is it only for the purpose of per diem that
28 you're worried about?

29
30 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** The purpose is we were told that
31 the council, under the Magnuson Act, has to approve its advisory
32 panels, and a working group is another kind of advisory panel,
33 even though we don't call it an advisory panel. It's not
34 something that can just do on an ad hoc basis.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Let's put Bob Spaeth down and Jay down
37 and Scott Daggett. One of them would come as the official
38 member of the group. Does that work? Morgan.

39
40 **DR. KILGOUR:** Thank you for entertaining me, but I have maybe a
41 solution to this problem. What if we do this via webinar, so
42 that nobody has to travel all this way? Would that be
43 acceptable? I could schedule the webinar so that you would -- I
44 am just trying to alleviate some fears here. Would a webinar be
45 acceptable as a way of convening this working group?

46
47 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Mr. Chairman, the money is not the
48 question. The question is people giving specific advice to the

1 council. That's the hang-up. Those people need to be appointed
2 by the council.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I understand, and this is no different than
5 what we approved earlier with the royal red thing. We put
6 names, and that's what we're doing now, with the understanding
7 that one of the longline representatives would be the official
8 member. If he can't come, we will go down the line to whoever
9 can make the meeting. Have we discussed this one enough? In
10 the back.

11
12 **MR. BROOKER:** I think we should also add someone from the Coral
13 AP to meet with this working group. In light of that, I would
14 move to add myself, J.P. Brooker, or, in the same spirit as the
15 alternates for the longliners, Joe Weatherby. One or the other
16 of us would attend.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Have we got any discussion on these additions?
19 Hearing none, are you ready to vote? That's your business.
20 There you go. I'm sorry.

21
22 **MR. JAAP:** For the SSC and the coral group, all in favor.

23
24 **MS. KRUEGER:** Thank you. **For the Coral AP, all in favor; any**
25 **opposed. The motion passes.**

26
27 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Thank you. Morgan told me I've got
28 things goofed up so bad that we're going to turn it over to the
29 Vice Chair so he can take over. I have to apologize, but I've
30 got to make a phone call. The Vice Chair will decide whether
31 you all get a break or not.

32
33 **MR. BOSARGE:** Do we need a break? We will take ten minutes and
34 be back at five after three.

35
36 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

37
38 **MR. JAAP:** We've got a lot of work on our table, and, to make
39 things go a little simpler, a little easier, I propose that we
40 postpone any work on the northwest sites that were proposed in
41 2015, because the sanctuary has basically set aside a series of
42 seven banks and a complex of multiple banks in their proposed
43 expansion, and we would defer to them to proceed with their
44 procedure, and the council would stand by on the particular
45 areas that have been proposed in the northwest area. I can read
46 you something here.

47
48 Basically, I will read this statement. It doesn't have to go in

1 with our debate there, but the Flower Garden Banks expansion
2 will provide more comprehensive marine protected area
3 management, an HAPC designation, which is limited to fishing
4 activities. The expansion EIS preferred alternative, which is
5 Number 3, identifies seven banks and complexes with multiple
6 banks, totally 383.19 square miles, and we defer to the Flower
7 Garden Banks expansion for the present and will focus HAPC
8 designation on the other areas for consideration.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Now this is a Coral AP motion?

11
12 **MR. JAAP:** Coral SSC.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Coral SSC. Do we have a second by a member of
15 the Coral SSC?

16
17 **DR. LANG:** I would like to ask G.P. to --

18
19 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** We've got a second by Paul. Go ahead, Judith.

20
21 **DR. LANG:** I would like to ask G.P. what is his preference.
22 Does it matter to him if we vote independently?

23
24 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I probably won't vote on this particular motion,
25 but there is a lot of overlap here. We don't want to be
26 redundant or duplicative on it, and so I think it's appropriate,
27 because what we will be doing is essentially what the HAPC
28 process would also be doing. However, we may be looking at it
29 from a different perspective, slightly, and it may not meet the
30 needs of the council, but I think it would be appropriate for
31 the council to let the sanctuary process play out, and so I
32 don't have any problem with this approach.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Steve.

35
36 **DR. ROSS:** I mean if we do that, the concern I would have is
37 that the sanctuary process may take considerable time with an
38 uncertain outcome, and then we're back in the square one of
39 reevaluating those sites that may not have made it or there's a
40 long interim period where there is no protection.

41
42 I am not sure that I see -- To me, in looking at those
43 boundaries, I would have almost recommended that the HAPC
44 boundaries and the sanctuary boundaries be one and the same and
45 keep both processes moving forward, instead of two different
46 sets of boundaries, and so I would have made a different
47 recommendation, but I'm not sure I see why we would drop one for
48 the other.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Any other --

3
4 **DR. LANG:** Well, we did vote to ask the sanctuary to relook at
5 the boundaries of four of them and to move them, mostly very
6 slightly, to accommodate the shrimp fishery.

7
8 **MR. SCHMAHL:** That is correct, but, from the input that we've
9 gotten from the fishing industry in general, it's not the
10 shrimping industry that's the most vocal about it. It's the
11 reef fish snapper grouper fishery.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Shelly.

14
15 **MS. KRUEGER:** Thank you. I would just think that if we are
16 giving recommendations to the Gulf Council that then will
17 contribute comments to the DEIS, if we don't discuss it prior to
18 Flower Gardens, or even Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary,
19 making their decisions, then how will we constructively be able
20 to give the council recommendations to give to the national
21 marine sanctuaries?

22
23 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Morgan, you had your hand up?

24
25 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, and this is hopefully -- I am trying to get
26 us steered in the right direction as far as getting our work
27 done. Remember that the council charge was to prioritize areas
28 for consideration for HAPC status.

29
30 If you want to do this, which is great, then that means that we
31 can focus on the other areas, because I was told that the
32 council wants to look at ten, and potentially later we will look
33 at additional areas, but forty-seven is a lot to digest in one
34 document, and so that's just my little notation, is that the
35 council wants this group to try and come down from forty-seven
36 areas for this current document to ten. If you do this, then
37 you already have eliminated seven or eight from consideration,
38 and so you can focus on the rest of the Gulf, and that's great
39 for me. It makes it easy, but the group needs to -- We need to
40 come back to priority areas.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Walter.

43
44 **MR. JAAP:** I guess my comment is supporting the effort of the
45 sanctuary to expand. I think that's a separate sort of issue.
46 We can, as a group, either from the SSC or the AP standpoint,
47 recommend, in the letter, that we are supportive of their
48 actions in any way we can, but I think, as Morgan pointed out,

1 we have probably, in an incremental idea of adding HAPCs to the
2 Gulf Council's list, there is no way we're going to do forty or
3 fifty of them.

4
5 Somewhere between ten and fifteen is probably a reasonable
6 number to think about, and we have less than a day to get the
7 rest of this work done, and so I think it makes sense to me,
8 from a practical standpoint, and it's not that I don't like the
9 northwest Gulf sites. I think there are probably a lot of them
10 that are very excellent, but it's just a matter of, from a
11 practical standpoint, of things that we have in south Texas,
12 Florida, and the northeast are on our plate, and we can take
13 care of those and hopefully get a good list.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Is there discussion? Who votes on this? Is
16 it just the Coral SSC, Morgan?

17
18 **DR. KILGOUR:** I think this was a Coral SSC motion, correct? So,
19 unless the APs would like to make a similar motion or the same
20 motion, yes.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Does the Coral AP want to address it?

23
24 **MR. BROOKER:** Do we have to join? I mean do you need two of
25 three or they can do it themselves? Is that right?

26
27 **MS. KRUEGER:** We will decline at this moment.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** You will decline. What's the Shrimp AP want
30 to do?

31
32 **MS. BOSARGE:** Any suggestions? My suggestion would be to
33 decline also, just because I think it fits your group better.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** All right. Coral AP, if you're the chair, you
36 don't vote and is that how it works? Do you want me to handle
37 it, so you can vote?

38
39 **MR. JAAP:** For me? Since I made the motion, probably it would
40 be a good thing. G.P., are you going to recluse?

41
42 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes, I think I will just abstain on this one.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We've got a motion on the floor.
45 Frank.

46
47 **MR. HELIES:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a point of clarity. We
48 mentioned Alternative 3 in here, and that's the sanctuary's

1 preferred alternative, but not necessarily the one that's going
2 to be approved, and so is that -- Is that just going to be what
3 we're going to look at anyway, as assuming that it's going to be
4 approved?

5
6 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** That is their preferred alternative at this
7 time. Now, what makes the final cut in their process -- Okay.

8
9 **MR. HELIES:** Walt, I just might add to yours that -- I don't
10 know. Postpone, I don't know if that's indefinitely, but the
11 ones in south Florida, after the discussions with the
12 longliners, we could postpone those until a working group
13 convenes, because, if we're trying to juggle around which ones
14 we want to make a priority and cover in the next day-and-a-half,
15 it seems like the ones in south Florida could also be postponed,
16 since we're going to do a lot more work on that.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Let's get one out of the --

19
20 **MR. JAAP:** We've already got one on the list.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We've got a motion on the floor for the
23 Coral SSC. That motion is to postpone any work on the
24 recommended HAPCs that are the same as those proposed in
25 Alternative 3 in the Flower Garden Banks National Marine
26 Sanctuary expansion DEIS. **All in favor, signify by saying aye;**
27 **opposed. The motion passes.** The Coral AP and the Shrimp AP
28 chose not to address this issue. Okay, Morgan, where are we?
29 Let's move forward.

30
31 **DR. KILGOUR:** Let's move forward. I like that idea. We're
32 going to hopefully start making a lot more progress than two
33 sites. Just for my own clarification, the last motion that was
34 made about Pulley Ridge, to me, indicated that that was one of
35 the priority areas in this list of ten.

36
37 If it's all right with the group if I just can -- Can somebody
38 give me another -- Let me also say that it's my understanding,
39 based on the discussion earlier today about Viosca Knoll 862/906
40 that that is another priority area, or is that incorrect?

41
42 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** That is a priority area.

43
44 **DR. KILGOUR:** Those are two priority areas for HAPC status.
45 Both of those areas, I need to work with folks to modify the
46 boundaries, and I will bring those modified boundaries to the
47 council in October.

1 Are there any other areas on the West Florida Shelf that the
2 group wants to consider as a priority area, based on the
3 information that we currently have? Walt did some really great
4 analyses using species richness and diversity, and so are there
5 any other areas on the West Florida Shelf?

6
7 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I've got a hand up. Steve, go ahead.

8
9 **DR. ROSS:** I would like to talk about those areas, the three
10 boxes of Long Mound, the John Reed site, and Many Mounds. I
11 wonder, Morgan -- I sent a couple of maps to the committee.
12 There was one overview map that I would like to project that
13 might help in this discussion.

14
15 Basically, what I would like to propose, and I will try to
16 defend that, is that those three boxes be joined together into
17 one area, even though it's large. That was the first map. That
18 was the blow-up map.

19
20 There are no lat/long on that map, but basically the top of that
21 map is where Long Mound starts, at roughly 26 degrees, 28
22 minutes, and Many Mounds, you can see there it's jutting out of
23 that red area, about the middle of the map. That's the Many
24 Mounds area. What you're looking at is the West Florida Slope
25 multibeam sonar maps from my cruises and the Okeanos Explorer
26 cruises.

27
28 The red line is a rocky scarp that runs for nearly 200
29 kilometers, from a little bit north of where this map is nearly
30 to Key West, and it has a profile of somewhere -- It varies a
31 lot between a couple of meters to five to ten meters tall. In
32 the south, it can be as high as fifty to eighty meters,
33 according to the multibeam data.

34
35 The blue dots offshore of that are coral and rocky ledges and
36 mounds, some of which are bioherms and some of which are just
37 rocky ledges. They have a combination of lophelia corals and a
38 lot of black corals on some of the rocky areas.

39
40 Instead of three boxes here, to me, it makes a lot of sense to
41 protect this as one area with a northern and southern boundary
42 and an inshore boundary of something like 400 meters, or about
43 1,200 feet, and an offshore boundary of about 600 meters, or
44 nearly 2,000 feet. I could form that as a motion, but I thought
45 maybe I would throw that out as a discussion point first. I'm
46 not sure which, procedurally, is better.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Steve.

1
2 **MR. BOSARGE:** I guess my question would be -- We're charged with
3 coming up with the areas of particular concern, and if this is
4 an area that you as a scientist are just now seeing and
5 learning, I wonder if we wouldn't be better off to look at an
6 area we know about and make that an area of particular concern,
7 more than a place that we're just now seeing.

8
9 **DR. ROSS:** This isn't an area we're just now seeing. We've been
10 studying this area for eight to ten years, and the geologists
11 mapped and studied this area twenty years ago. It's been known
12 for a long time, but it's just that the new data that's coming
13 out now about this area is more coral related, and also it
14 covers a lot more of the biodiversity that's there, but it's
15 been known for quite a while. I think also I would push the
16 southern boundary of this area further south. Anyway, thank
17 you.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Walter.

20
21 **MR. JAAP:** Just to clarify for Steve that the three areas
22 actually were suggested or nominated as separate areas. What
23 Steve Ross is asking is that we connect the three of them
24 together so they're not independent, so you have one homogenous
25 line for that HAPC.

26
27 **MR. BOSARGE:** Once again, it's kilometers and meters, and can
28 you come back with some -- It's not so much the kilometers.
29 That's not a problem, but the depth that this coral lays in.

30
31 **DR. ROSS:** Right, and I mentioned that. On the inshore side, I
32 would go with something like 400 meters, which is about 1,200
33 feet, a little more than that, and, on the offshore end, there
34 doesn't appear to be a lot of coral below 600 meters, which is
35 about 2,000 feet, and so between 2,000 and 1,200 feet. It's a
36 fairly narrow box, but, as Erik pointed out and we discussed
37 earlier, because of the size of this area and the amount of
38 rocky habitat, there is probably more living deepwater coral in
39 this area than anyplace else in the Gulf of Mexico.

40
41 **MR. BOSARGE:** I am with you, but I still can't -- I feel like
42 we've got areas that we should be concerned about more than
43 maybe this area, in that there's nobody that's out there messing
44 with it. It's in nature, and it's been in nature, and it
45 appears to be staying. In other words, that's my point. I just
46 wonder if we don't have areas of particular concern that would
47 be more important than this area. Even though this is a -- Can
48 you overlay the royal red tracks on that?

1
2 **DR. ROSS:** To that point, we've always -- What we're trying to
3 do here is not just protect areas, I think, that are in
4 immediate usage, but trying to be a bit proactive and protect
5 habitat that's biodiverse and important. It's very unlikely
6 that anybody would want to pull a net here, but there are
7 activities that could impact this area, and I think that's what
8 we're trying to identify. It is the, as far as we know,
9 arguably the biggest deepwater coral area in the Gulf of Mexico.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Ms. Bosarge.

12
13 **MS. BOSARGE:** What activities are you seeing as posing a risk in
14 this area, just out of curiosity? Is it anchoring or something?

15
16 **DR. ROSS:** Historically, it was hydrocarbon exploration, and
17 that's not an issue there, in that part of the Gulf now. There
18 is some fishing activity, but I don't know -- It appears to be
19 golden crab trap fishing, but I don't know to what extent that's
20 going on. We do see abandoned traps in this area. I don't
21 think there's a lot of trawler activity, but I'm not sure about
22 that. There are potential fisheries that could develop in these
23 areas, just like at Viosca Knoll. There's not a lot of fishery
24 usage there, except for recreational fishermen.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Joe.

27
28 **MR. WEATHERBY:** Again, we're here to look at some of these coral
29 assemblages and evaluate them and prioritize them. My question
30 now is -- I don't mind doing any of that. I think it's
31 appropriate, but I wonder, to shift gears from looking at these
32 spots to taking more bottom, is there a process by which anybody
33 who reviewed this and said, well, they're going to go fishing
34 there in a month, and then we're changing the parameters of what
35 we're considering, and is there a way to notify the public about
36 that, so nobody feels ambushed by the process?

37
38 I think that also -- Again, if, like Dr. Ross here is saying, if
39 it's the right kind of coral, we should set it aside, but I do
40 think that people who had looked at this last week and then went
41 to their job ought to be given an opportunity to weigh in on it,
42 and I guess they will, but I don't know what the mechanism for
43 that is. I hate to see anybody who went to work today thinking
44 my little fishing hole is safe and then feel ambushed
45 afterwards. I think it lends credibility to the work of the
46 group as well.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Well, I'm sure the process will go in the

1 Federal Register. If you want to lose something, put it in the
2 Federal Register, but that's all part of the process.

3
4 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I'm not pushing back on it, but I just don't
5 know what the mechanisms are for all of that, that's all.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, Joe. I don't think we have any
8 sort of motion on the floor. Steve started the process, and
9 he's got his hand up now.

10
11 **DR. ROSS:** If that's appropriate, I will make a motion that the
12 West Florida Slope coral area be slightly changed from the three
13 boxes that are currently mapped to a single rectangular box with
14 a northern border at 26 degrees, 28 minutes, and a southern
15 border at 26 degrees, 05 minutes, and an eastern border at the
16 400-meter contour, which we'll change to feet, and an offshore
17 western boundary at the 600-meter contour, with the
18 understanding that those eastern and western boundaries can be
19 adjusted to match whatever mapping necessities or law
20 enforcement necessities exist.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Just so we understand, 26 degrees, 28 minutes,
23 that's the northern boundary of what's currently Long Mound?

24
25 **DR. ROSS:** It's close to that, yes.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay, and 26 degrees, 05 minutes is the
28 southern boundary of Many Mound?

29
30 **DR. ROSS:** No, that's an expansion to the south.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** It is an expansion, and so it's going further
33 than the existing box?

34
35 **DR. ROSS:** That's because a lot of habitat was missed.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay, but you're going further south than that
38 box that that's currently there.

39
40 **DR. ROSS:** Correct. That's my recommendation.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. All right. A recommendation or did you
43 make a motion?

44
45 **DR. ROSS:** Well, it looks like we need a motion, and so it was a
46 motion.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Can we get that up on the board?

1
2 **DR. KILGOUR:** Sorry. We are having technical difficulties, and
3 so I'm going to need that motion repeated so that Bernie can get
4 it. We finally got the webinar back up and running, and now we
5 can give you our full attention.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** This is a Coral AP motion.

8
9 **DR. ROSS:** Do you need me to repeat it?

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Are you ready now, Morgan? Okay.

12
13 **DR. ROSS:** Okay. I made a motion that we reconfigure the
14 existing West Florida Slope coral area from the existing three
15 boxes into a single box with a northern boundary at 26 degrees,
16 28 minutes, a southern boundary at 26 degrees, 05 minutes, an
17 eastern boundary along the 400-meter contour, and a western
18 boundary along the 600-meter contour. I think that's all.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** You can see your motion up on the board. Is
21 that what your intent is? Is that your motion?

22
23 **DR. ROSS:** Yes.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We need a second by an AP member. Is
26 that a second, Joe?

27
28 **MR. WEATHERBY:** Yes, it's a second.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** We've got a motion and a second. Walter.

31
32 **MR. JAAP:** For consistency, I would suggest that we might
33 exchange "box" for "site".

34
35 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Is that okay with you, Steve, the maker of the
36 motion? Rather than "box", it would be "site".

37
38 **DR. ROSS:** Certainly. That's fine.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Three sites or have we been calling them boxes
41 in the past? Okay. We've got a motion and we've got a second.
42 Is there discussion? Ms. Bosarge.

43
44 **MS. BOSARGE:** I am just -- We've been trying to -- The Shrimp AP
45 tried to do some homework on these sites, to try and look at
46 some stuff, and now we're combining three sites and extending it
47 past the current boundaries, and, if you can think about it from
48 the fishermen's perspective, we didn't have any -- You know

1 what's down there from a coral standpoint and your research, but
2 we haven't had the opportunity to plug that into our computer
3 plotters and see what -- Now, granted this is deep water, and so
4 this is probably going to be possible royal red, but the point
5 is that it's kind of being tossed out here, and I don't know
6 that I want to set the precedent at this point of combining
7 boxes and extending them past current boundaries and making that
8 recommendation, because we put a lot of work into refining some
9 boxes and getting it, and now we're going outside of what we
10 have data for, from the shrimp perspective, coming into this
11 meeting. In other words, we're kind of shooting blind here as
12 far as what this may do from an impact perspective.

13
14 **DR. ROSS:** Right, and I would like to respond to that. I'm
15 sensitive to that concern, and when we looked at Viosca Knoll, I
16 was onboard with shrinking that box considerably, and the only
17 reason I suggested connecting these boxes and expanding the area
18 is that it's all about the same habitat. It's a narrow box, and
19 it's really rugged. It's almost impossible to trawl in there.

20
21 Of course, I understand that you're getting that information
22 from me and not first hand, but that's why I suggested the
23 expansion, is it's really more of the same and not different,
24 and I am pretty concerned about expanding into area that we
25 don't need to.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Paul.

28
29 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Since Morgan's system is up and working again, is
30 it possible to have shrimping frequency overlaid on top of that
31 graph that you just showed?

32
33 **DR. KILGOUR:** It's not up and working. Our server is down, and
34 that's what the problem is. Anyway, I am trying to put
35 everything onto my desktop, so that we can work from there, but
36 I apologize for the delay.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** But it is possible when things -- Steve.

39
40 **MR. BOSARGE:** I think you said 400 meters out to 600 meters, and
41 400 meters being about 200 fathoms out to about -- I mean I
42 can't say that that's where those guys work, but that's the
43 depth. I know they're not going to trawl through that, but I'm
44 just concerned that we draw a big box and the bottom they may
45 make a turn and you cut off a bunch of their bottom, because
46 you're on a slope now.

47
48 200 fathoms to 400 fathoms is not a large area. It's probably

1 three miles maybe, something like that. Here is my concern.
2 Let's don't draw a box where we're going to cut off part of
3 their bottom again.
4
5 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Do you have any idea how much additional
6 acreage that would be taking in, Steve?
7
8 **DR. ROSS:** No, I don't. That would be easy information to come
9 by. All of this is in a GIS system, but I don't have that
10 handy. I didn't necessarily come with that recommendation fully
11 made.
12
13 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Would it double the area or even more than
14 that? I don't know how far south you're going from that
15 existing Many Mounds boundary, but you said you suggest further
16 south?
17
18 **DR. ROSS:** It may double it, but, if we look again at that
19 overview map, you can see a bit of what we're trying to include,
20 which is that rocky scarp, which is large, and the mounds
21 offshore of that rocky scarp and not the inshore part. That
22 really is the guide for those boxes.
23
24 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Shelly.
25
26 **MS. KRUEGER:** Could I make a friendly amendment that we vote to
27 approve the three boxes as is as a priority, since it -- If we
28 start moving boxes around, then, all of a sudden, everything is
29 kind of up for grabs again, and, for the sake of clarity and
30 conciseness, to consider that as a motion, an amendment to the
31 motion.
32
33 **DR. ROSS:** I will not accept that as an amendment to my motion.
34
35 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I don't think that's appropriate for an
36 amendment, but I do think it's appropriate for a substitute
37 motion, if you want to do it that way.
38
39 **MS. KRUEGER:** Can I request to do that as a substitute motion?
40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** You said priority for the three existing sites
42 as we see them on the --
43
44 **MS. KRUEGER:** As is. Instead of reconfiguring, to have the
45 three be a priority as is.
46
47 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We have a substitute motion, and help
48 me with your motion, that the three existing sites listed in the

1 Florida Maps Bank or whatever the designation is would be
2 priorities.
3
4 **MS. KRUEGER:** Correct.
5
6 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We need a second to the substitute
7 motion by a Coral AP member. Is there a second?
8
9 **MR. BROOKER:** I will second for the purpose of conversation.
10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Now make sure that's the motion you
12 want. Okay. We've got a substitute motion. Is there
13 discussion? Walter.
14
15 **MR. JAAP:** I would offer perhaps a second sentence, saying
16 somewhere that during the process that the possibility of
17 combining or merging the three sites be investigated.
18
19 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** But you can't do that as an SSC member.
20
21 **MR. JAAP:** Then I will shut up.
22
23 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I guess we can all discuss it, but the only
24 people voting are -- I think I'm correct on that. Steve, you're
25 first.
26
27 **DR. ROSS:** There is another consideration in addition to the
28 science that drives the logic behind combining these boxes, and
29 that is that we trade three for one. If we're going to try to
30 designate ten HAPCs, we've now got two less than we have to
31 consider by having one larger box.
32
33 The other thing is, by having three boxes, we have some risk
34 that all three may not pass, and so then we lose a significant
35 area and one of the biggest coral areas in the deep Gulf, and so
36 there's some additional arguments in addition to the data.
37
38 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Joe, go ahead.
39
40 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I understand and see the logic to Steve Ross's
41 science and his proposition, but I also understand that
42 everybody has come a long way and did homework to get here, and
43 so I hear some of that piece, too.
44
45 That could be approved as a priority, because I think I hear
46 that it should be, but it could be approved as a priority with
47 an option to combine them, pending some comment from the
48 possibly affected stakeholders who aren't here, royal red, and

1 Mr. Nelson is gone, or anybody who may be impacted, but I see
2 some logic to that, too.

3
4 I think that's also fair to the stakeholders who have got to
5 live with this stuff, and so that gets Steve Ross's science into
6 consideration, but it gives people a chance to catch up with
7 their homework and agree. Does that make sense? I think what
8 Walt is saying about amending it -- What Walt and Shelly are
9 saying that the three existing be passed as a priority with an
10 option here to consider combining it into one. I think that
11 that -- If nobody pushes back hard, then we're there. I mean do
12 we have to do it today?

13
14 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Now we've got nothing, but, Paul.

15
16 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I think the problem is we're dealing with a --
17 With the other ones that we've been doing, we had a relatively
18 compote dataset of both the shrimping frequency and distribution
19 abundance of that and the coral bottom and what's going on
20 there, and we only have half of the picture here, and it's very
21 difficult to say yea or nay or change it or whatever without
22 knowing what's going on.

23
24 I think a good point has been made. I think we ought to just be
25 patient and maybe even put this one aside on the shelf, just for
26 a half-hour or whatever, and move on to another one. When
27 Morgan gets going again, we can bring it back and go, okay,
28 what's up.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Indefinitely or table until when? Morgan,
31 have you got it?

32
33 **DR. KILGOUR:** It's not the same thing that you were looking at
34 earlier. I haven't been able to retrieve that. This is my
35 backup of my backup, and so these are the sites that you guys
36 are discussing, Long Mound, North Reed, and Many Mound.

37
38 I haven't been able to put up the contours so that you could see
39 where those would be. I will do that in a minute, but, from
40 what I understand from the discussion, is we're looking at an
41 area, and correct me if I'm wrong, that is about from the top of
42 this down along the bathymetric contours from 400 meters to 600
43 meters, and so I need to add those contours, and I'm doing that
44 as soon as I can get on the network, but, for your information
45 on shrimp, on where that is, those black dots, again, are the
46 shrimping effort, and so you see one black dot here. I
47 apologize, and thank you for your patience.

1 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Ms. Bosarge.

2
3 **MS. BOSARGE:** I guess that was the point that I was making about
4 changing the boxes. You see those points out there, and you've
5 got to keep in mind that there's seven guys, on average, landing
6 royal red shrimp every year, with a possibility of it changing
7 hands between about fifteen, but that's the total.

8
9 Now, we know that there's an electronic logbook on one of those
10 boats, at least, because Johnny has one on his boat, the guy
11 that just left, and so it may not look like there's a lot of
12 points out there, but if that's not an area that Johnny has been
13 shrimping over the last few years, we may not see it on here. I
14 can tell though that somebody has been royal redding out there
15 pretty close to it, and so I guess that was where my concern was
16 with starting to combine the boxes.

17
18 Maybe Johnny has looked at the individual boxes and said, well,
19 but I just don't know about starting to create new boxes that we
20 haven't really looked at yet, but I'm not opposed to -- It's not
21 my ideal, but things that we've already looked at, I think we
22 could discuss.

23
24 **DR. ROSS:** It doesn't look like there is much effort there
25 though, correct, I mean anywhere close to those boxes. I mean I
26 understand what you're saying about that, but --

27
28 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Morgan, can you give us a little bigger picture,
29 more area?

30
31 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Harris.

32
33 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** When you're fishing an area and you've got a gap
34 in between an area, you can drag it through there and you don't
35 cause any damage. I see three boxes, and there's gaps in
36 between those boxes. There is no danger of anyone dragging
37 through there. He's not going to cause any damage to the coral
38 reef.

39
40 If you extend the box all the way down, you're taking up
41 territory that -- You can see the three boxes. You can drag
42 around the box or you can drag inshore of the box or offshore of
43 the box, north of the box, south of the box. Once you take the
44 box and having three and you just make one, you're cutting area
45 where a fisherman could legally go in and not cause any damage.

46
47 **DR. ROSS:** That's not true, because the rocky scarp is still
48 there, and so are the corals and the mounds. Those boxes just

1 didn't get connected, but the habitat is still there.
2
3 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Morgan, are you still --
4
5 **DR. KILGOUR:** All right. I think I got what you want. I didn't
6 do the 26 degrees, 05 -- What is it?
7
8 **DR. ROSS:** 26 degrees, 28 minutes and 26 degrees, 05 minutes.
9
10 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's latitude, right?
11
12 **DR. ROSS:** Yes.
13
14 **DR. KILGOUR:** That would be up here.
15
16 **DR. ROSS:** This area would actually be skinnier than those two
17 southernmost boxes.
18
19 **DR. KILGOUR:** Right, and so this is about -- This isn't precise,
20 but this is about -- 26, 28 is twenty-six-and-a-half, right?
21 Twenty-six degrees, 28 minutes is twenty-six-and-a-half? So it
22 would be from here, and that's 26, 28-ish, to what was the other
23 latitude that was given?
24
25 **DR. ROSS:** 26, 05.
26
27 **DR. KILGOUR:** So from here to down to -- Now, don't look at the
28 box. Just look at the upper and bottom line, and the red and
29 blue lines are the depth contours. The red and blue line would
30 be the east and west borders, and the line that I just drew
31 would be the north and south borders.
32
33 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Paul.
34
35 **DR. SAMMARCO:** If I am interpreting what I heard correctly from
36 Steve and Erik, I think what they've found, through their
37 surveys and their reconnaissance, is that those areas between
38 those boxes are indeed similar types of habitat of the things
39 that are in the boxes, that it's a continuous habitat of hard
40 bottom. It's not soft bottom. Is that right?
41
42 **DR. ROSS:** Yes.
43
44 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Okay. I just wanted to clarify that.
45
46 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Steve, the northern boundary moving down and
47 removing part of Long Mound, is that because the corals are not
48 in that northern part of that first site?

1
2 **DR. ROSS:** No, that's because I was trying to be a little
3 conservative. That scarp goes further north than that. The
4 areas that are the most coral developed offshore of the scarp
5 are actually pieces of the scarp that have broken off over time
6 and fallen offshore, and they have become the substrate that the
7 corals are growing on.

8
9 Everywhere that scarp is, it's got this debris field just
10 offshore of it. That's why it's a fairly narrow band of
11 habitat. In some places, the corals have actually started to
12 form bioherms and not just rocky areas with corals.

13
14 We obviously, if we're arguing over this, we obviously can't
15 extend this to cover the whole scarp, which is 200 kilometers
16 long or more. This is the most significant part, where we've
17 got good data.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** John had his hand up, and then you're next.

20
21 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I just wondered, if we had all this data, why the
22 three boxes originally? Why didn't we just go with the single
23 box to start with?

24
25 **DR. ROSS:** Other people had different opinions. I've worked out
26 there, and other people have worked out there. We had different
27 opinions. Walt would have to address that, I think, and I would
28 have recommended then what I am recommending now, just based on
29 my data. I don't see the justification for breaking it up into
30 three boxes, and I feel like it's a simpler motion to have it as
31 a single box, and so there are other advantages, but Walt will
32 have to address that, I guess.

33
34 **DR. LANG:** Just for what I remember of a couple of --

35
36 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Judy, I've got hands up, and so you're in
37 line. Mr. Bosarge, and then you're going to be next.

38
39 **MR. BOSARGE:** My concern is, once we designate this as a HAPC,
40 habitat area of particular concern, the regulations that will
41 come with that later will basically take -- For the most part,
42 it takes all commercial fishing out of the picture. When I
43 argue with you as to are we going to close these three small
44 boxes or are we going to take in -- If you had your wish, we
45 would start at Key West and probably go up to the Mississippi
46 Canyon. Do you see my point?

47
48 In other words, and I don't blame you. That's what you do.

1 That's what we need to -- But, at the same time, I am trying to
2 look out for an industry that may be making their livelihood
3 from that now or may want to in the future, but, if we just go
4 and block off this big old square and say that, well, it may not
5 happen right now, but you can bet that two years from now there
6 will be -- Only commercial fishermen will be the ones that won't
7 be able to transit it or won't be able to anchor in it or won't
8 be able to fish in it. If you see my point of why I'm concerned
9 that we're going to take this big old block say, okay, we're not
10 going to do anything here.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Judy, you're up.

13
14 **DR. LANG:** I was just going to say, in answer to the question of
15 why we didn't make it one block a couple of years ago when we
16 were originally looking at it, we did discuss that. We did
17 mention that as a possibility, and we felt that, at the time, we
18 didn't have information, and I think there is more information
19 now than was available to us then, and, Steve, you were not part
20 of that process.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Thank you. Erik.

23
24 **DR. CORDES:** I was going to make the same point, but I would
25 also point out that this is a few miles long. To your point,
26 this is -- Steve surveyed a lot of this for the first time, but
27 we've both done a bunch of dives in this area, and it's -- I
28 could make the same argument for fishing in the area.

29
30 This is about a hundred miles long. It's similar habitat all
31 along there, as far as we know, from the multibeam maps. This
32 area, where he is drawing one larger box, is the area where we
33 have the best information now, and we know, because they are
34 groundtruthed, that there are a lot of live corals and mounds
35 and everything there. This is our favorite couple of miles in
36 that hundred-mile stretch.

37
38 Odds are that the fish community and the shrimp and anything
39 that may be of commercial interest is up and down that hundred
40 miles, but we are asking for a small representative, our
41 favorite, piece of that.

42
43 **MR. BOSARGE:** I do understand that, and I work also in state
44 fisheries management, and I have watched in our state that we
45 pick off this little piece and then we pick off that little
46 piece and then we pick off -- Now, since we've got a spotted sea
47 trout industry, where commercial guys get a 50,000-pound quota,
48 the recreational fishery is 1.325 million, because what we did

1 was we took this away from them and we took this away from them
2 and we kept taking it until they had no ground left and no tools
3 to work with.

4
5 That's what I worry about here, and, hey, I am with you. I am
6 all for protecting. We don't need to tear up or destroy
7 anything that's that beautiful in nature, but, at the same time,
8 I have to look at where the industry is at and what they're
9 doing, and we keep taking these little small pieces.

10
11 For instance, we came here, and I forget the name of the
12 restaurant we ate at last night, but Tommy had a nice piece of
13 snapper. If we keep taking these places, how are we going to
14 provide that?

15
16 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Steve is up and then Glen and then
17 Paul.

18
19 **DR. ROSS:** Steve, I think that's the value of these committees,
20 is they're a mixture of people, because we aren't drawing the
21 whole hundred-mile box and you aren't drawing no boxes, not that
22 you wouldn't, and so what we're recommending here is a balance.

23
24 I think your point was you kept saying small pieces. That's the
25 point. They are small pieces, and, if you look at the whole
26 Gulf of Mexico, these are little dots, and most of the Gulf is
27 not protected. Most of the world is not protected, and all of
28 us want to eat seafood. We don't want to put anybody out of
29 business, but nobody is going to be in business if we don't
30 protect the habitat.

31
32 **MR. BOSARGE:** I agree.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Mr. Delaney.

35
36 **MR. DELANEY:** Just an observation, and I have a high degree of
37 respect for all the coral scientists that are here today, and I
38 know we've worked together for many years on different projects
39 and, ultimately, I think it's been a positive process, but it's
40 always been based on some real science.

41
42 This is sort of dissolved into a non-science process right now.
43 I mean, this morning, we had a lot of good data images and very
44 concrete, documented science. Right now, we're just having a
45 discussion among people who have opinions, based on their own
46 observations, and they readily admit that other people had
47 different opinions in the scientific community, and this just
48 doesn't feel right.

1
2 Steve, I have profound respect for your work, but this is just a
3 bunch of conversations and opinions on -- We don't have a piece
4 of science that we're looking at, and that's not a criticism of
5 you or saying that you're not telling the truth.
6

7 **DR. ROSS:** These are the same data that we've used for all these
8 other sites.
9

10 **MR. DELANEY:** It's just there's nothing here. We are just
11 having a conversation of opinions. What are you showing us?
12

13 **DR. ROSS:** I wasn't asked to give a talk here. I can give you a
14 one-hour talk on the West Florida Slope.
15

16 **MR. DELANEY:** I just don't think this is a science-based process
17 right now. We've got some people from the coral community here
18 who feel one way, and there are apparently people in the coral
19 community who see it differently, and that's why there is three
20 boxes, as you said.
21

22 That kind of leaves folks like us saying what do we do? Where
23 is the science that is so clear and definitive to support
24 anything here? I am a little uncomfortable with it, personally.
25

26 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. I've got two people on the
27 list. Then, if my memory serves me right, we still have a
28 motion on the board. We've got a substitute motion and the
29 original motion. We've had a lot of good discussion on this,
30 and let's hear from the two that are on the list and hopefully
31 we'll put the motion back up and do something with it. Paul,
32 you're up and then Mr. Williams.
33

34 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I just want to mention about some of the data
35 that we were looking at this morning. If you remember, we had
36 really good images of the reefs, really good images of the
37 shrimping frequency, and so it was really interesting to put it
38 together and then try to put the pieces of the puzzle together.
39

40 With this one, we're no more or less handicapped than we were in
41 the previous ones, and the shrimping frequency data is clearly
42 low in this area. I think we're lucky in that way, that this
43 does not seem to be a heavily-worked area. If it is heavily
44 worked, it's not showing up in the data any more or less than it
45 would be showing up in the areas that we're looking at.
46

47 As I said, I think that we're lucky in that respect, and it
48 seems to me that if the area were expanded that we're not

1 stepping on anyone's toes, that we know about anyway, and it is,
2 I think it is -- The feeling I get as well is that the three
3 little boxes that we had before were probably due to limited
4 data. How long ago were they drawn? Was it ten years ago or
5 twenty years ago or something? Now we have better data, and so
6 that's just my feeling.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Just for the motion, should that
9 be -- Shelly, it's your motion. We have three sites, Ms. Roy,
10 that it just be made priorities, and I guess that -- Thank you.
11 Mr. Williams.

12
13 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Just a short statement and a quick question. I
14 know, Dr. Lang, you mentioned a while ago that the reason for
15 the three boxes originally was because you didn't have enough
16 data then and now there is enough data and those boxes should be
17 expanded.

18
19 At what point in the next two years -- If we have more data and
20 you expand those boxes again, and the next or two years, we
21 expend those boxes again. At what point do we quit expanding
22 those boxes and preventing potentially all commercial fishing or
23 shrimping through there? Granted, there is probably very
24 little, if any, shrimping, or probably very little commercial
25 fishing at all, and so the question is what are we protecting it
26 from? Thank you.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We have spent quite a bit of time,
29 needed time, on this issue. The Coral AP has a motion, and it's
30 a substitute motion. I would like to have a vote on that motion
31 by the Coral Advisory Panel. The motion is the three existing
32 sites of Long Mound, North Reed, and Many Mounds be made
33 priorities. Coral AP members, all in favor, -- We are voting on
34 the substitute motion. **All Coral Advisory Panel members in**
35 **support of the substitute motion, please raise your hand, four;**
36 **against, two. Four to two, and the motion passes.**

37
38 That does away with the original motion. Does either of the
39 other two panels want to address this same motion?

40
41 **MR. JAAP:** From the SSC standpoint, gentlemen and ladies, are
42 you in favor of supporting the alternative motion?

43
44 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I just want to kind of clarify that those three
45 boxes did come from a recommendation from our committee, from
46 the SSC, in 2015, and so they weren't designated a long time
47 ago. They were just recently, and that was based on information
48 that we did have at the time.

1
2 John Reed was involved in those discussions at the time, and we
3 were being pushed very hard to limit the size of these areas to
4 absolute known areas of high-density coral communities. Based
5 on the information we had at that time, that's how those three
6 boxes came up.

7
8 I personally am in favor of what Steve is suggesting, because it
9 is a continuous habitat, but the information that we had showed
10 that those boxes contained some very high-value habitat, and so
11 I would be in support of combining those boxes, but, at the same
12 time, recognizing the process.

13
14 This was a process, and we are following it, and I am
15 sympathetic to coming in and changing those recommendations
16 later, but we have more information, and these areas probably
17 deserve to be protected. We're not here to shut down fisheries,
18 but we're here to identify high-value habitat and protect those
19 habitats for the future.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Okay, Coral SSC, what's your
22 pleasure?

23
24 **MR. JAAP:** Any other comments? My comment would be this, that I
25 agree pretty much with everything that G.P. says. I think the
26 opportunity to approve the three existing sites should be the
27 priority and that, if we need to do something, we should
28 approach it with another outside -- Maybe an auxiliary panel to
29 reexamine this whole issue and include some of the user groups
30 that might be using these sites and get back to the issue then,
31 and that would resolve this issue, because I can understand
32 where some of the gentlemen over here were concerned about the
33 fact that -- Scientists don't always agree, but there is
34 probably some truth somewhere, and we can agree on that and
35 reach a reasonable outcome on that.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you, sir. Okay.

38
39 **DR. LANG:** Can either G.P. or Walter create a motion out of
40 these considerations that they would like to add to the
41 substitute motion that's been passed that would capture our
42 concern that the areas between the boxes perhaps are equally
43 deserving of being considered HAPCs, but we don't want to do so
44 without more consultation with the fishing industry and without
45 looking at the data which has been acquired in the last two
46 years, to make sure that they are as important habitats as we
47 suspect, as we suspected two years ago.

1 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Gregory.

2
3 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I haven't been paying attention
4 lately, but I think each group should vote on the same motion,
5 and it's okay if different groups have different conclusions.
6 Then you can entertain a different motion, unless the Chairs
7 want to have the different committees come up with totally
8 different motions that are not voted on by the other committees.
9 I mean it's getting complicated, to me.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** The Coral SSC Committee -- I want them to have
12 the opportunity to do what they want to do on this thing. The
13 AP did their thing and the Coral SSC does their thing and then
14 the Shrimp Committee will take it up one way or the other.

15
16 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I'm sorry, but I just ask the
17 question. If one of the committees doesn't address a motion the
18 other committees have passed, what does that mean? It doesn't
19 mean they approved it or disapproved it, but they just ignored
20 it, and that makes it hard to take a message to the council, it
21 seems to me.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** As a council member, I would have had
24 absolutely no problem understanding if one committee passed one
25 motion and the other two didn't want to address it. That tells
26 me what the feelings of the other two committees were. They
27 didn't necessarily agree with what was passed. That's why I'm
28 asking, which way do you --

29
30 **MR. JAAP:** Okay, ladies and gentlemen from the Coral SSC, motion
31 to support the Coral AP substitute motion.

32
33 **DR. LANG:** I second that motion.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** It's moved and seconded that the Coral SSC
36 supports the Coral AP's motion. It's not a substitute anymore.
37 It's a motion that passed.

38
39 **MR. RUZICKA:** If I can just ask, and G.P. can provide
40 clarification for the SSC, but you were in support of actually
41 the motion that Steve proposed, is that correct?

42
43 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes, that is correct. I would make that motion
44 and I would go there if I -- I would actually vote against the
45 motion that you guys just made.

46
47 **MR. RUZICKA:** I agree. I would actually be in support of what
48 Steve had proposed, rather than what's here, for the reasons of

1 logistics and everything that he mentioned, and also the
2 statistical and scientific data that's currently available.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** In my opinion, you've got a double-edged sword
5 here. If you don't support this, you want the original motion,
6 but the original motion wasn't passed. The substitute by the AP
7 passed four to two, and so that's a pretty substantial majority,
8 four to two, out of a six-member committee, but that's -- The
9 motion currently by the Coral SSC is to support the Coral AP's
10 motion, and that is the three existing sites be made priorities.
11 That is the motion. Paul.

12
13 **DR. SAMMARCO:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

14
15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Has the question been called?

16
17 **DR. LANG:** I have a question. If we support it, can we follow
18 this motion with a motion of our own to possibly amend it on the
19 basis of new information?

20
21 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Not amend it, if this passes, but you can --

22
23 **DR. LANG:** Or a separate motion or to consider it or --

24
25 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Anybody can make a motion and you get a second
26 and we start all over.

27
28 **DR. LANG:** A brand new motion, that's what I was --

29
30 **MR. JAAP:** The motion on the floor is to support the Coral AP's
31 motion of three existing sites to become on the priority list.
32 Those in favor of that motion on the SSC.

33
34 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Has the question been called or can we have
35 discussion on it?

36
37 **MR. JAAP:** We have been discussing it, and I was hoping we could
38 move on, but if you want to discuss it longer, that's fine.

39
40 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I guess I'm having trouble, because, of course, I
41 support this motion, because I want to at least see those three,
42 but, speaking from the -- The SSC is supposed to represent the
43 science side of it, and, based on the information that we are
44 having from the scientists, I would go further than that and
45 agree that it ought to be enlarged, but I would vote for this
46 motion, because we want to see those, at a minimum.

47
48 **MR. JAAP:** We are getting paid very reasonably for this, and so

1 do your duty and be diligent and let us have a vote on this
2 motion, because we can make a second motion that's independent
3 to do other things to improve this whole system and get what we
4 want, and so let's -- **All in favor of this motion.**

5
6 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Wait. What's the pleasure of the Shrimp
7 Advisory Panel? I am asking my members. Never let it be said
8 that I'm a dictator. I want to give my members the opportunity
9 to make a motion or not make a motion. What is the pleasure of
10 the Shrimp Advisory Panel?

11
12 **MR. BOSARGE:** I am in favor of supporting the motion, simply
13 because I don't feel like this is the time or place to be
14 expanding these boxes. There is a mechanism for that, and it's
15 not here.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** So your motion is to support the Coral
18 Advisory Panel's motion to go with the three existing. Do I
19 have a second? Second by Mr. Julius. Okay, guys, Shrimp
20 Advisory Panel, we've got a motion and a second. Is there
21 discussion? Any other discussion? **All those in favor, signify
22 by saying aye; opposed, like sign. The motion passes.**

23
24 Morgan, unless the group objects, I suggest it would be more
25 meaningful to make that motion that the -- Since it started with
26 the Coral AP and the Coral SSC was second and the Shrimp AP was
27 third, that all three supported this action. Is that okay with
28 the group? Okay. Frank, you had your hand up.

29
30 **MR. HELIES:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am probably speaking for
31 myself here, but, as a Shrimp AP member, I don't feel it's my
32 responsibility to be voting on what is a priority habitat area,
33 because that's not my expertise.

34
35 I appreciate us being involved in the process, and I feel like
36 we should probably make a motion down the line to ensure that we
37 are a part of the process moving forward, but I am not going to
38 vote on any priorities for these areas, because I don't know.
39 It's up to the Coral SSC to make those recommendations to the
40 council.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Well, I agree with that, but, of course,
43 advisory panel members have input based on their knowledge of
44 activities in the area, and that's why the whole group got
45 together, and, as early as we can get together on the frontend,
46 I think it makes for a better work product as the end result,
47 and that's the whole thing. Okay, Morgan, where are we? Does
48 somebody else want to do something? Have we got another motion

1 coming? Ms. Bosarge.

2
3 **MS. BOSARGE:** Just based on the discussion that everybody was
4 having for those last three sites, I just wanted to back up and
5 remind everybody of the phase that we're at. You all are giving
6 the council input on what you think are high-priority areas to
7 designate as HAPCs, and the shrimp industry and some of the
8 longliners that were here are also giving input on that.

9
10 That is going to create a document at some point that the
11 council will start on and begin to examine this further, and so
12 this is only the first time that this is going to come before
13 you all, and, Dr. Ross, what I'm saying is that -- If those
14 three areas end up in the amendment that the council starts,
15 then that's going to, at some point, come back to the Coral AP
16 and Coral SSC for you all to further comment on and examine, and
17 so just to alleviate some of your concerns that this is not the
18 one and only comment time.

19
20 **DR. LANG:** Leann, I am really happy to hear you say that,
21 because I know there is going to be a lot of new information
22 coming out over the next year, in this area in particular.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay.

25
26 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I think we should move on.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Thank you. Morgan, go for it.

29
30 **DR. KILGOUR:** I think we're done with the West Florida Slope.

31
32 **DR. ROSS:** The only question I would have is South Reed was not
33 really challenged or discussed here. I am not sure whether we
34 should just move on to the northeast or whether we should bring
35 that to the table.

36
37 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's a good point. There are two sites that you
38 haven't discussed on the West Florida Shelf, but, right now,
39 just to keep us on track, we have five sites identified. There
40 is Okeanos Ridge and South Reed Site, which were both on the
41 West Florida Slope, that haven't been discussed, but, if it's
42 okay with the committee, we can move to the northeast Gulf and
43 start talking about the Pinnacles Trend area. There is a lot of
44 sites in there, and there's a lot of shrimping, I think, that
45 occurs in there, and it's up to you guys.

46
47 Here I have the shrimping tows, and I am not putting the
48 bathymetry on here, only because it seems to be slowing things

1 down. If you really, really want to see it, I can put it up
2 there, but these are the boxes that were drawn at the Coral SSC
3 and AP meeting, and I will focus in on these. Some of these
4 areas had boundaries that needed to be revised based on -- This
5 is the wrong one.

6
7 These are the proposed areas that needed boundary revision. Far
8 Tortuga was one that was potentially needing boundary revision.
9 I believe, in the Flower Gardens DEIS, that they talk about the
10 corals that were there, and so there is documented presence.
11 It's not as substantial as that found in Rough Tongue Reef,
12 Patch Reef, and L&W Pinnacles and Scamp Reef, and so are any of
13 these priority areas that we need to discuss or -- How about
14 this. Which of these are the priority areas that we need to
15 discuss for the northeast? This is just for -- I can zoom out,
16 but this is the Pinnacles Trend area, again.

17
18 These are all of the areas in the shallower portion of the
19 Pinnacles Trend. There are some deeper areas, Mississippi
20 Canyon 118, and, again, I will put on the shrimp effort, and you
21 guys can tell me which ones you want to discuss.

22
23 **MR. JAAP:** Mr. Chairman, my straw list, and this is not written
24 in granite, as I said, but I based this somewhat on biodiversity
25 information, which are Triple Top, Double Top, Alabama Alps,
26 Rough Tongue, L&W Pinnacles, and Scamp, and we've already done
27 the Viosca Knoll area. That was just a straw list, and I'm not
28 going to cry and walk away with my toys if you don't like them.

29
30 **DR. CORDES:** Mr. Chair, if I may, there is just a couple of
31 things that I want to point out up here. Viosca Knoll 826 is
32 another large lophelia reef that I was talking about before.

33
34 This is the site that probably has the most information about
35 lophelia in the Gulf of Mexico, and it's probably second to a
36 couple of the reefs in the northeast Atlantic for this species
37 in the world. This has been studied for twenty years. It's
38 really well known and mapped out. We've got tons of data here,
39 and so I would throw that one out, or whatever the reverse of
40 that is.

41
42 The other two that I'm really familiar with are Alabama Alps and
43 Rough Tongue, and these were two of the long-term datasets that
44 Ken Sulak had following the spill, where they documented a lot
45 of the changes in the fish communities there and also had some
46 evidence for exposure and damage to some of the corals during
47 the oil spill. These are two long-term monitoring sites. Those
48 are the three that I am most familiar with, and I will defer to

1 other people for some of the other sites, but I would hold those
2 up as priorities.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Morgan.

5
6 **DR. KILGOUR:** I zoomed into Viosca Knolls 826 so you could all
7 see it, but Alabama Alps was one that was identified as needing
8 boundary revision, based on the discussion at the May 2015 Coral
9 SSC and AP meeting. I went back and, because it was also
10 determined that that was one of those heavily shrimped areas,
11 and so I went back and I looked at where the shrimping occurred,
12 and I overlaid the -- I put the bathymetry on there.

13
14 I basically followed the outline of the feature and tried to
15 minimize the effects on shrimping by making sure that I got the
16 feature, and I also tried to keep the boundary line straight,
17 like the Law Enforcement Technical Committee had requested, and
18 so you can see, if we cut off this northeastern portion, that
19 alleviates a lot of the pressure on the shrimping industry,
20 because that's where a lot of that shrimping occurs. Then you
21 still have the HAPC that protects the Alabama Alps reef itself.

22
23 This is, again, something I did on my own, and that's what I
24 came up with. I am going to try and pull up the bathymetry and
25 hope that I don't break the system again while you guys discuss
26 this, but I just wanted to show you for this particular one. It
27 was one that was recommended to have a boundary revision.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Mr. Bosarge while Morgan is --

30
31 **MR. BOSARGE:** If your calculations are correct, I don't see a
32 problem with this. It looks to me like you've done a marvelous
33 job of still protecting the coral and protecting the industry,
34 and so, if everything is good, from my perspective, I think
35 we're good with it.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Joe.

38
39 **MR. WEATHERBY:** (The comment is not audible on the recording.)

40
41 **DR. CORDES:** I was just pulling it up, actually, and I can show
42 you some pictures, but it was pretty patchy, the damage. The
43 injury level -- I mean I can show you detailed maps of those two
44 reefs and where the damage occurred.

45
46 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I guess maybe my question would be more towards
47 do you see value in making this one a priority as opposed to
48 another choice that didn't undergo damage?

1
2 **DR. CORDES:** I would still support preserving these. There is a
3 lot of undamaged space in those Trends, and the fact that there
4 is fifteen or twenty years of long-term data on the fish
5 communities and the other associates with the corals I think is
6 also good evidence, good support.

7
8 **MR. BROOKER:** Just further to that point, whether it's damaged
9 or undamaged, it doesn't mean you have to protect it or don't
10 have to protect it. I mean, if Mr. Bosarge and the shrimpers
11 seem to think that it's a good compromise, I would say we should
12 just include it on the list anyway. Are we looking for a
13 motion at this point?

14
15 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I've got one hand up, if you hold up and let
16 Walter say what he has to say. I don't see any other hands, and
17 then I would be ready. Go ahead, Walter.

18
19 **MR. JAAP:** My comment is, when we have these sites like this
20 that are close to the Deepwater Horizon wellhead, and there is a
21 lot of research and a lot of dollars going into those sites,
22 because they're being monitored for probably another ten years
23 or something like that, and so there is some real good
24 information that could be received, as well as we can probably
25 piggyback on those cruises and get information, and so, if there
26 is some damage and injury, there will be an opportunity to see
27 how quickly it recovers too, and so it has some benefit, I
28 think, even though it has some --

29
30 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Thank you. Okay. Did you want to make a
31 motion?

32
33 **MR. BROOKER:** Sure. I will make a motion to -- How many areas
34 are looking at here? It's three, right?

35
36 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I was addressing just this one. That's what I
37 was thinking, but go ahead, Morgan.

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** I just wanted to note that the dark-green line is
40 the boundary that I redrew, and then this lime-green line is the
41 Flower Garden Banks Alternative 5 boundary. If you see, there
42 is some topographic relief that's outside of that original
43 boundary that they included, and so there you go.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Morgan, this is what you did?

46
47 **MR. BROOKER:** Before I make the motion, I would also like to
48 point out that there is probably some other areas that are

1 similar to this that might not be problematic, from the
2 fishermen's perspective, and that probably could be included in
3 an amendment that goes to the council, regardless of
4 prioritization, because they're little fished or not especially
5 fished, and so I would just like to keep that in some folks'
6 minds, and it might be worthwhile to create maybe two
7 categories, one category for prioritization and another category
8 for areas that are not of specific concern and wouldn't really
9 be problematic as HAPCs from anyone's perspective. It's just
10 something to think about as we carry on.

11
12 **In light of that, I will make a motion to set aside the Alabama**
13 **Alps as a -- I guess we can call this one an area for priority**
14 **at this point.**

15
16 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Which boundary?

17
18 **MR. BROOKER:** Mr. Bosarge, which boundary did you say worked for
19 you?

20
21 **MR. BOSARGE:** The purple.

22
23 **MR. BROOKER:** So the purple. I don't know if you can capture
24 the language from my garbled sentences there, but --

25
26 **DR. KILGOUR:** How about the staff-recommended boundary?

27
28 **MR. BROOKER:** **Yes, staff-recommended boundary sounds great.**

29
30 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We have a motion. Do we have a second
31 by the AP? Okay. We've got a motion and second being proposed
32 by the Coral AP. Paul had his hand up. Was it to the motion or
33 you had another issue?

34
35 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Just a quick note. It looks like the Flower
36 Garden Banks original configuration catches some of the hard
37 bottom which is outside of Morgan's. It's just a point of
38 information. It depends on whether you want to protect it or
39 not.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** That was on the southeastern end?

42
43 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Yes, the southeast.

44
45 **DR. LANG:** There may not have been any information on that a
46 couple of years ago when we were looking at these, and so we
47 would have included them if we thought they were important or if
48 we thought we knew what was there.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. We have a Coral AP motion. Is there
3 discussion? Any more discussion? Is the Coral AP ready to
4 vote? **All those in favor of the motion, raise your hand, six;**
5 **any opposition. Hearing none, Coral SSC.**
6

7 **MR. JAAP:** Does the Coral SSC want to support this? Yes.
8

9 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Shrimp AP, what's your pleasure? The Shrimp
10 AP supports it. Unless there is opposition, I am going to ask
11 that it be made into one motion with the Coral AP first, the
12 Coral SSC second, and the Shrimp AP taking up third, and so one
13 motion and all three panels recommends it as a priority. Moving
14 right along. Morgan, when you're ready, give us another one,
15 please.
16

17 **DR. KILGOUR:** The other two that I heard that you wanted to look
18 at for priority areas, and please tell me if I'm wrong, were
19 Viosca Knoll 826 and Rough Tongue Reef. Is that correct?
20

21 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I think that's -- 826, that's correct, and
22 what was the other one?
23

24 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Rough Tongue and Viosca 826.
25

26 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay.
27

28 **DR. KILGOUR:** This is Viosca Knoll 826. You can see that there
29 are a couple of dots that go along the top of it for shrimping
30 effort. I spoke with Mr. Nelson about this particular area,
31 because of these dots, at the Coral SSC/AP meeting in 2015.
32

33 This was one that I needed to look at again, and he said that he
34 ran his tracks again and that this was not a prime royal red
35 shrimping ground, which is why he didn't need to wait for this
36 discussion, and so I don't know who those tracks are from, but
37 it's one set, and it could very well be a transit that's just
38 slow. This is Viosca Knoll 826, and the Coral SSC and AP
39 recommended the whole lease block. That's all I have about
40 that.
41

42 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay.
43

44 **MR. JAAP:** The SSC would make a motion to place Viosca Knolls as
45 a priority.
46

47 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** That's 826?
48

1 **MR. JAAP:** 826, yes.
2
3 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Is there a second? Do I have a second?
4
5 **DR. LANG:** I will second.
6
7 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Judith seconds. It's moved and seconded. We
8 have a motion and we have a second.
9
10 **MR. JAAP:** Any discussion? Want to vote? **All in favor.**
11
12 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** I think that was unanimous. AP?
13
14 **MS. KRUEGER:** Coral AP, all in favor, or do you have to say
15 that?
16
17 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Does the Coral AP support that motion by the
18 Coral SSC? I don't hear any opposition. Shrimp AP, do you
19 support that motion? Okay. I think the motion is supported by
20 the Coral SSC, Coral AP, and the Shrimp AP for Viosca Knoll 826
21 as a priority. What was the next one?
22
23 **DR. KILGOUR:** This is Rough Tongue Reef. There are, again, a
24 couple of points. You can see there is three shrimp points
25 inside the boundary, and so, again, those can be artifacts of
26 the algorithm. Perhaps you were going just the right speed for
27 just the right amount of time, because it doesn't look like
28 that's a track. You would see dot, dot, dot, dot.
29
30 **MR. JAAP:** With the information from the shrimp community, I
31 would ask the SSC to consider this as a priority area. I will
32 make the motion for Rough Tongue Reef, that it be placed on the
33 priority list.
34
35 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** We've got a motion and we've got a second by
36 Paul. Is there discussion?
37
38 **MR. JAAP:** Any discussion, gentlemen and ladies? **In favor.**
39
40 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** The motion passes. Rough Tongue Reef, how did
41 it get its name? Okay. The motion was made by the Coral SSC,
42 and the AP is yea or nay? Coral AP is yea. Shrimp AP, what's
43 the Shrimp AP's pleasure? The Shrimp AP is yea, and so the
44 motion is the Coral SSC, Coral AP, and the Shrimp AP make Rough
45 Tongue Reef a priority area. **It passes by all three committees.**
46 Thank you.
47
48 **DR. KILGOUR:** Now we're up to seven.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** We're at quarter of. Do you want to stop it
3 now, so you guys get a half-day of work tomorrow or what's your
4 pleasure? Do you want to continue?

5
6 **DR. KILGOUR:** We have still several deep areas that we haven't
7 discussed, and we still have the South Texas Banks, which I
8 think we need to have ample discussion on.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Tomorrow morning.

11
12 **DR. KILGOUR:** As long as people are still going to be here.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Ms. Bosarge, do you have a comment?

15
16 **MS. BOSARGE:** I just had a question. Outside, I had heard that
17 there was a few shrimpers that may not be here tomorrow, and I
18 know those South Texas Banks get pretty close to a lot of
19 shrimping activity, and so who will be here tomorrow from the
20 Shrimp AP? Will everybody be here?

21
22 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Everybody but me.

23
24 **MS. BOSARGE:** Everybody but -- Julie won't be here tomorrow.
25 All right. I was just checking.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** Okay. Morgan, do you want to try and take one
28 up in the next fifteen minutes, since you're scheduled for a
29 five o'clock stop, or do you want to --

30
31 **DR. KILGOUR:** I was going to say I think we're at a good
32 stopping point, and maybe I can get my computer to work a little
33 bit harder tomorrow.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** That would probably help. Where is Doug
36 Gregory?

37
38 **DR. KILGOUR:** If you're going to get him in trouble, I don't
39 know where he is.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN PERRET:** No, no. Anyway, Mr. Gregory, I apologized to
42 the group, but I had a prior commitment tomorrow, and so I will
43 not be around tomorrow. I want to thank all of you for being so
44 cooperative. I want to encourage council staff to encourage the
45 council to get advisory panels and scientists together early on.
46 I think we end up with a much better work product in the long
47 run, and I just want to publicly tell you that Dr. Morgan has
48 done a great job for all of us, and so thank you.

1
2 (Whereupon, the meeting recessed on August 3, 2016.)
3

4 - - -
5

6 August 4, 2016
7

8 THURSDAY MORNING SESSION
9

10 - - -
11

12 The Joint Shrimp Advisory Panel, Coral Advisory Panel, and Coral
13 Scientific and Statistical Committee of the Gulf of Mexico
14 Fishery Management Council reconvened at the Gulf Council
15 Office, Tampa, Florida, Thursday morning, August 4, 2016, and
16 was called to order at 8:00 a.m. by Vice Chairman Steve Bosarge.
17

18 **MR. BOSARGE:** Good morning, everyone. Welcome to our second
19 day. I'm glad to see everybody that --
20

21 (There is a gap in the audio recording.)
22

23 **DR. KILGOUR:** We had to pare it down from the forty-seven, and
24 that forty-seven did include, I believe, thirteen current
25 existing HAPCs with no regulations, and so that's what we need
26 to do, is we need to prioritize ten areas for the council to
27 consider at this upcoming coral amendment.
28

29 You are welcome to make a recommendation that the existing HAPCs
30 with no regulations are also considered. That would be fine,
31 but it was my understanding that we were going to, from the
32 Coral SSC, let those just stay as they are and let the Sanctuary
33 process play out. Was that clear as mud?
34

35 **MR. BOSARGE:** Walter and then Paul.
36

37 **MR. JAAP:** To clarify, it would be helpful to know which of
38 these HAPCs that currently exist are in that northwest area,
39 just so we maybe can think about that and what we want to do.
40

41 **MR. BOSARGE:** That's a good question. Morgan, can you do that,
42 and then we'll have Paul.
43

44 **DR. KILGOUR:** I sure can. If you all have your maps in front of
45 you, and I also had it on that Excel spreadsheet that I sent out
46 with the zoomed-in maps, but the current HAPCs that don't have
47 regulations that are included in the Flower Gardens Alternative
48 3 that would be removed, if you guys chose to not address them,

1 would be MacNeil Bank, and that's an HAPC with no regulations,
2 Rankin, 28 Fathom, and Bright Bank. Those are part of the
3 Rankin Bright Bank Complex as an HAPC with no regulations.

4
5 Geyer Bank is an HAPC with no regulations and McGrail Bank is an
6 HAPC with regulations. Sonnier Bank is an HAPC with no
7 regulations. Alderdice Bank is an HAPC with no regulations, and
8 then the Bouma, Bryant, Rezak, and Sidner Bank, part of that is
9 an HAPC, and so the Rezak/Sidner Bank is considered an HAPC. It
10 would expand in the sanctuary proposed Alternative 3.

11
12 There are two banks that don't have any HAPC status now that are
13 in that Alternative 3, and that's Parker Bank and Elvers Bank,
14 and those were recommended by the working group and by the Coral
15 SSC and AP, but they're not currently HAPCs.

16
17 **MR. BOSARGE:** Paul.

18
19 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I guess I'm a little bit confused about the ten
20 HAPCs and whether that's supposed to be for our entire meeting
21 or if it's just from this group. Secondly, further on to that,
22 my feeling is that we're here. If we can do twelve or fifteen
23 or whatever it is during the period that we're here, we should
24 take advantage of the time that we have. It's a while before
25 we'll all get back together again. That's just my feeling.

26
27 **MR. BOSARGE:** G.P. and then Morgan.

28
29 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I guess I am a little concerned, because the
30 purpose -- First of all, an HAPC with no regulations doesn't do
31 much. The purpose, I thought, of this process was to identify
32 those areas as HAPCs that would also have some sort of
33 regulations, particularly related to bottom-tending gear and
34 anchoring. That's typically what would be associated with a
35 coral HAPC, is to sort of elevate the areas that have been
36 designated as HAPCs with no regulations to the level of coral
37 HAPCs, which would have some level of additional protection.

38
39 I think, and we went through a process yesterday where we went
40 through the northwestern banks and basically identified that
41 there were no major issues with fishing conflicts. Therefore,
42 why not put them into the area of priority status? I don't
43 think -- I understand we have a charge from the full council to
44 keep it to ten, but the fact is there is more than ten, and
45 there needs to be more than ten.

46
47 I would think that we should, especially if there is no
48 conflicts, and many of these areas have been shown to have no

1 apparent conflicts with shrimping activities, that we should
2 identify those and not be constrained by an artificial number.

3
4 **MR. BOSARGE:** Morgan.

5
6 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just to clarify, this ten number was not part of
7 the actual motion. The motion was that the group identify and
8 rank the most important coral areas and provide this information
9 to the council in a report.

10
11 This ten number is something that was discussed as a logical or
12 -- It wasn't a definitive number, but forty-seven is not going
13 to work, and so we need to prioritize the areas that need to be
14 considered for HAPC status, with the thought that those will be
15 HAPCs with regulations, although that's at the council's
16 pleasure on what they decide to do.

17
18 I understand that there's a lot of important coral areas in
19 here, but the group really does need to prioritize which areas
20 are the most important for consideration. I am really going to
21 have a hard time selling to the council that they're all
22 important and so they all need to be considered equally, because
23 there are areas, from the discussion, that I can tell have a lot
24 of research done and have -- Like Viosca Knoll, that's one of
25 the best-studied areas, 826, and that probably needs to be on
26 that priority list, whereas some of these other areas that may
27 have a lot of coral, but aren't as well studied and don't have
28 the documentation, maybe not, but that's up to you guys to
29 decide on which areas need to be ranked high priority and which
30 can be ranked medium priority and low priority.

31
32 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I will point that a lot of these HAPCs with no
33 regulations in the northwestern Gulf were identified in 2006,
34 and so they were identified as priorities then, and, to not have
35 them on a list of priorities now, it seems contradictory.

36
37 **MR. BOSARGE:** Walter.

38
39 **MR. JAAP:** Thank you. Just two points. As G.P. pointed out,
40 these ones that we are talking about that are currently HAPCs,
41 also most of them are on your list for your preferred option,
42 right?

43
44 **MR. SCHMAHL:** That is correct, yes, but that doesn't mean that
45 that's going to happen.

46
47 **MR. JAAP:** I understand that, but I'm just saying that if we are
48 sort of looking at the logic of we think that the regulations

1 coming out of the sanctuary type program are more comprehensive
2 and inclusive than just the fishery aspects, then it stands to
3 reason that it's okay, and I guess we could say that leaving
4 them to the sanctuary expansion program would be okay.

5
6 I guess the other point I would make is that if we look at
7 Section X on our agenda, Item e, it says we should also look at
8 regulatory suggestions, and so, in the HAPCs, when we finish up
9 here, I think we should give some direction to the council that
10 we expect that there would be some form of regulation, because
11 to have an HAPC without regulation or management doesn't make
12 much sense.

13
14 It's a place on the map, and I'm looking at something that came
15 out of IUCN, which is Lessons Learned in Marine Protected Areas,
16 and one of them is basically that you should have clearly-
17 defined objectives and performance regularly checked by
18 monitoring programs and that it's going to have to have some
19 form of checks and balances for status and trends, to make sure
20 that, if we're doing something, is it working?

21
22 **MR. BOSARGE:** Glen.

23
24 **MR. DELANEY:** I apologize. I've only had one cup of coffee, but
25 I could swear that the people that are speaking to this right
26 now all voted to suspend action on this for some future
27 consideration yesterday, and so we're going backwards on the
28 agenda is all I would point out, and we don't have a whole heck
29 of a lot of time, and so, in the scheme of priorities, if these
30 are indeed the most important areas among the many that we
31 haven't even looked at yet, then perhaps it's appropriate to go
32 back and reconsider them and that vote was inappropriate
33 yesterday, even notwithstanding your votes to suspend it, but,
34 if these fall on the middle or lower end of your priorities,
35 then we're kind of delaying getting to the real priorities,
36 which may be in the northeastern Gulf or Gulf Coast Texas.

37
38 I don't know what your priorities are, and so it seems to me
39 that we're going backwards. You guys all voted to not do this.
40 The coral community said don't do this now, and so now the coral
41 community is saying do this now, and so the shrimp industry
42 doesn't have a lot of ability to evaluate what's a priority for
43 you. We are just kind of here to say please be kind to us.

44
45 **MR. BOSARGE:** Harris and then Joe.

46
47 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** In a democracy, you don't have a magic wand
48 where you say all forty-seven, and it's a slow process, as you

1 can see with Congress, and the reason it's a slow process is so
2 everyone can have a voice and have their opinion.

3
4 If we are mandated to do ten or twelve, let's do ten or twelve,
5 but what I would ask Morgan is how many do we have on the
6 priority list now and how many do we need to meet our ten or
7 twelve and do that, instead of a blanket forty-seven.

8
9 As you have seen in the testimony here with some of the
10 fishermen, there were some of the areas where there were
11 problems, and, here again, we need to look at this. We can't
12 just say, okay, prioritize all forty-seven and we don't have a
13 voice to see if these lines are extended to where they're going
14 to interfere with fishing. That's all I have to say, but I
15 think we need to know how many we have prioritized and how many
16 more do we need to get to our ten or twelve and get this show on
17 the road. Thank you.

18
19 **MR. BOSARGE:** Thank you. Joe.

20
21 **MR. WEATHERBY:** For me, I think, maybe building off of what I
22 just heard everybody say, for me, if there are forty-seven spots
23 I think it's very clear to me that we have to get through the
24 stakeholder conflicts, in the interest of the fishing, the
25 different types of fisheries that we're looking at, but, once
26 we're beyond that, I want a little help in talking about what
27 makes one a priority over another.

28
29 Is it about twenty-five years of research that's been done
30 there? Is it about size? Is it about resources for regulation?
31 What are the drivers? What are the bottlenecks that makes one a
32 priority and another one just like it, with the same black
33 coral, not so much? If you can help me with that, I would
34 appreciate it.

35
36 **MR. BOSARGE:** I had thoughts of maybe some criteria for what we
37 would rank these sites at, as to what is priority and what is
38 not. G.P.

39
40 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I just wanted to respond to Glen a little bit.
41 First of all, I was asking for clarification, because I was
42 assuming that the vote yesterday was to not spend time on these
43 areas because they had already been dealt with, essentially, but
44 I am finding out now that they haven't been dealt with, because
45 they're not going to be on the priority list that goes to the
46 full council. If that's the case, then I do have a problem with
47 it, and I would also point out that I did abstain from that vote
48 yesterday.

1
2 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, Gary.

3
4 **MR. GRAHAM:** G.P., one point of clarification. I would ask that
5 you don't take a brush and say there is no conflict with the
6 fisheries, because, if you start looking at the HAPC line,
7 again, that MacNeil Bank, that inshore side of MacNeil Bank, is
8 -- It's productive, and I would just ask that you don't say that
9 there's no conflicts if we're looking at HAPCs. Thank you.

10
11 **MR. BOSARGE:** Morgan.

12
13 **DR. KILGOUR:** In the interest of time, the group may decide to
14 make a recommendation that might be a middle ground, which is if
15 the sanctuary expansion does not go through that these be
16 reconsidered, or maybe you have a second ranking of existing
17 HAPCs with no regulations be considered for regulations as a
18 separate -- Perhaps separate the new areas from the existing
19 areas, so that it's not such an enormous amount of information
20 all in one spot.

21
22 I am just trying to think of a way to work around the fact that
23 you were asked to prioritize and rank these areas. We're at
24 seven areas now, and we still haven't finished the northeastern
25 Gulf, any of the deepwater sites, or even started on South Texas
26 Banks, and so, in the interest of time, I guess I need a little
27 bit more clarification on which direction you want me to go for
28 this morning's discussion.

29
30 **MR. JAAP:** Morgan, I think that idea of having some sort of a
31 proposal -- I would make a motion to say that if the sanctuary
32 expansion plan, for whatever reason, isn't dealt with, let's
33 say, that these HAPCs that have been currently designated would
34 be given consideration for regulation by the council, or
35 something to that effect.

36
37 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Johnny.

38
39 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I am certainly not trying to slow things down
40 any, but I am still stuck on the prioritizing. I feel like the
41 user groups and the coral committee and the SSC and the shrimp
42 industry and recreational and longliners would each have a
43 different opinion on what should be prioritized, especially when
44 it comes to that the priority will most likely be the HAPC that
45 will get regulations.

46
47 Regulations for one user group may not work for the other one,
48 and so I am still struggling in trying to see how do we

1 prioritize everything if we all have a different view of what
2 should be prioritized. Maybe you all can help out or something.

3
4 **MR. BOSARGE:** Leann.

5
6 **MS. BOSARGE:** You're exactly right, and so what's going on
7 beyond what's just in this room, as far as from the council
8 perspective, we're going to have some things that come out of
9 this meeting, and you're exactly right that a priority list from
10 the coral side of the room would probably look very different
11 from anything that would come off the shrimp side of the room,
12 but what the council hopes to do is to have staff bring us,
13 after this meeting plus the Reef Fish AP -- Those people have
14 weighed in some, and then we got some feedback from the
15 longliners in the eastern Gulf today, and so staff is going to
16 almost bring us like a spreadsheet looking thing and say, well,
17 from the coral side of the house, these are their priorities.

18
19 Then, from say the fishing stakeholder side of the house, these
20 were the sites that were most critical to them, as far as
21 needing a revision or this is where they fish or this is where
22 they shrimp or they need this or that.

23
24 It's going to be a conglomeration and a crosspollination of
25 priorities and issues, and then the council will look at all of
26 that and take it all into perspective together and say, okay, so
27 where do we need to focus our efforts, and we will begin a
28 document to look at some number of those sites, some number, as
29 Morgan said, less than the forty-seven, because it's just a
30 little too much for us to handle, and so that's where we're
31 going with this.

32
33 **MR. BOSARGE:** That's right, this is just beginning, but what's
34 bogging us all down is we all have different thoughts of what is
35 the priority. With me, it's my concerns is what's going to
36 happen once we make it a priority site. Who is it going to
37 affect? We all want to be proactive and protect the coral, but,
38 at the same time, the coral has been there for years and years
39 and years. We don't want to just shut everybody out and change
40 peoples' ways of life over, like Harris said, one motion.
41 Anyhow, go ahead, Gary.

42
43 **MR. GRAHAM:** I just -- Look, the Flower Gardens are holy, and I
44 don't even think we need to waste time on the Flower Gardens. I
45 think they're a priority. I think that you guys are showing me
46 some other areas that I'm unaware of that I think need to have
47 more focus. If I went back to Texas and the Flower Gardens
48 weren't a priority, I would probably have to change states. I

1 just take the Flower Gardens as certainly one of the areas, and
2 I don't think they ought to be considered one of the ten. I
3 think automatically they're there, and let's look at some other
4 areas here. Do you understand where I'm coming from there?

5
6 **MR. BOSARGE:** I think the Flower Gardens are already a
7 sanctuary, and they're already regulated.

8
9 **MR. GRAHAM:** But they've got some other areas there too around
10 that.

11
12 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes. MacNeil Bank and -- To move on, do we want
13 to look at some of these -- Go ahead, Walter.

14
15 **MR. JAAP:** Like I said, we can look at the sites, but I think
16 this motion that Morgan suggested was the basically we kind of
17 say something to the fact that if the sanctuary program doesn't
18 go into the expansion that they prefer, that these HAPC sites
19 that were formerly designated without regulation be considered
20 for regulation. That's sort of the motion I would make.

21
22 **MR. BOSARGE:** Do you want to make the motion?

23
24 **MR. JAAP:** Yes, sir.

25
26 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Second.

27
28 **MR. BOSARGE:** This would be from the Coral SSC.

29
30 **UNIDENTIFIED:** By regulation, what do you mean?

31
32 **MR. JAAP:** Well, it would have to do, obviously, with -- Because
33 we can only regulate fishing, but it would be something to the
34 effect that certain types of gear that might be causing -- By
35 documentation, have caused some sort of harm or injury to the
36 resources, that those would be considered for regulation.

37
38 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Would that be the shrimp industry you're talking
39 about?

40
41 **MR. JAAP:** I think it could include shrimp, it could include
42 longline, it could include other forms of fishing that have
43 bottom-tending gear.

44
45 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I've seen some of these sites that are so deep in
46 the water that a ship anchor's can't touch the site and a shrimp
47 trawl can't touch the site and longliners can't probably touch
48 the site, and why do they need regulations on those?

1
2 **MR. JAAP:** Historically, the Florida Middle Grounds -- I will
3 use it as an example. That was the first HAPC that we
4 designated, and there are certain types of fishing activity that
5 are forbidden in that particular area, and it has had some
6 effect on protecting the resources there, and that's why I would
7 say that that potentially -- If they go into forming some type
8 of regulation in those areas, that it would be -- We only can
9 deal with fishing. We can't deal with anchoring and we can't
10 deal with petroleum exploitation and things like that.

11
12 **MR. BOSARGE:** Ms. Bosarge.

13
14 **MS. BOSARGE:** Walt, when we went through those yesterday, all
15 the sites that are in that Preferred Alternative 3 for the
16 Flower Gardens Sanctuary expansion, I think there were like
17 three sites, three or four, that we looked at and we said, well,
18 we see some trawling going on at the very northern portion of
19 that site, and we kind of had some suggestions on how to adjust
20 the boundaries so that it would have less impact on the shrimp
21 fishery.

22
23 Would you consider having that as part of your motion, that if
24 those sites -- If the sanctuary Alternative 3 isn't put in place
25 by NOAA, which we have no control over, but, if it's not, then
26 you are wanting those to be reconsidered, essentially, by the
27 council, but would you mind putting something in there that as
28 amended or as adjusted by this group, with the boundaries that
29 were adjusted by this group?

30
31 **MR. JAAP:** It could say "to included adjusted boundaries".

32
33 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right.

34
35 **DR. LANG:** As an aside, this will make sure that G.P. doesn't
36 forget.

37
38 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I won't forget.

39
40 **DR. LANG:** I will second that.

41
42 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. We have Judith.

43
44 **MR. JAAP:** Any further discussion? SSC members, please vote
45 for; those against.

46
47 **MR. BOSARGE:** The motion carries. Does the Coral AP want to --
48

1 **MR. BROOKER:** I don't know if we need to make this motion. I
2 think coming from the Coral SSC is probably sufficient.

3
4 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay. Shrimp AP?

5
6 **MR. DELANEY:** Again, I really struggle with this notion that the
7 shrimp industry is going to recommend priority HAPCs. I mean
8 that's not our job. Our job is the -- The coral community
9 should identify habitats that are priority, for all the reasons
10 that you think they're priorities, and the shrimp industry is
11 here to work with you to try to minimize the adverse impacts on
12 our operations, while still achieving the greatest benefit to
13 protecting habitat as possible.

14
15 We're not in a position to say anything about what coral
16 priorities are. That's not our expertise, and we don't want to
17 pretend that we have that expertise, and so we're reacting to
18 your prioritization and trying to work in a cooperative fashion
19 to resolve any conflicts between our interests, and you guys
20 have been amazingly responsive to that.

21
22 I think this probably the most productive meeting, in that
23 context, that I've ever been in dealing with coral. I mean it's
24 fantastic and we appreciate that, but, again, we're not going to
25 offer prioritization of coral. What would we base that on?

26
27 **MR. BOSARGE:** So the Shrimp AP declines. All right. We have a
28 motion, and we had a vote. The motion carried.

29
30 **MR. SCHMAHL:** There was one objection.

31
32 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay. Four to one. Morgan.

33
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** For record keeping, it was four to one? I didn't
35 count.

36
37 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes.

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** Okay. Sorry. I just wanted to make sure we have
40 it right on there, because I can't see right through here.

41
42 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. We are moving on with the
43 prioritizing. As you can see, we in the shrimp industry don't
44 feel we have the expertise, and so we're going to have to leave
45 it in your hands.

46
47 **MR. JAAP:** My suggestion would be that we look at the area that
48 we were talking about, which would be L&W Pinnacles and Scamp

1 Reef and --
2
3 **MR. BOSARGE:** And that Mississippi Canyon 118.
4
5 **MR. JAAP:** It's in the northeast area. It's the 100 to 300-
6 meter range and documented with twenty-six different kinds of
7 corals on the site.
8
9 **MR. BOSARGE:** Morgan, can you put that up and put the
10 bathymetry?
11
12 **MS. BOSARGE:** Morgan, just so we're all on the same page, we're
13 looking at the northeastern Gulf sites, right?
14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** Correct. This is L&W Pinnacles and --
16
17 **MR. JAAP:** It's combined also with Scamp.
18
19 **DR. KILGOUR:** And scamp reef, okay.
20
21 **MR. JAAP:** It's a fairly small area. It's twenty-two, almost
22 twenty-three, square kilometers.
23
24 **DR. KILGOUR:** All right, and if I put shrimping effort on there,
25 and the VMS effort is not showing up. It's not showing. This
26 is L&W Pinnacles and Scamp Reef. The shrimping effort is on.
27 You can see the black dots, and the VMS is not showing. The
28 bathymetry you can see. It's just not color. Let me zoom in on
29 this for you. It looks like there is one shrimping tow point
30 right here, but that might just be --
31
32 **MR. BOSARGE:** The depth one more time?
33
34 **MR. JAAP:** It's been 100 and 300 meters.
35
36 **MR. BOSARGE:** So fifty fathoms to --
37
38 **DR. KILGOUR:** The depth is probably going to be an issue,
39 because I'm not connected via hardwire, to try and alleviate
40 other problems, but I should have it on there. It is between
41 300 and 500 meters, and so that's -- It's definitely outside the
42 fifty-fathom line.
43
44 **MR. BOSARGE:** Steve.
45
46 **DR. ROSS:** While we're bringing that up, I have a quick question
47 maybe for Walt's group. It looks like in some of these boxes --
48 I am not sure whether we can adjust boundaries at this meeting.

1 We got into problems with that yesterday, and I'm going to have
2 a couple of suggestions, but it appears that, if this box were
3 tilted on a diagonal, that it would cover more reef and give
4 back more trawlable territory and do a better job of protecting
5 the resource than the box I see there now. Is that an
6 adjustment we can make here or is that --

7
8 **MR. BOSARGE:** It needs to run with the bottom, and that's the
9 problem. It's not running with the bottom.

10
11 **DR. KILGOUR:** We can fix that.

12
13 **DR. ROSS:** I mean that's my question. As we suggest and
14 prioritize these areas, can we also make some minor adjustments?

15
16 **DR. LANG:** We were doing that yesterday, and so why not
17 continue?

18
19 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think what Morgan did for us in the past was
20 essentially the coral scientists provided some boundaries, and
21 then they had their meeting, and Morgan looked kind of at some
22 different things and made some adjustments to the boundaries,
23 but we didn't do that in the meeting, per se, right? I think
24 that that's definitely something you could ask Morgan to do
25 though, if you wanted Morgan to look at it, and possibly look at
26 tilting boxes, but I don't know that it's something that she may
27 want to do on the fly. Do you see what I'm saying?

28
29 Then we're changing coordinates and things like that, but I
30 think it's definitely something that she can look at. As I said
31 before, this will be the first time that this group is going to
32 get a shot at this, and then it's going to become a document.
33 Then it will be revised and tweaked more after that.

34
35 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I just want to mention that we attempted to do a
36 little bit of that when we were drawing boundaries for the
37 proposed sanctuary expansion, and so you might want to take a
38 look at the Flower Gardens Banks proposed boundary for that
39 area. I don't recall exactly what it was.

40
41 **MR. BOSARGE:** Paul.

42
43 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I would just like to say that I agree with some
44 of what I've heard. That's important, and I think it's wise to
45 get it right the first time, because, once we focus on it and
46 discuss it and get it right and push it up, we may not have to
47 redo it three or four times or whatever, and so the dialogue is
48 good, and I think tweaking this would be a really good idea. It

1 would be helpful for everyone.

2
3 **MR. BOSARGE:** If our time is not constrained too bad by moving
4 it around, I agree that it needs to be changed. If it was
5 twisted, it would do everybody more good.

6
7 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Looking at that map, the sanctuary boundary
8 covers the reef tract fairly tightly, proposed sanctuary
9 boundary.

10
11 **MR. JAAP:** Morgan, do we have to make a motion, or can you just
12 take the instruction or advice to look into changing that into
13 the idea that the sanctuary put forward?

14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** I can do either. I can either just adjust that
16 box and tilt it, and you can direct me on what you would like it
17 to look like, or, if the group recommends that larger feature
18 that follows the reef tract, I can do that too and edit the
19 boundaries and make it that.

20
21 **MR. JAAP:** I think the preference would be to try to follow the
22 reef tract, rather than just twist the box.

23
24 **MR. BOSARGE:** Here again, as far as I feel the shrimp industry
25 is concerned, I say we could go with the green line. My concern
26 would be for the longline fishery and the reef fish fishermen
27 that are not in the room, because, if the regulations are put in
28 place, it would affect them more. Steve.

29
30 **DR. ROSS:** I don't know if we need to make this as a motion, but
31 we're prioritizing relatively few sites from the list, and this
32 expansion covers the reef, and I think it helps make this more
33 of a priority site, using pretty much the sanctuary's proposed
34 green boundary. Do we need a motion to change this or more
35 discussion?

36
37 **DR. KILGOUR:** I think at this stage, because there were motions
38 to accept the boundaries in the last SSC/AP meeting, that I
39 would probably prefer it if you guys could make a motion that
40 you would like me to change the boundaries to this, to the
41 sanctuary's boundaries, and I can do that easily, but I'm
42 showing you what was the difference.

43
44 **MR. BOSARGE:** I will just make one comment and then we'll deal
45 with it. If all we did was to turn the box, and there are
46 regulations applied to that box, then, even though your
47 protection may not go on each, you are leaving some of that for
48 these commercial guys to work. In other words, the Reef Fish

1 Committee is going to look at this also, and so just keep that
2 in the back of your mind. Go ahead, Steve.
3
4 **DR. ROSS:** Having heard that comment, I think we could go either
5 way, but I am going to propose as a motion that we adjust the
6 boundary of this site, L&W Pinnacles and Scamp Reef, to go to
7 the proposed boundary suggested in the sanctuary expansion and
8 that this area be a priority area.
9
10 **MR. BOSARGE:** Do we have a second from the Coral AP? Paul.
11 Steve made the motion and Paul seconded.
12
13 **DR. LANG:** No, Paul can't second it.
14
15 **MR. BOSARGE:** I'm sorry. Paul is not part of that. Shelly is
16 going to second the motion, and this is the Coral AP. Is there
17 discussion? Any discussion?
18
19 **MR. BROOKER:** I will say did that conform to the Shrimp AP's
20 boundaries there? I mean I missed some of that conversation,
21 because I was standing up over at the other side of the room.
22
23 **MR. BOSARGE:** I don't want to speak for the whole Shrimp AP, and
24 so we will let Johnny.
25
26 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I don't really have a problem with it. I think
27 it makes a lot of sense where that boundary will follow that
28 reef more, because I don't see any shrimping effort at all in
29 there, and so I don't have a problem with it.
30
31 **MR. BROOKER:** Then I would support this motion as long as the
32 shrimpers can get behind it as well.
33
34 **MS. BOSARGE:** I have one reservation, in that the reef fish
35 fishermen are going to -- That's another fight for another day,
36 I guess.
37
38 **MS. KRUEGER:** All in support of this motion.
39
40 **MR. BOSARGE:** We've got six for.
41
42 **MS. KRUEGER:** Opposed.
43
44 **MR. BOSARGE:** None. The motion carries unanimously.
45
46 **MR. JAAP:** The SSC will vote to support this particular motion.
47
48 **MR. BOSARGE:** Five for. Any opposed?

1
2 **MR. JAAP:** We just supported that motion, that's all.
3

4 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay, and so the Coral SSC supports the motion.
5 The Shrimp AP supports the motion also. All right. Now we move
6 on. Morgan, I don't want to rush you, but can we move on to
7 Mississippi Canyon 118?
8

9 **DR. KILGOUR:** We sure can.
10

11 **MR. JAAP:** This is a deep site somewhere between 800 and 1,500
12 meters. The area is almost 338 square kilometers. I presume,
13 unless I am -- My colleagues down here can tell me differently,
14 but, right now, this doesn't have a lot of, I guess, study on
15 it. It has something like three -- I have in my list, from the
16 previous work, about three coral species, but I think it's one
17 of these areas that, because it's so deep, it hasn't had a lot
18 of research, but, Steve, what's your idea on that?
19

20 **DR. ROSS:** As far as I know, this is a small coral area with
21 scattered hard grounds. It's not very big. It hasn't been
22 researched that much. It's hard to tell how significant it is,
23 but it is deep, and it's outside the area of most conflict.
24 There's not a lot you can say about that site.
25

26 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I guess where my head is going is Steve doesn't
27 know much about the research. If there's not danger and they're
28 not fishing it, and we're trying to prioritize things, this
29 looks like a good one to skip to the next one is what I'm
30 saying. If we don't have a lot of research and if it's not in
31 danger of being trawled over or if it's not on the priority list
32 for the fishing interest, there might be some other places.
33 This might be a place to save time is what I'm saying.
34

35 **DR. KILGOUR:** Erik Cordes is on the webinar, just in case we had
36 questions about some of these deepwater areas, because he has
37 been there, and he has something to say, I think. Erik, are you
38 still there?
39

40 **DR. CORDES:** Hi, everybody. Sorry I had to leave, but MC 118 is
41 the site of the gas hydrate observatory that's been in place for
42 quite a while. It's run out of the University of Southern
43 Mississippi. In more recent years -- There is a ton of research
44 at this site, but it's focused mostly on the seeps.
45

46 In more recent years, when we've been going back, we have
47 actually found fairly extensive areas of corals, and this is the
48 site that I was showing you the pictures of that had all the red

1 crabs all over it. As you can see, there is some fishing effort
2 here.

3
4 I just wanted to throw that out there. I am not sure that it
5 makes it to the top ten if we only have a couple of sites left.
6 Maybe this isn't one of them, but, just so you know, there is a
7 ton of research. We do have really good maps and we have good
8 coral distributions, and this is that red crab habitat that I
9 was showing you.

10
11 **MR. BOSARGE:** Thank you, Erik.

12
13 **DR. CORDES:** Just one more thing. To the point of very little
14 fishing effort down here and no conflict, I was just -- You know
15 we had talked a little bit offline about taking some of the
16 sites that are uncontested and kind of moving them as a sort of
17 bulk recommendation, rather than trying to fit them into this
18 list of only ten sites.

19
20 Take a bunch of these, especially these deeper sites, where
21 there is much less interest from the fishing community, and
22 possibly setting those aside sort of en masse, as we recommend
23 that these all be considered HAPCs, due to the lack of conflict
24 and the potential importance of these sites, and so I just
25 wanted to throw that out there. Thank you.

26
27 **MR. BOSARGE:** Thank you. Morgan, I saw the shrimping tracks,
28 but what are the black dots?

29
30 **DR. KILGOUR:** Those are tow points. I can't explain it, because
31 this is very deep.

32
33 **MR. BOSARGE:** How deep?

34
35 **MR. JAAP:** This particular site goes up to 1,500 meters.

36
37 **DR. KILGOUR:** 4,500 feet.

38
39 **MR. BOSARGE:** I can't imagine. That doesn't make any sense.
40 Paul.

41
42 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Does that mean -- I don't really know, and I'm
43 not a trawl man, but does that mean that people are doing mid-
44 water trawling?

45
46 **MR. BOSARGE:** No, this is all LGL or electronic logbook data
47 from trawlers. Harris.

1 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** That's why it's important to put the depths,
2 because you might have 1,000 feet and then, all at once, there's
3 a bank and it goes up to thirty-eight fathoms. I mean that's
4 the way it is. Even on the fifty-fathom curve, you have fifty
5 fathoms and then right here you have thirty-eight. Then you
6 have 1,000, and it's not consistent, and so, there again, we
7 don't have the depth, and we don't really know where they're
8 dragging or what depth they're dragging.

9
10 **MR. BOSARGE:** True. Morgan.

11
12 **DR. KILGOUR:** I am going to try and get the -- I know it doesn't
13 go up to fifty fathoms. It's just way too deep for that, and so
14 this is deep water, but one thing I wanted to mention is that
15 all of these points are extracted using an algorithm, and so
16 your vessel had to be going a certain speed for a certain length
17 of time for this point to show up, and so I don't know if this
18 transiting and you're just working on nets or something. I
19 don't know, but there is a lot of shrimping point out in this
20 area, and so I am going to try and get the fathoms on there and
21 see what I can do.

22
23 **MR. BOSARGE:** While you're doing that, can you also go back out
24 a little bit, where we can see the rest of the tracks?

25
26 **MR. JAAP:** While she's doing that, just to make people aware
27 that, in terms of the deepwater sites, we have just this one in
28 the northeast and we have one in the Florida Banks system, and
29 the rest of them are in the -- I think there's four or five in
30 the northwest, of the forty-seven things that we're proposing.

31
32 **MR. BOSARGE:** You said you have one in the northeast?

33
34 **MR. JAAP:** Yes, the Mississippi Canyon, that we're looking at
35 right now. When we get into the northwest, we've got Green
36 Canyon 852, AT 357, AT 047. They're all clustered in -- Well,
37 they're clustered for me, in my analytical sense, but then, in
38 Florida, we have the John Reed South site, which is south of the
39 Pulley Ridge area. Perhaps it has some conflict issues with the
40 longliners.

41
42 **MR. BOSARGE:** And in south Texas?

43
44 **MR. JAAP:** There are no deep sites in south Texas.

45
46 **MR. BOSARGE:** I am just looking -- Morgan, that's off the mouth
47 of the Mississippi River?

1 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes. If I turn off the shrimping effort, things
2 go a lot faster, and so I will turn it on when we're zoomed in a
3 little bit more, if that's okay with you, just so you can see
4 where this is. The Mississippi Canyon is right here, and I
5 believe the other sites that Walt was talking about are these
6 four and possibly this one right here. Is that correct, Walt?
7 So AT 357, AT 047, Green Canyon, and Garden Banks.

8
9 **MR. BOSARGE:** I'm going to ask one more time, but the actual
10 depth at this Mississippi Canyon 118? I mean we've got a range,
11 but what is the depth?

12
13 **DR. LANG:** According to Sandra, it's 850 meters, and so 2,500
14 feet.

15
16 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's the fifty-fathom line in the Gulf of
17 Mexico, this thing right here. Apparently the coral area, the
18 center of it, is at about 2,700 feet.

19
20 **MR. BOSARGE:** So a little over 400 fathoms. I can only surmise
21 that that would be vessels transiting.

22
23 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, or overnighiting slowly going somewhere.

24
25 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, and there's not, to my knowledge -- I don't
26 know that anybody has got that much wire. All right.

27
28 **DR. KILGOUR:** Was there a motion made about this site?

29
30 **MR. BOSARGE:** There has been no motion.

31
32 **MR. JAAP:** Does the SSC have any other comments or the AP on
33 this particular site?

34
35 **DR. ROSS:** I think Erik provided some additional good data. As
36 he said, the hydrate observatory is mostly seep-related, and
37 he's got better data on some of the corals there, and it's a
38 small site. I think the problem is that we're nearing sort of
39 the end of the number of sites we're going to recommend, and so
40 it's unclear how this site ranks in regard to some of the others
41 we might consider.

42
43 It might be that this is sort of a maybe until we talk about a
44 couple of the others. I'm not sure whether that's a good way to
45 go, and I'm not sure how this site compares to the other
46 deepwater sites, if we need a deepwater representative, and
47 which would be the best one.

1 **MR. BOSARGE:** G.P.

2
3 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I would like to follow up on that a little bit,
4 because I think the suggestion that Erik made, in addition, was
5 -- I still feel this constraint that we're trying to fit within
6 a number, which I think is arbitrary, that when there is some of
7 these deepwater sites that are not really contested, that don't
8 have any conflicts, I think they should be included, whether
9 they -- I have to remind you that all of these areas have been
10 identified as priorities by the Coral SSC, all forty-seven, and
11 so it's not like -- Now we're trying to reprioritize within that
12 forty-seven, but all of these areas are priorities, and, if
13 there's not a conflict, why not include them and why be
14 constrained within that arbitrary number?

15
16 **MR. BOSARGE:** Steve.

17
18 **DR. ROSS:** That's good point, and, in that case, I won't make a
19 motion, but I will suggest that we consider making a motion that
20 all the deepwater sites be included as priority areas, and there
21 may be three or four of them, and just be done with it.

22
23 **MR. JAAP:** I think we have to kind of look at the other sites to
24 begin with, to make sure there aren't the fishing conflicts,
25 right? I would think that would be a reasonable thing, first of
26 all, to see if the boundaries are reasonable and that these are
27 okay, but we could move on and look at 047, the AT sites, and
28 see how they look relative to the Mississippi Canyon.

29
30 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. John.

31
32 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Without any further detail and whatnot, I think
33 we need to go on and let's get it done. It's nine o'clock
34 already.

35
36 **MR. BOSARGE:** If that's the consensus of the group, let's move
37 on. We will hold this site to look at to come back to after we
38 have visited the other four sites you've mentioned. Now we're
39 back over into the --

40
41 **MR. JAAP:** We can go to the northwest Gulf and look at AT 047
42 and AT 357.

43
44 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Morgan is gone, but we've got good
45 help. Which one would you like to look at first, Walt?

46
47 **MR. JAAP:** 047.

1 **MR. BOSARGE:** 047. Can we get that one up? Have you got shrimp
2 points out there?
3
4 **DR. KILGOUR:** It looks like you could be very easily transiting,
5 but I don't know. Maybe fishing. I don't know.
6
7 **MR. BOSARGE:** Maybe so. Can you give us a little detail on
8 what's here?
9
10 **MR. JAAP:** Again, the data I have is fairly sparse. It lists
11 three different kinds of corals that are found on the site. I
12 don't know if Erik has any more information on it, and it would
13 be around twenty-three-and-a-half square kilometers, not very
14 big.
15
16 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Johnny.
17
18 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Looking at the supposedly shrimp effort, if
19 that's shrimp effort, that guy is still out there trying to get
20 his rigs off of there.
21
22 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I do have notes from our review of this that this
23 area does have several large mounds of madrepora coral, and this
24 is also a site where numerous red crabs have been noted and
25 documented.
26
27 **MR. BOSARGE:** Paul.
28
29 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Does the Flower Garden Banks group have a revised
30 line around that place other than the rectangle that we're
31 looking at, or is that it, because the area of the bank, of the
32 hard bottom, seems different than the area that is encompassed
33 by the square.
34
35 **MR. BOSARGE:** We will have to refer to Morgan on that.
36
37 **DR. KILGOUR:** I'm sorry, but what was the question?
38
39 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Is there a sanctuary boundary as well?
40
41 **DR. KILGOUR:** Let me look. Yes, Alternative 5 includes -- This
42 is Henderson Ridge Mid-South.
43
44 **MR. BOSARGE:** Which appears to be the same boundary. Thank you.
45
46 **MR. JAAP:** Maybe the thing to do is just look at the other AT
47 site and just get an idea and a glimpse of that, and then we
48 could consider all three of these.

1
2 **MR. BOSARGE:** Which one would be your next one?

3
4 **MR. JAAP:** The next one would be AT 357, please.

5
6 **DR. KILGOUR:** I have the Alternative 5 from the Flower Gardens.
7 It's Alternative 4 and 5, but they call it something different.
8 It's Henderson Ridge South, but this is the lease block name, AT
9 357. It looks like the difference is they encompass this larger
10 feature. All of the documented coral presence that I have in my
11 database, which is not all-inclusive. There's been some new
12 published studies that we're still incorporating into the
13 database, but it's up here on this little peak.

14
15 **DR. CORDES:** This was discovered in some of the work following
16 the Deepwater Horizon. This is the biggest and most extensive
17 coral area that we know of in the Gulf in waters over 1,000
18 meters. It was only discovered about five years ago.

19
20 When we were drawing the Flower Gardens expansion, the fact that
21 it looks very -- The area to the south looks very similar to it,
22 but we just haven't had a chance to get out there yet, and
23 that's why they encompassed it, based on some of the predictive
24 work we did, but that little purple dot over the "A" is --
25 Actually, it's not so little.

26
27 It's maybe half-a-mile wide, and we know that there are corals
28 pretty much throughout that entire area. It's mostly sea fans,
29 but it was a large population of one of the species that was
30 impacted during the spill, and so it's of significance for that
31 reason, but I would lump this -- This is another in that list of
32 offshore, deepwater, uncontested sites that hopefully we can
33 maybe consider in bulk.

34
35 **MR. BOSARGE:** Thank you, Erik. Steve.

36
37 **DR. ROSS:** I think this looks like a similar issue to what we
38 had before with the sanctuary boundary and including the reef
39 proper better. There's a lack of conflict here, and I would
40 like to point out something else. We have a lot more data in
41 the Gulf of Mexico than we used to, and the oil spill research
42 helped contribute to that, but there's still lots of places
43 where we haven't looked, and using these multibeam maps to help
44 define these reefs is a pretty good idea, because a lot of this
45 bathymetry is what the models use to predict coral habitat, and
46 so I would recommend that this be a priority area with the other
47 deepwater areas and use the sanctuary boundary.

1 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Morgan.
2
3 **DR. KILGOUR:** I have two things to say. First of all, I would
4 like to remind everyone that one reason why HAPC status, even if
5 you're not fishing there, would be important is that it requires
6 a consultation with NMFS if oil and gas want to expand to this
7 area. If it has an HAPC status, they have to do some type of
8 looking at it before oil and gas can enter there. It doesn't
9 prevent it, but it just requires an extra step, and so there is
10 that.
11
12 The second thing is, is there anything other than sea fans
13 currently on HE 357, because, right now, the Gulf Council has
14 removed all octocorals from the fishery management unit, and it
15 needs to reincorporate deepwater octocorals in order for those
16 to be considered as corals in coral EFH.
17
18 If there is black coral or stony coral, that's fine, but
19 octocorals as a whole have been removed and need to be
20 reincorporated back into the fishery management unit for us to
21 consider them as coral EFH. That's just another hoop I have to
22 jump through, and it's already been recommended to the council
23 that they reincorporate octocorals in the FMU, but it just
24 hasn't happened yet.
25
26 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Shelly.
27
28 **MS. KRUEGER:** That was my comment, that I thought we had voted
29 to re-include them, but it just hasn't been --
30
31 **UNIDENTIFIED:** It hasn't been moved yet.
32
33 **DR. CORDES:** This is Erik again.
34
35 **MR. BOSARGE:** One second, Erik. G.P.
36
37 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Erik is probably going to say what I'm maybe going
38 to say, but I do have in our notes from our review that there
39 are large colonies of madrepora in this area, and so there are
40 stony corals here.
41
42 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Erik and then Joe.
43
44 **DR. CORDES:** That was it. G.P. got it.
45
46 **MR. WEATHERBY:** Pardon me, but, as a new member, I'm still
47 getting my legs under me, but pardon me if I'm asking
48 rudimentary questions. The charts I've seen displaying all the

1 web of oil and gas pipeline, have they already been considered
2 in here as far as -- Like are there issues that we need to be
3 considering as we're doing this? I thought I just heard them
4 say there's another process, someone saying there's another
5 process, that they go through.

6
7 **MR. BOSARGE:** I believe that was Morgan talking about that if
8 they become an area of concern that the oil and gas industry can
9 still go there and drill, but they have to look at what they may
10 affect in the process. In other words, there is a process they
11 have to go through.

12
13 **MR. WEATHERBY:** Again, my question is less about drilling
14 platforms and more about these -- The charts I've seen showing
15 the pipeline, pipeline webs that are on the bottom, which more
16 directly impact the coral, have they been -- Is there a filter
17 that these HAPCs have been through, or is that considered
18 afterwards? I don't need a primer, but I'm just asking for like
19 how does that work?

20
21 **MR. BOSARGE:** I can't answer the question. Maybe Walt.

22
23 **MR. JAAP:** Historically, I mean we can regulate the fishing
24 activities and so forth, and, as Morgan pointed out, when an
25 area is designated as an HAPC, there is negotiations with
26 Minerals Management or whatever the agency is now that currently
27 manages the --

28
29 **MR. WEATHERBY:** BOEM, right?

30
31 **MR. JAAP:** But we really don't, I think, have a -- I know, from
32 the Gulf Stream pipeline project that I worked on that goes from
33 Mississippi into Tampa Bay, there were a lot of things that were
34 brought up from an ecological and fishing standpoint when they
35 put that pipeline in, and so I think there are some checks and
36 balances, but probably they are all considered in the EIS
37 process.

38
39 **MR. WEATHERBY:** Maybe my question is better answered offline,
40 when everybody is not talking, but there's got to be a
41 relationship between shrimp dragging and pipeline placement
42 along the bottom, correct? I need to understand that a little
43 better too, and I apologize, Mr. Chairman.

44
45 **MR. BOSARGE:** As far as the pipeline placement, they put the
46 pipelines where they need them. I mean there is no consultation
47 between the shrimp industry. When they're getting ready to put
48 a pipeline down, it's Point A to Point B, and I believe, if I'm

1 not -- I'm pretty sure that I'm correct on this, but anything
2 inside of 300 feet has to be buried and anything outside of 300
3 feet can lay on the bottom.

4
5 There is no consultation between the shrimp industry and the
6 pipeline industry, but, a lot of times, I look at the pipelines,
7 especially once they get them above the water, and it's more
8 structure for things to attach to and grow and fish to -- It's a
9 give-and-take.

10
11 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I'm an artificial reef guy, and I get that part
12 of it, but I'm just wondering, do they lay them right over the
13 black coral and then mitigate somewhere else or how does that
14 work?

15
16 **MR. BOSARGE:** To my knowledge, they don't.

17
18 **MR. JAAP:** The Gulf Stream pipeline that comes down had to avoid
19 Madison Swanson, it had to avoid the Middle Grounds, and it had
20 to avoid high-profile habitat, and so I think -- Currently, I
21 think they are pretty proactive in trying to work with the
22 environmental and the fishing industries to make sure they don't
23 do any more harm than is possible. When they do harm -- Gulf
24 Stream put in 200,000 ton of limestone boulders to compensate
25 for hard-bottom habitat injuries.

26
27 **MR. WEATHERBY:** Sorry. I don't mean to sidetrack the process.

28
29 **MR. BOSARGE:** That's fine. Go ahead.

30
31 **MR. CHAD HANSON:** Chad Hanson with the Pew Charitable Trusts. I
32 just wanted to make one comment to that last comment by Mr. Walt
33 Jaap. On the Madison Swanson, the oil and gas industry was
34 going to lay that pipeline, and the person that was doing the
35 research out there from FSU actually had to fly to D.C. to point
36 out that that's actually a HAPC. They were not being proactive
37 when they were laying the pipeline through. It took the
38 scientists to go and be proactive to try to get them to put the
39 pipeline around that, and I just wanted to point out that
40 clarification.

41
42 **MR. BOSARGE:** Thank you. All right. Back to our site, we're
43 looking at it, and we do see some tracks there that I know, and
44 most of you other shrimpers know, that's got to be transit
45 tracks. Do we want to, and it has to be the coral, want to
46 adopt the -- Go ahead, Walt.

47
48 **MR. JAAP:** I would say we have at least two options. One would

1 be to adopt the three sites in the deep water that we've looked
2 at, AT 047, AT 357, and Mississippi Canyon, or, as someone
3 pointed out, I think that the AT 357 site seems to have more
4 resources and perhaps is a better site to put on the priority
5 list. Is there any discussion on that?

6
7 **DR. LANG:** I guess I would like to ask Erik for his
8 prioritizing.

9
10 **DR. CORDES:** I would definitely rank this as, in my opinion, of
11 the rest of the deepwater sites that we have on the list, this
12 would be my number one.

13
14 **MR. JAAP:** 357?

15
16 **DR. CORDES:** Yes, that's right.

17
18 **MR. BOSARGE:** Do we adopt the boundary that is in the green or
19 the red? The green is the sanctuary boundary. Do we adopt the
20 sanctuary boundary or do we adopt this prioritizing boundary?

21
22 **MR. JAAP:** I would recommend that we consider the sanctuary
23 expansion boundary rather than the SSC's recommendation.

24
25 **MR. BOSARGE:** It looks like it fits the bottom better, and so
26 would you like to put that in a motion?

27
28 **MR. JAAP:** G.P., do you have a comment?

29
30 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Just as part of the discussion, I prefer the first
31 thing that you said, was to incorporate all three of these
32 areas, and essentially because even though this 357 is probably
33 the highest priority of the three, all of them are important
34 deepwater sites and none of them appear to have any fishing
35 conflicts associated with them.

36
37 **MR. JAAP:** All right. I will make a motion that we prioritize
38 the three deepwater sites, which are AT 047, AT 357, and
39 Mississippi Canyon 118, as priority sites in deep water.

40
41 **MR. BOSARGE:** Steve.

42
43 **DR. ROSS:** Before we do that, what are we going to do with Green
44 Canyon 852, which is also a deepwater site?

45
46 **MR. BOSARGE:** Is Green Canyon 852 the one we looked at prior or
47 we have not looked at it?

1 **MR. JAAP:** We haven't looked at it yet, I don't think.
2
3 **DR. ROSS:** I mean I guess my point is let's get all of these in
4 one batch and deal with them, but just make sure we've covered
5 all those bases for deepwater sites.
6
7 **MR. BOSARGE:** Morgan, can you show us where Green Canyon 852 is?
8
9 **DR. KILGOUR:** I absolutely can.
10
11 **MR. JAAP:** It has more species listed, from the earlier work.
12 It's in the depth range of --
13
14 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I will also point out that there is a couple of
15 additional ones that I don't think we've talked about yet
16 either, Mississippi Canyon 751 and 885.
17
18 **UNIDENTIFIED:** One of those I don't think is on our original
19 list though.
20
21 **DR. CORDES:** I just wanted to point out that pretty much all of
22 the sites that are listed by their lease block numbers are all
23 in water depths over 1,000 feet, and those are the sites that I
24 was sort of suggesting that we could just consider in bulk, as
25 long as there is no conflict.
26
27 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Thanks.
28
29 **DR. CORDES:** There is maybe eight to ten of them, or maybe more.
30
31 **MR. BOSARGE:** Morgan.
32
33 **DR. KILGOUR:** What you're seeing here is those purple dots are
34 all coral points. The green line that runs through, that's a
35 pipeline. If I turn off the coral points, so we can better see
36 when I zoom in, there doesn't appear that there is any points
37 for shrimping tracks or anything like that.
38
39 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. What does the Coral SSC --
40
41 **MR. JAAP:** We could add this one to the other three that we had.
42
43 **MR. BOSARGE:** What kind of total does that bring us to?
44
45 **MR. JAAP:** I think it would bring us a little over ten, wouldn't
46 it? There is four here.
47
48 **MR. BOSARGE:** Is there anybody with any more discussion? Steve.

1
2 **DR. ROSS:** Well, there is a suggestion that there is more than
3 four of these deepwater sites, and we're kind of -- It seems
4 like we're sort of getting bogged down in this part without
5 going back to consider the shallow-water sites. The problem is
6 we don't have a clear set of objective criteria to balance all
7 of these against, and so I'm not sure whether we should just
8 limit ourselves to a few of these deepwater sites and move on or
9 not. That's unclear to me.

10
11 **MR. BOSARGE:** Paul.

12
13 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I think what we have here is a group, and we may
14 as well deal with them, accept them or not accept them or
15 whatever, now and move on to the next group, and I think we
16 should de-focus on the number ten or eleven or twelve or
17 whatever it is and do what we can do, but we've already gone
18 through and discussed these and we've analyzed them. They seem
19 to be in pretty good shape, and let's deal with them.

20
21 **MR. BOSARGE:** Walter.

22
23 **MR. JAAP:** I think I support what Paul suggested, is basically
24 we consider this group, these four deepwater sites, and then I
25 would suggest we move to south Texas. There are a couple of
26 sites there that we need to look at. They are in shallower
27 water, but I think they need to be evaluated and discussed.

28
29 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay. I thought you said we didn't have anything
30 in south Texas.

31
32 **MR. JAAP:** Not in deep water. I'm saying we get the deep water
33 and then we move to Texas. That would be my suggestion, but I
34 think the motion is on the board and we should address it and
35 either vote it up or down.

36
37 **MR. BOSARGE:** It's up to you to make the motion.

38
39 **MR. JAAP:** The motion is up there. Any further comment? Go
40 ahead, Morgan.

41
42 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just so I'm clear, did you want to add Green
43 Canyon 852 to this? I'm just unclear.

44
45 **MR. JAAP:** Yes, please. The SSC then would -- All in favor of
46 this.

47
48 **MR. BOSARGE:** One second, Walt. We've got Chad.

1
2 **MR. HANSON:** Unfortunately, Erik is not here. He's on the
3 phone, but he has made suggestions. He's one of the deep-sea
4 scientists that's been out there to these areas, and he is
5 making a suggestion to include them all, and I am not clear as
6 to how these areas here are being prioritized over the others,
7 when some of the scientists are saying they all should be
8 included, and so I think maybe that's probably where the
9 committee could go.

10
11 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I would agree with that. I would agree with this
12 motion, because these are priorities, but I will point out again
13 that there is Mississippi Canyon 751 and Mississippi Canyon 885
14 and Green Canyon 234 and Green Canyon 140 and 272 and Garden
15 Banks 299 and Green Canyon 354 and Garden Banks 435. These have
16 also been identified as important deep-coral areas, and I think,
17 to make this simple, we could take them all and identify them as
18 priority areas. They don't have fishing conflicts, and we could
19 do them as a group.

20
21 **MR. BOSARGE:** Paul.

22
23 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I agree that these areas are probably all
24 important. However, with respect to our trawling colleagues,
25 our shrimpers and so forth, I think we really need to go and
26 review each one of them, so that everyone is comfortable with
27 our declaring them a go or no-go. They may well all be go, but
28 at this point it's -- Without reviewing them, it's hard to say.
29 I know that bogs the process down, but it is the process.

30
31 **MR. BOSARGE:** I am worried about if we throw too much at them at
32 one time that -- Anyhow, Morgan.

33
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** I'm going to make a suggestion. Once you're
35 finished with this motion, I would really recommend that we move
36 over to the South Texas Banks, because there is -- I mean we're
37 supposed to end at noon today, but flights don't always go
38 according to my schedule, and so I would like to make sure that
39 we at least get the areas that are going to be involved with
40 friendly conversation before we go to these deepwater sites,
41 since there doesn't seem that there's a lot of heartburn about
42 them, and you guys can decide how to address these after we do
43 the South Texas Banks. That's my plea. Thank you.

44
45 **MR. BOSARGE:** The most heartburn will be from the oil and gas
46 industry on these.

47
48 **MR. JAAP:** In an incremental approach here, we're going to go

1 and -- I would suggest we vote on the sites that are up there
2 and the motion as priority for -- These are all deepwater sites.
3 We've had discussion on them. **All in favor.**

4
5 **MR. BOSARGE:** Five. **Anybody against?**

6
7 **MR. JAAP:** Is anyone against that particular motion on the SSC?

8
9 **MR. BOSARGE:** The motion carries unanimous.

10
11 **MS. KRUEGER:** I would like to ask the Coral AP if they would
12 like to approve the same motion. Any opposed?

13
14 **MR. BOSARGE:** Coral supports the motion. The shrimp industry?
15 The Shrimp AP supports the motion. Dennis Henderson.

16
17 **MR. HENDERSON:** You know we're here, and the way I understood
18 it, we were going to do ten sites. Now it looks like every site
19 is a priority. I mean I don't think we'll ever finish this
20 meeting today if we keep going on the way we are.

21
22 **MR. BOSARGE:** Ms. Bosarge.

23
24 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think what Morgan had suggested, I think it's
25 probably a good idea. I think she's going to move into the
26 south Texas ones, which are a little bit shallower and may have
27 some conflicts, and then essentially the group can put as many
28 priority areas in as they want, but just keep it in mind that if
29 that list grows too vast that what happens is, when it gets to
30 the council, then the council ends up trying to figure out which
31 ones were really the important ones, if we feel we can only
32 handle ten sites in a document or something.

33
34 We really want that to come from you all, and so that's why it
35 was important for you all to kind of -- What Morgan had said
36 about the discussion at the council and what we were thinking
37 about doing with that document, so that you all are the ones on
38 the coral side that tell us the very most important ones.

39
40 You're more than welcome to put them all in there, but if we
41 can't handle them all in a document, then we end up going, okay,
42 well, which ones were really their top ten, essentially, or
43 something like that, and so we really want that to come from you
44 all, and so just keep that in mind as you go through these
45 discussions.

46
47 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Joe.

1 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I think that these folks have come a long way,
2 and let's get to the ones that are going to be contentious or
3 that need adjustment, as opposed to stuff in deep water, where
4 there is no fishing.

5
6 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. That sounds good. Walter.

7
8 **MR. JAAP:** I would say we move to the south Texas. We voted on
9 this, and it's approved.

10
11 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. We have a motion, and it's all
12 approved, and let's go to south Texas.

13
14 **MR. JAAP:** The sites in south Texas include Baker Bank,
15 Hospital/North Hospital/Aransas Banks, and that's all one, the
16 Southern Banks, Dream Bank, Big Adam, Blackfish Ridge,
17 Mysterious Banks, and Harte, all of which are in the fifty to
18 one-hundred-meter range, which we consider to be the shallower
19 area, and I will suggest maybe does someone have a particular
20 bank they would like to offer up as a starting point? Morgan.

21
22 **DR. KILGOUR:** I would like to remind the Coral SSC and AP that
23 these all, except for Harte Bank, were areas that needed
24 boundary revision, based on the discussion that was had at the
25 May 2015 meeting. I did another one of my boundary revisions,
26 where you can see, now that shrimp effort is being overlaid on
27 this, that this is a pretty prime shrimping grounds.

28
29 What I did was I would go into each individual bank, and when I
30 have bathymetry of data available, which I do, but it's -- You
31 can see it's checked, but it's not showing, and so my computer
32 is giving me issues again.

33
34 I followed the feature, as best I could, while trying to
35 minimize shrimping, and so, if we want to start from south and
36 go north, that would be fine, and I can zoom in and you can see,
37 if that's all right with you, but I was trying to minimize the
38 number of points.

39
40 Really, when you look at the effort, you can see where the banks
41 are pretty much without having to even see the bathymetry, and
42 so just imagine that it's there, and you can see where the banks
43 really are, because there aren't tow points over the tops of
44 these banks, for the most part. There is a few, but when you
45 look at where the shrimping occurs, it's really not on the tops
46 of these banks.

47
48 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay. Here again, these are going to be

1 contentious spots, in that, if you look at south Texas and the
2 shrimp industry, we pretty much know where the coral is at, and
3 we're staying off of it, and Morgan has done a good job of
4 trying to draw the boxes where they fit best.

5
6 My concern is, if you also look at shrimp tracks, you can pretty
7 well see that there are very little other bottom obstructions or
8 natural bottom for other fishermen to fish other than these
9 places, and so, if we make this an HAPC and we regulate all
10 commercial fishing out of it, you pretty much are going to take
11 away the commercial fishermen from that end of the state.

12
13 This is my problem with it. As far as the shrimp industry is
14 concerned, we've done a really nice job of making it work for
15 our industry, but my concern is for the other industries that
16 also depend on this.

17
18 **MR. JAAP:** Are these -- Would you describe them as being bandit
19 fisheries or longline or both or what?

20
21 **MR. BOSARGE:** Both. Go ahead.

22
23 **MR. RUZICKA:** Morgan, is that Alternative 5 that you have in the
24 green there or what does the green box represent?

25
26 **DR. KILGOUR:** The green box represents my boundary revision,
27 based on the bathymetry of the feature, and I want to say that
28 this is -- I have bathymetry on here, and you can see the bank
29 right in here, but this is not the extent of the whole bank. I
30 have better bathymetry. There's been a couple of cruises on
31 there, and so that's why this looks significantly larger. This
32 is -- What you can see is very broad-scale bathymetry. It's for
33 the whole entire Gulf of Mexico. What I have is much better,
34 and it, unfortunately, won't show up.

35
36 If you want, before you make a decision on each individual bank,
37 I can move from bank to bank to bank, so you can see where the
38 shrimp tracks are. There is only one really that wasn't an
39 issue, and I should have started with that one.

40
41 That's Harte Bank right here. You can see that it's avoided
42 pretty well. That was the one that didn't seem to need
43 revisions. Up here, we have another bank. You can see the
44 feature, Blackfish Ridge. It's pretty well avoided already. A
45 lot of these communities also -- There are black corals on
46 there, and so they are a part of the fishery management unit,
47 but most of the coral diversity on here are octocorals, which,
48 again, would need to be reincorporated.

1
2 Big Adam Rock, there is just a small corner of this whole entire
3 lease block that really has the feature. Green Bank, you can
4 see it, but I mean, when you zoom in, you can see where the
5 banks are just without even the bathymetry, because they are
6 avoided.

7
8 **MR. BOSARGE:** Steve.

9
10 **DR. ROSS:** I haven't worked these sites. I have read some about
11 them, but it appears that the actual hard ground is avoided,
12 which you would expect if anybody knows what they're doing out
13 there, but is there any -- Do we have any information or any way
14 to ecologically rank these eight sites, instead of just looking
15 at these maps? Does anybody have any data that would suggest
16 that one site is better than another or richer or more diverse
17 or has a higher profile? That's the kind of information that I
18 would like to --

19
20 **MR. JAAP:** Steve, the data from the earlier work, which is
21 probably -- It's incomplete, in some respects, but Baker, we
22 didn't have anything for at that time. Hospital/North
23 Hospital/Aransas had fourteen coral species, and that would
24 include octocorals, scleractinians, and black corals. Southern
25 Bank had seven. Big Adam, I did not have any information on.
26 Blackfish Ridge was five. Mysterious Bank, we don't have data,
27 and Harte had five, and so, of the group, it appears that
28 Hospital and North Hospital probably had -- From that
29 preliminary data, it was richer.

30
31 **MR. BOSARGE:** Harris was next.

32
33 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** I have two issues that I want to talk about.
34 First, Morgan, I'm kind of confused on the dots. Are they in
35 tow or are they in transit, and do they have longliner dots on
36 there? No longliners? How about the dots? Are they in transit
37 or they're dragging? They're all dragging? Okay.

38
39 The second issue that I want to talk about is we do have maps,
40 and Gary might address this. I don't know what the map's name
41 is, but it shows all of these areas, and shrimpers try to keep
42 away from there, because, first of all, some of these areas, if
43 you get in the rocks and all, it's like razor blades, and it
44 tears up your nets, and nets are very expensive now. They used
45 to have cotton nets and nylon nets, and now they're going to
46 these poly plastics, which are very expensive, and you can't
47 afford to lose your gear.

1 Then Gary also came out with a hang book, and I don't know if
2 Florida and Mississippi and all have hang books, but every
3 shrimp has a hang book that shows you where the rocks are, and
4 it shows you where the reefs are at, and it shows you where the
5 sunken boats are at, and you avoid that, because you could lose
6 \$10,000 or \$20,000 worth of equipment. That's why you see the
7 shrimpers staying away from these areas, and I will let you
8 comment, Gary.

9
10 **MR. GRAHAM:** Well, first of all, my hang book went back to --
11 They're dinosaurs now. That was all back in the loran days,
12 and, when we got GPS, that obviated a need for my efforts,
13 because what you do now is fishermen have computers on their
14 boats with very advanced navigation and plotting systems and
15 these sorts of things, and what they do is they exchange
16 information through computer chips and stuff now, Harris, and
17 these guys know that -- You can see that. They know.

18
19 Hospital, these areas were -- I have been around a long time,
20 and they were named before I ever came on the scene in 1966.
21 Hospital got the name because an old shrimp said if you get in
22 there that it's going to tear you up and put you in the
23 hospital. I mean that stuff has been known for years, but, yes,
24 the industry has this information, and it's very obvious in
25 looking at the plots that they're avoiding it.

26
27 **MR. BOSARGE:** Joe, you were next.

28
29 **MR. WEATHERBY:** Maybe Harris answered my question, but, Morgan,
30 is there any information, anecdotal or otherwise, for fisheries
31 that are not shrimping, as far as activities around some of
32 these areas, the bandits and -- I don't know if there's any
33 trapping or -- I just heard you say no longlining information,
34 right?

35
36 **DR. KILGOUR:** I just put on the VMS data, and so it's -- Like I
37 said, the purple is cold and red is hot, and so it doesn't
38 appear that -- What I wanted to say is that I have the
39 unpublished from the University of Texas Brownsville, and there
40 are published reports from Harriet Nash that they went on two
41 cruises in 2013 and 2014, I believe, and they mapped all this
42 and they did extensive studies.

43
44 These areas are very different from all of the other areas that
45 you are considering. Their makeup is different, and the species
46 on them are different, but the one area, I believe, that I
47 remember, and I could be misspeaking, that all of the
48 researchers out there that -- That was their priority area, was

1 Unnamed Bank, this Harte Bank.

2
3 They found an interesting diversity of animals, and it also had
4 interesting sedimentation and non-sedimentation. It was hard to
5 -- They had to go there three times before they could actually
6 see anything, because of the currents, but that was, I think,
7 and I might be misspeaking, but that was their priority area of
8 all of these areas, because it was the most diverse with fish
9 and coral, and it was it unique.

10
11 **MR. WEATHERBY:** When I'm looking at this, the hot and cold
12 representation on this type of chart or representation or
13 whatever we're calling it, is this representing -- This
14 represents more than shrimping, correct?

15
16 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, this is the VMS points. She can't give you
17 the actual points, because that would be too proprietary.

18
19 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I understand that, but I mean what I'm saying
20 is, when I look at -- There was a chart up a couple of seconds
21 ago that was almost entirely purple.

22
23 **MR. BOSARGE:** That was shrimping.

24
25 **MR. WEATHERBY:** Does that mean there's no shrimping in it or
26 does that mean there's no longlining or bandit or --

27
28 **MR. BOSARGE:** That's just shrimping.

29
30 **DR. KILGOUR:** The purple represents the VMS, and that would be -
31 - We have four different permits that we were able to -- There
32 is a lobster VMS, there is a reef fish VMS, there is a snapper
33 VMS, and there is a shrimp VMS. That's what all of this is.

34
35 All this means is that, over the past ten years, there was up to
36 thirty-three hits in that purple box. The aqua boxes are
37 actually -- There is more hits in those, and so anywhere between
38 173 and 900 over the past ten years.

39
40 I forgot to mention that -- I mean I used to live in south
41 Texas, and so I'm a little bit more familiar with the
42 recreational side of these, but all of these banks are heavily
43 recreationally fished, but, again, the regulations that you are
44 proposing to the council wouldn't affect all of that, but these
45 are prime spots for fishermen to go and fish.

46
47 **MR. WEATHERBY:** Again, just to -- I'm sorry if I seem thick,
48 but, just to be real clear, this is not only shrimping, but it's

1 all commercial fishing effort, correct?

2
3 **DR. KILGOUR:** This is not shrimping at all. This is VMS data.
4 The shrimping data are the dots that are going to show up that
5 will make this all black.

6
7 **MR. WEATHERBY:** All right. Very good. I just want to make sure
8 that -- There is industries that aren't here, and I want to make
9 sure that we're at least thinking about them while we're doing
10 this, that's all.

11
12 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Johnny and then Steve.

13
14 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Based on what Harris said and certainly Gary's
15 reply and what we see here from the shrimp industry, I honestly
16 don't see why these spots are even being considered at HAPCs.
17 That's very aggressive, but we don't need it.

18
19 **MR. BOSARGE:** Steve.

20
21 **DR. ROSS:** I guess I am confused now, too. I was asking Walt
22 that question about data, and I'm having a hard time reconciling
23 what Walt said with the data that Morgan just threw out. I'm
24 trying to find a way to -- These are topographic highs, and they
25 obviously have some other fisheries besides shrimping that are
26 related to them, but it would appear, from Walt said, that
27 Hospital and Aransas Bank complexes is the area where there is
28 the most biological or ecological significance, but I am trying
29 to find a way to move forward here. It seems like we're sort of
30 stuck on looking at these maps and dots, and we haven't made any
31 progress.

32
33 **MR. BOSARGE:** Well, we knew this was going to be kind of
34 contentious.

35
36 **MR. JAAP:** Just to clarify for you, Steve, I was using data that
37 came from I think the 2014 group that got together. Morgan has
38 a lot more data that has been compiled since that point in time.
39 I guess you could say that, priority-wise, at least when I did
40 my multivariate exercise, I pulled out Harte Bank as being one
41 of the priority sites in this particular area. It seems like
42 other people have, for other reasons, have picked that site as a
43 primary site, and so that's all I can say, and I hope that
44 clarifies it, to some degree.

45
46 **DR. ROSS:** Just to respond quickly, it does, and that's also the
47 area that has the least conflict, it would appear, and so is
48 that where we would want to start and talk about that one and

1 move forward?

2
3 **MR. BOSARGE:** Possibly, but let me get Dennis in here first.

4
5 **MR. HENDERSON:** Morgan, can you put that area up there where
6 you've got the dots inside there? Let me explain to you. A lot
7 of that is, okay, dragging is one, two, or three knots, but a
8 lot of fishermen would pull off there if they had some kind of
9 trouble and they picked their rigs up and they would just idle.

10
11 They would go two or three knots, and it would look like they
12 were shrimping, but really they're probably working on their
13 rigs, and they probably went in there because there wasn't any
14 boats. Don't think, just because those dots are there, that
15 they were actually shrimping, because there is no real lines to
16 them.

17
18 If you put that up, one you had up there -- See, all the rest of
19 them is lines. They are dragging for two or three hours and
20 everything. Those things there, they look like maybe fifteen or
21 thirty minutes or something like that there. That don't
22 actually mean that they were dragging.

23
24 If you're in a fleet of boats and you've got a little bit of a
25 problem, that would probably be the area where there wouldn't be
26 any boats, and you would go in there and you would just idle and
27 fix your problem and go back out. I just want you all to
28 understand that.

29
30 **MR. BOSARGE:** Harris.

31
32 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** They may also be just trolling and fishing over
33 the reef, too. They might not be going all the way down to the
34 reef, but you've got sports fishermen. A lot of these shrimpers
35 -- I never did it. I would rather go to sleep and wait and work
36 at night, but some of them would stay up and they would fish,
37 and so you don't really know why they were in that area. If
38 there were rocks or reefs, they weren't dragging. There was no
39 way they could be dragging, because they would lose everything.

40
41 **MR. BOSARGE:** That's right. Paul, you're next.

42
43 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I think we're dealing with an area here that is
44 diametrically opposed to the area that we were just dealing
45 with, where it was deep and there was not a lot going on and
46 that sort of thing. Here, there is heaps going on, and we know
47 there is hard bottom, and we know it's of value.

1 The frequency of trawling is much, much higher on the skirts of
2 these things than the ones that we've looked at. Therefore,
3 over time, if you integrate that over time, there's a higher
4 probability that somebody may get lost or go over the top or
5 whatever it is, and, again, these banks are old. I liken them
6 to old-growth forests, like a redwood forest. They take a long
7 time to establish, and, once they're kind of decimated, they
8 take a long, long time to bounce back.

9
10 The object of the game is to protect the hard bottom, and it
11 seems to me that having the HAPC isn't really going to affect
12 99.99 percent of the trawlers anyway, because they are avoiding
13 the area. They know it's there, and they will stay out of it.
14 They don't want to lose their nets. I wouldn't want to if I
15 were a trawler. It sounds very expensive. I just think that's
16 something to keep in mind.

17
18 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Gary.

19
20 **MR. GRAHAM:** I am kind of compelled to indicate to you that we
21 did a study in the early days of these electronic logbooks. We
22 put observers on the boats to match what the boat was doing and
23 what was being recorded from the electronic logbooks. It's not
24 100 percent accurate. I think we got a 97 percent accuracy.

25
26 You've still got a 3 percent outlier involved in this, and so I
27 just think you need to understand that too, if there is some of
28 these dots that are not matching up. It was 97 percent though,
29 which we think, Johnny, was pretty good, but we conducted a
30 several-year study on that with observers through the
31 Foundation, and so --

32
33 **MR. BOSARGE:** One comment I would like to make is I look at
34 these banks and I see that Morgan has drawn the boxes in the
35 right direction and we've got it all tweaked down, but, in
36 reality, making them HAPCs, what are we going to accomplish
37 here? In other words, unless somebody goes out there and builds
38 a wall or a fence around it, you're still going to have the
39 shrimpers there. They're still going to be in the same place.

40
41 The only thing that, as far as protecting the coral, the only
42 thing that could come out of it would be to shut the bottom
43 fishermen out. I mean am I right or am I wrong? I mean what
44 will you gain, other than being able to -- If one shrimper goes
45 in there and does something, being able to go and maybe take him
46 to court and get something done that way, but, as far as drawing
47 a box around it and putting rules in place, that's not going to
48 -- If somebody is going to accidentally do something, it's not

1 going to stop that. Are you following what I'm saying? In
2 other words, what would we gain by giving these that status?
3 What would we gain?

4
5 **MR. JAAP:** I guess, from a practical standpoint, you could say
6 that, as Morgan had pointed out, that if some agency or some
7 company wanted to go do a mineral extraction or oil and gas
8 development or something, there would be some review of the
9 area, more so than it would be if it was not an HAPC, and I
10 think, from an ecological standpoint, as Morgan pointed out
11 also, that this site has some unique attributes in terms of the
12 species and the densities and the abundance of these organisms.

13
14 From an ecological context, there is some value in supporting a
15 minimalist approach of protection for this area. I agree with
16 you that it's heavily used and it's going to not be a pristine
17 site, for sure, and it has that kind of thing, and so I mean
18 it's debatable where we go here.

19
20 **MR. BOSARGE:** To me, by making this an HAPC, it hasn't affected
21 the shrimpers. All you've done is to take the rights away from
22 the commercial fishermen to go in there and fish it. You left
23 the rights -- Most of the time, the way the rules go, you left
24 the rights to all the recreational fishermen. They can still go
25 in and do whatever they want to do, however they want to do it,
26 within reason, and so it's almost like you -- If it was blanket
27 rights, where, okay, we're going to take everybody out of here
28 and nobody is going to come in and nobody is going to -- Then,
29 okay, this is fair.

30
31 Otherwise, to me, it's unfair. That's just my opinion, but the
32 one Unnamed Bank or Harte Bank on the very bottom, that looks
33 like a spot that we might could do something with, but Steve.
34 That's just my opinion.

35
36 **DR. ROSS:** Maybe we had better stick with Harte Bank. I guess I
37 was just going to say that my understanding of the rule would be
38 that it would eliminate bottom-disturbing gear, regardless of
39 who is using it, and so the protection would be, I think,
40 uniform, and we could ask that. I am a little worried about
41 applying that criteria, because we could have asked that
42 question of all of these sites, is what are we gaining and
43 nobody is using it and why are we doing it.

44
45 I think some of this process is with an eye toward the future
46 that we don't yet know, setting aside areas that are productive,
47 that will continue to be productive, and protect those habitats,
48 and so I think that's what we should focus on, and it would

1 appear that Harte has got some criteria that support it.

2
3 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Johnny and then Joe.

4
5 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I certainly agree with Steve and to your comment,
6 Steve. On these issues, I think we should go with what we know
7 and not necessarily into the future on this particular issue.
8 Now, other ones may be different, but I think we should go with
9 what we know, and what we know is we don't use this bottom.

10
11 We can't use this bottom, and there is so much activity around
12 it, and I think the Harte Bank certainly sounds unique,
13 according to what Morgan said, and maybe consider making that a
14 HAPC and just leaving the rest of it and let it continue to do
15 what we do. Now, Morgan, tell me again, if you don't mind, how
16 old are these tracks or these dots? They go from 2003 to 2013?

17
18 **DR. KILGOUR:** 2004 to 2013.

19
20 **MR. WILLIAMS:** 2004, okay. That's a long time. I mean that's a
21 good example of the shrimp industry, in ten or twelve years, not
22 even making a drag in these places, not even anything, and so I
23 still stand by the argument that maybe, with the exception of
24 the Harte Bank, because it appears to be unique, leave these
25 things alone. That way, you don't shut out any fishing, any
26 commercial fishing of any kind, while still they're being
27 protected, because people can't work in them.

28
29 **MR. BOSARGE:** I've got Joe next.

30
31 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I would say some of the value that I see to
32 these HAPC designations -- Again, I want to hear from all the
33 stakeholder groups, and I like eating fish, and so I'm all for
34 fishing. However, I would say this.

35
36 It's a big ocean out there. Some of these places that are
37 identified as having a certain concentration of species and a
38 certain set of resiliency and a certain hardiness, to the extent
39 that they can survive next to all that shrimping says something
40 about the way that they're constructed as positive
41 environmentally.

42
43 Even though there is a million scientists coming from a million
44 places that want to study this, it's a big ocean, and I think
45 that the HAPC designation serves to concentrate the limited
46 financial resources, that we get a big database on a small,
47 resilient area, which would have more value than 15,000
48 scientists studying 15,000 separate places.

1
2 These places, just like Gary was saying, they were named before
3 his time and they're still here. This says something, something
4 inherently powerful, about that place environmentally, something
5 survivable, and, to the extent that it's close offshore and you
6 can get more scientists there than you can at 150 miles farther
7 out, it might make the information coming from that more
8 valuable in the long run to all the fishermen and to all the
9 environment, and so I see some logic to setting these places
10 aside, even though I know it's hard to do and a pain in the
11 neck.

12
13 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Judith.

14
15 **DR. LANG:** Thank you, Joe. I appreciate those remarks, and I
16 would add to them that, if a couple of the banks besides Harte,
17 which is apparently unique, are considered HAPCs and longlining
18 and dragging on the bottom and those kinds of fishing efforts
19 are curtailed on those couple of sites, they will act as
20 reservoirs for the reef fish populations to flourish, and there
21 will be a spillover effect that will positively impact all the
22 other banks where the longliners are allowed to continue
23 fishing. In terms of benefitting the fishing industry, it also
24 makes a lot of sense to set aside a couple.

25
26 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I would like to make a brief comment.

27
28 **MR. BOSARGE:** Walt is next.

29
30 **MR. JAAP:** To begin the process and get us to move a little bit
31 here, I will make a motion that Harte Bank be given priority
32 status as an HAPC.

33
34 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. We've got some more folks that want to
35 speak here. We've got Steve next and then Gary and then Joe and
36 then Paul.

37
38 **DR. ROSS:** I was going to propose something similar to what Walt
39 just said, and I would like to add to that that I think the
40 Coral AP should join in that motion, so it's a joint motion, at
41 least.

42
43 **MR. BOSARGE:** Gary.

44
45 **MR. GRAHAM:** I just wanted to address something that Judy said
46 there. You're saying longline, but Steve related back that you
47 could maybe take the longliners out, but what are you going to
48 do with the recreational fishermen and everything that are going

1 in and removing the fish? That's an issue that I think is quite
2 important.

3
4 **DR. LANG:** Morgan, if we designate this as an HAPC, do any
5 future regulations that are associated with that affect
6 recreational fishing? Is that off the table?

7
8 **DR. KILGOUR:** No, the current regulations will -- Let me preface
9 this by saying this is always a council decision, but the
10 regulations that were recommended by the May 2015 group was that
11 they would be consistent with the current regulations on HAPCs,
12 which is basically bottom-tending gear. Recreational angling
13 would still be allowed, but they would not be allowed to anchor
14 while recreational angling. Now, if they were diving, they
15 could still do that.

16
17 **MR. BOSARGE:** Which that's bottom-tending gear. I'm talking
18 about for the recreational side.

19
20 **DR. KILGOUR:** The council can only regulate fishing activity,
21 and so anything that's not fishing activity is outside of the
22 regulations.

23
24 **MR. GRAHAM:** For whatever it's worth, Blackfish Ridge has got
25 artificial reefs on it. Nobody has mentioned that, but I
26 thought that I might bring that out.

27
28 **MR. JAAP:** Is it an oil rig thing?

29
30 **MR. GRAHAM:** Yes, sir. It's a sunk oil rig, if I'm not
31 mistaken.

32
33 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Rob.

34
35 **MR. RUZICKA:** Morgan, let me just ask you in a different way.
36 Are there any HAPCs in the Gulf of Mexico that do regulate
37 recreational fishing, as of now, just to put it in perspective?

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** No.

40
41 **MR. BOSARGE:** I am going to get to you, but do you see why we as
42 commercial fishermen have a little bit of a problem designating
43 these as HAPCs, because all we're doing is cutting our own
44 throat.

45
46 **DR. ROSS:** Wait a minute. As I understand that, the rules apply
47 to both groups equally. It's bottom-tending gear, regardless of
48 who is setting it, and so everybody is equally applied there,

1 aren't they or not?

2

3 **MR. BOSARGE:** Leann.

4

5 **MS. BOSARGE:** Because it's a definition of what is considered
6 bottom-tending gear, and the gear that recreational fishermen
7 typically use, that traditional hook and line gear, it doesn't
8 fall into that bottom-tending gear category.

9

10 Therefore, the prohibitions that typically apply to recreational
11 fishermen are the anchoring prohibitions, like Morgan was
12 saying. They can't drop their anchor within the site, but they
13 can fish there with their gear, which goes down toward the
14 bottom, but it's not considered bottom-tending gear, based on
15 the definition.

16

17 **DR. ROSS:** But that doesn't include bandit rigs, right?

18

19 **DR. KILGOUR:** No, you can still do bandit rigs.

20

21 **MR. BOSARGE:** I've got Joe and then John.

22

23 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I understand that. What we're saying though is
24 if these HAPCs -- A swordfish longline would be okay and so
25 would a driftnet, but it's just anything that's impacting the
26 bottom or no? Could I float a swordfish longline over a HAPC?

27

28 **DR. KILGOUR:** As long as it's not a bottom longline, I am pretty
29 sure that you could still use it. It would have to be a mid-
30 water longline or --

31

32 **MR. WEATHERBY:** For me personally, I don't see a problem with
33 parity for recreational fishing. However, and I can see how
34 some of that gear even drifting without an anchor can impact the
35 bottom, from using big-drop weights and bouncing them off the
36 coral, and I get that as well. I don't see a problem
37 considering some parity. What's good for the goose is good for
38 the gander, as far as some of these HAPCs go.

39

40 **MR. BOSARGE:** John is next.

41

42 **MR. WILLIAMS:** What is the contention at this point? It seems
43 to me like Morgan has already made the rectangles and the boxes
44 and whatnot inside of all of your areas that you don't fish
45 anyway, and so what does it matter? It seems to me like what we
46 need to do is not do ten of these things, but narrow it down to
47 two and be done. We've got already thirteen or fourteen, don't
48 we, and the mandate, or at least from the council, was to say,

1 hey, let's narrow it down and let's don't do -- We're already
2 over ten. We're almost at fifteen.

3
4 **MR. BOSARGE:** I guess I will try to answer your question. The
5 contention is it doesn't really affect the shrimp industry, but
6 it still affects commercial fishermen. Like I said before, even
7 with the redrawn lines, giving them the HAPC status won't change
8 what happens in there other than to stop one sector of
9 fishermen, period. That's all you're going to do.

10
11 You're going to take commercial fishermen out. The only other -
12 - You talk about the recreational fishermen still being able to
13 go in there and fish, but the problem is where there is -- In
14 the State of Texas, there may be a hundred fishermen. On the
15 recreational side, the boats are bigger and they're faster and
16 that effort is doing this.

17
18 For every one of your commercial fishermen, you're going to have
19 ten or fifteen recreational fishermen, and I don't mean to harp
20 on it, but, if you want to know what the area contention is,
21 this is the area of contention. All you're doing is wiping out
22 one sector with your regulations that will be put in place.
23 Steve.

24
25 **DR. ROSS:** What sector and what gear are we talking about here?

26
27 **MR. BOSARGE:** It would be those bandit fishermen.

28
29 **DR. ROSS:** But that's not prohibited.

30
31 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, bandit fishermen would be prohibited,
32 correct?

33
34 **DR. ROSS:** No, they're not. It's not bottom-tending. You
35 couldn't anchor. So I mean let's be more clear about who is
36 being eliminated.

37
38 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Walt and then --

39
40 **MR. JAAP:** These are highly-contentious areas, obviously. We
41 have heard about it, but remember that this process is -- We're
42 on I guess you would say the first inning. The rest time
43 around, the review process may say that this is just
44 unacceptable to do, and so we're doing the best we can with the
45 information we have. We really respect everyone's opinion, and
46 I think if you want to take it off the -- Not put it in there,
47 that's fine, but I think, to me, we need to have a balance, to
48 some degree, of these HAPCs throughout the Gulf region, and this

1 would be the good one for probably the western or south Texas
2 area.

3
4 **MR. BOSARGE:** Ms. Bosarge.

5
6 **MS. BOSARGE:** Steve, just to answer your question, we have a lot
7 of those commercial fishermen that come to a lot of the council
8 meetings, and they talk to us about some of this that's going
9 on. From my understanding, a lot of what they do is they anchor
10 right outside of these areas, right outside the coral, and then
11 fish over where they need to be.

12
13 They may be using gear that's going to be allowed even if you
14 draw this box, but what happens is, if you don't draw that box
15 right up next to that coral, then they can no longer anchor
16 where they need to anchor, and so then they're essentially shut
17 out. That's what happens.

18
19 They can't anchor 1,000 meters outside of this and be able to
20 get where they need to get to fish, and so the anchoring
21 prohibition is what ends up eliminating them from fishing in
22 these areas, because there is just almost no way for you to get
23 that box tight enough for them to continue to fish there.

24
25 **DR. ROSS:** Right, and that was the clarification I was looking
26 for, is exactly who is excluded and for what reason. I guess
27 that brings us back to another issue, is can we live with any
28 HAPCs in this area or can we live with a couple of example
29 HAPCs?

30
31 I think Joe pointed out a couple of reasons why focusing
32 attention on these areas would potentially allow for some
33 additional data collection that would help all of us, because
34 what we're struggling with here is a lack of information on all
35 of these sites. That's one thing to consider, I think, too, but
36 I wish we had more effort on that hook and line fishery to look
37 at, like we do for the shrimp fishery. That would help us a
38 lot.

39
40 **MR. BOSARGE:** Harris.

41
42 **MR. LASSEIGNE:** You know, we're looking at all these dots, but
43 you're talking about I think she said 2003 or 2004 to 2013. The
44 dots have been eliminated, because we have limited entry. There
45 are less and fewer boats in the Gulf than there were in 2003,
46 and we keep losing fishing area.

47
48 We're out there trying to make a living, a livelihood. It would

1 be like if I come here and I tell John that, hey, you're going
2 to lose your job, because I'm going to pass this regulation and
3 you're not going to have a job. That's basically what happens.

4
5 We lose areas that we're talking about putting a bunch of
6 windmills out in the Gulf of Mexico, and I don't know where
7 that's at, but that's going to take away some fishing grounds.
8 You have pipelines out there, and you have boats that sink. As
9 we talk, there are probably some vessels that are going to sink,
10 and that will be another obstruction that we're going to have to
11 miss in our fishing grounds.

12
13 The Rigs to Reef, they have dumped some of these Liberty ships
14 in areas where we fish. We told them not to dump them there,
15 but they went ahead and dumped them, and they took away our
16 fishing grounds, and so we are losing fishing grounds, and you
17 can pass regulations, which is fine, but sometimes when they
18 pass regulations, they don't listen to the people they're
19 affecting.

20
21 Our economy is lousy in this country. We are not producing
22 anything. Our fisheries keep shrinking. Where are we going to
23 get our products, from China or Thailand? What's coming into
24 this country that we can't produce because we're shrinking our
25 own people and taking them out of jobs? That's the bottom line.

26
27 Now, you can pass all the regulations you want, but you do have
28 to have at least a little heart and consideration of people who
29 have been doing this for years. The shrimping industry has a
30 proud and a long history, and then what's going to happen? Are
31 they going to say, well, what happened to the shrimping
32 industry? Where did it go? Well, I will tell you where it
33 went. If you keep regulating and choking it to death -- Do you
34 know what it costs to replace a shrimp boat right now?

35
36 Our shrimp fleet is getting old, and I don't think there's
37 anyone in the room that really can have pocket change to buy a
38 new vessel. That's another thing that's getting expensive, and
39 so you're going to make the shrimping industry into a dinosaur,
40 and eventually you're going to have all kinds of imported
41 seafood and you won't be producing seafood in this country.

42
43 **MR. BOSARGE:** Thank you. Rob and then Paul.

44
45 **MR. RUZICKA:** I certainly understand those concerns, and I don't
46 know if we're getting a little bit off track here. I guess I
47 look at this as a two-part process, where right here we're with
48 the Shrimp AP, and what you guys are recommending -- It looked

1 like, from some of these maps that Morgan had drawn, that we
2 would be able to stay out of you guys way and affecting your
3 ability to catch shrimp in this area.

4
5 The concerns that I had heard were voiced through the other
6 fishing industries that could be impacted, and so I think, to
7 try to steer this forward, if we could pick one or two, or maybe
8 it isn't a possible situation here, but that the Shrimp AP would
9 agree that, as long as we're inside of these boundaries here and
10 we're not going to affect your industry in this area, then we
11 have a second part to this job, which is to go to the other
12 fishing industries and say we would like to propose these HAPCs
13 in this area and is there benefit from the recreational
14 community, from the longline community, from the bottom-fishing
15 community? Would it affect them if these HAPCs -- We might
16 find, from the recreational community, or even the other
17 commercial fishing sectors, that there might be some high-value
18 areas that they would be willing to protect in these areas, and
19 so I guess I'm proposing it to the Shrimp AP.

20
21 If there is one or two of these areas where we can condense
22 these boundaries that aren't going to affect you, are you all
23 going to be agreeable to that and then we can move the
24 conversation forward to the other fishing sectors?

25
26 **MR. BOSARGE:** Paul.

27
28 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I just wanted to address something I think Steve
29 said, something about anchoring, or something that Leann said.
30 I guess it's a question to you and to Morgan, which is, is it
31 possible to put mooring buoys out, very much like we have on the
32 Flower Garden Banks, for vessels that want to come out and
33 anchor, but they are prohibited to anchor in the areas that are
34 HAPCs or whatever, so they can do whatever they want to, but
35 they're not tearing up the bottom as they anchor?

36
37 **MR. BOSARGE:** Let me get to Julius.

38
39 **MR. COLLINS:** One thing that hasn't been mentioned yet is
40 there's a possible mistake that the shrimp boats are coming and
41 going and they are close to the line. All of a sudden, one
42 turns and he's got to go into the zone, which he didn't want to
43 do, but the Coast Guard sees him and fines him and takes away
44 his license and he can't fish anymore. That could happen if
45 these things exist where a lot of shrimping is going on.

46
47 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, that would be one way it would affect it.
48 Ms. Bosarge.

1
2 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think that would be a question for maybe your
3 Reef Fish AP and your other finfish fishermen, but what they
4 have said in the past is there's just not enough of those
5 mooring buoys, and if you can imagine the frequency with which
6 they fish out here, they don't always go to the same exact spot
7 every time, and so to have one spot where they can anchor,
8 regardless of what the current is doing and what the wind is
9 doing -- Do you see what I'm saying? They have to kind of
10 adjust themselves where they need to be, and so the mooring
11 buoys really limit them.

12
13 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Lance.

14
15 **MR. NACIO:** A recommendation could be that maybe they use some
16 type of sea anchors that don't go to the bottom and just hold
17 them in a slow drift to fish.

18
19 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, and I think they're working on some of that
20 to present. I have a question for the -- I see Gary looking
21 hard at the charts.

22
23 **MR. GRAHAM:** I didn't want to comment, but I am just sitting
24 here thinking of buoys. I don't like buoys. I have dealt with
25 buoys for a long time through the years on artificial reefs and
26 other things, and the lights go out on them, and they present
27 problems from somebody running at night if they're not
28 maintained, and I have just never liked buoys. I have been
29 involved in that issue for many, many years, and I promise you
30 they're trouble.

31
32 **MR. BOSARGE:** I guess my question to maybe the Shrimp AP is --
33 Morgan, could you put those shrimp tracks back up there? Is
34 there one of these banks that would be within the shrimping
35 tracks, one that we could set aside that would be a place that
36 we could make it an HAPC for betterment of the research within
37 that area? I think Harte is a done deal, and maybe I'm wrong,
38 but I am talking about one of these others like Blackfin or --

39
40 **DR. LANG:** Like Hospital or Southern, but could we also refer to
41 it as a potential replenishment zone, to emphasize that if
42 there's less fishing that --

43
44 **MR. BOSARGE:** I tend to differ from you there. I don't think
45 you're going to see less fishing. You're just going to see
46 different fishing. It won't be less fishing, and, as the years
47 go by, I think it will be more and more and more fishing, and so
48 I can't see it being a replenishing.

1
2 **DR. LANG:** Somehow, the other fishing needs to be addressed, and
3 I don't know how -- I don't know what to suggest as the way of
4 doing that, but maybe it comes down to the corals and reminding
5 the council that the recreational fishing needs to be addressed
6 in the South Texas Banks ecosystem. Are we allowed to do that,
7 Morgan?

8
9 **DR. KILGOUR:** You can make any recommendations that you would
10 like to do.

11
12 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. I've got Johnny.

13
14 **MR. WILLIAMS:** This is just a personal perspective, but I still
15 stand by that we don't need these to be HAPCs, as simple as
16 that. I just don't believe we do, from the shrimp industry
17 perspective.

18
19 Now, I can't speak for the fishing industry, but I do agree that
20 the fishing industry, all the fishing industry, recreational and
21 longline, should be involved and should be addressed and should
22 be talked with about it, but, also from a shrimp industry
23 perspective, if we made one of these HAPCs, I would certainly do
24 it with Morgan's redrawing of the lines, but, personally, I
25 would like to hear from each Shrimp AP member to see what their
26 thoughts are.

27
28 **MR. BOSARGE:** I don't mean to pull away from the group, but if
29 we're going to get a consensus out of the Shrimp AP, we've got
30 to have a little side meeting here, so to speak. Let's do a
31 ten-minute break and we'll come back at 10:30.

32
33 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

34
35 **MR. BOSARGE:** The Shrimp AP has had time to sit down and look
36 this over and talk amongst ourselves, and we've got Frank that
37 wants to speak, and he will tell you maybe where we can
38 compromise.

39
40 **MR. HELIES:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. First and foremost, and I
41 don't know if we need to make this is a motion or not, but the
42 Shrimp AP is very uncomfortable with the current box sizes, and
43 any action moving forward should utilize the council staff's
44 realigned green boxes, and so we want that on the record, first
45 and foremost, before we move forward.

46
47 **MR. BOSARGE:** I think we probably need to put that in the form
48 of a motion, where it makes it to the council.

1
2 **MR. HELIES:** I will make that motion.

3
4 **MR. GRAHAM:** I will second it.

5
6 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Did you get the motion as made by
7 Frank and seconded by Gary?

8
9 **UNIDENTIFIED:** A question. Does that include the South Texas
10 Bank sites?

11
12 **MR. BOSARGE:** That would be for the South Texas Banks.

13
14 **MR. HELIES:** For the region, yes, that Texas region.

15
16 **MR. BOSARGE:** J.P.

17
18 **MR. BROOKER:** The Coral AP would happily join that motion.

19
20 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay.

21
22 **MR. HELIES:** Let's put it up on the board before we start adding
23 things.

24
25 **DR. KILGOUR:** Is that okay?

26
27 **MR. BOSARGE:** That's it, yes. All right. We've got a motion
28 and a second. Any discussion? **All in favor aye; opposed. The**
29 **motion carries unanimously.** Does the Coral AP want to weigh in?

30
31 **MS. KRUEGER:** All in favor; any opposed. The motion carries.

32
33 **MR. BOSARGE:** Coral SSC.

34
35 **MR. JAAP:** Coral SSC, all in favor; opposed. It carries.

36
37 **MR. BOSARGE:** The Coral AP, Coral SSC, and the Shrimp AP all
38 support the motion unanimous. All right, Frank.

39
40 **MR. HELIES:** Mr. Chairman, thank you for that. That will
41 alleviate some of our concerns. **Moving forward, the Shrimp AP**
42 **will support the Unnamed Bank, Harte Bank, as a priority area in**
43 **the document.**

44
45 **MR. BOSARGE:** Do we have a --

46
47 **MR. COLLINS:** I will second that.

1 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay. Frank made the motion and Julius seconded.
2
3 **MR. JAAP:** Just a point of order. The SSC motion was never
4 seconded, because we got into other discussion, and so I think
5 we do need to do that.
6
7 **MR. BOSARGE:** Do we have a second from the SSC on the previous
8 motion?
9
10 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Second.
11
12 **MR. BOSARGE:** Paul seconds. That was on the previous motion.
13 We had to back up there just for a minute. We did not have a
14 second on the SSC's motion to support the Shrimp AP motion. Do
15 you need to vote on it again?
16
17 **MR. JAAP:** I don't think we voted on it, and so we need to vote
18 on that again.
19
20 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay. I'm sorry. We got a little ahead of
21 ourselves.
22
23 **MR. JAAP:** The Coral SSC, and the motion is to make Harte Bank a
24 priority area for HAPC status, all in favor.
25
26 **MR. RUZICKA:** I guess, just in terms of this, to make -- Well,
27 it's been changed. I guess I was going to say, if it was just
28 supporting it, does that mean all the other banks are
29 unsupported, I guess, just as a point of clarification?
30
31 **MR. BOSARGE:** Frank.
32
33 **MR. HELIES:** We kind of got ahead of ourselves here. I was
34 making that motion, and I don't even know if it was considered a
35 motion, but we are supporting the Harte Bank being named a
36 priority area, with some caveats, and so we weren't to the point
37 of discussing it yet, and so you guys may or may not want to be
38 attached to this motion. You guys kind of got ahead of
39 yourselves here, and so if we want to go back and -- I got a
40 second from Julius, and so we can have some discussion on the
41 original motion that I presented.
42
43 **MS. BOSARGE:** Morgan, we're confused.
44
45 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, let's start this over again.
46
47 **DR. KILGOUR:** I am going to interrupt. The Coral SSC and Coral
48 AP made -- They were talking about making this motion, but it

1 was never formally seconded and it was never voted on. If you
2 support this motion, then you can just vote on it now with them
3 and I can alleviate some ink on the report with having two
4 motions that say the same thing, but it's up to you on how you
5 want to do this, but you can just vote on this one and we'll be
6 okay, if you want to.

7
8 **MR. BOSARGE:** Frank.

9
10 **MR. HELIES:** Thank you. I will rescind the previous motion that
11 I made and we will add our name to this motion that was made
12 prior to the break.

13
14 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. It's the Shrimp AP's motion, correct?

15
16 **DR. KILGOUR:** You need to vote on it. Everybody else voted on
17 it, right?

18
19 **MS. KRUEGER:** We didn't. The AP didn't.

20
21 **MR. BOSARGE:** Nobody actually voted on this motion. Frank made
22 the motion and Julius seconded, and I believe we were working on
23 the SSC, and so we've got to get caught up here. That's what I
24 was trying to figure out, whose motion it is. It's the Shrimp
25 AP's motion, and so we need to let the Shrimp AP vote first on
26 their motion. Is there any discussion? No discussion and go
27 ahead.

28
29 **UNIDENTIFIED:** Frank just rescinded your motion for this, to add
30 to the --

31
32 **UNIDENTIFIED:** We will just have one motion.

33
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** I made things a lot more confusing. What happened
35 was we didn't vote on the -- The vote on this from the Coral SSC
36 and the Coral AP didn't happen, and so you were supporting a
37 motion that didn't exist, because it never was seconded or voted
38 on, and so we went back to the motion that wasn't seconded or
39 voted on and you can be part of that motion is what my
40 recommendation was, because it's supporting the motion that
41 never happened.

42
43 **MR. BOSARGE:** So where did that original motion --

44
45 **MR. JAAP:** All in favor of the motion to make Harte Bank a
46 priority for HAPC, all in favor; opposed, none.

47
48 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right.

1
2 **MS. KRUEGER:** Coral AP, motion to make Harte Bank a priority
3 area for HAPC status, approve; opposed. No opposition.
4

5 **MR. BOSARGE:** It carries unanimously. Now we're ready for the
6 Shrimp AP. All in favor say aye; opposed. The motion carries
7 unanimously. Now, Frank.
8

9 **MR. HELIES:** To answer his concern previously, we don't feel
10 comfortable with any of the other proposed areas being labeled
11 an HAPC. Now, if the SSC decides to name one a priority area
12 for this list, we will have some comments for that.
13

14 **MR. JAAP:** From the SSC, is there a proposal to include other
15 South Texas Bank sites for consideration as a priority HAPC?
16

17 **MR. BOSARGE:** Chad.
18

19 **MR. HANSON:** Thank you. I'm looking at a document that Dr.
20 Sandra Brooke sent in. I think some of the Coral SSC folks have
21 it, and she identified some areas that would be like priority
22 areas from her perspective, and she has listed Hospital Bank and
23 Southern Bank in addition to Harte Bank on this, and so I would
24 like that to be known to this committee, that she has put some
25 comments in on these areas as well.
26

27 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right.
28

29 **DR. LANG:** I would just like to follow up on Chad's remark,
30 because Sandra has listed a large number of taxa in addition to
31 the corals and gorgonians that Walt mentioned in his analysis of
32 the banks, and, of them, the two that were clearly the greatest
33 standouts were Hospital and Southern.
34

35 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Frank.
36

37 **MR. HELIES:** To those points, I didn't want to be the one to
38 promote those areas, but we will support Southern Bank.
39

40 **MR. JAAP:** A formal nomination of the bank, please.
41

42 **DR. LANG:** Perhaps we could look at both Southern and Hospital
43 before we make a final determination, and I would like to ask
44 Frank why Southern in particular.
45

46 **MR. HELIES:** It's the lesser of the evils. There is less
47 fishing activity around that area. There were some concerns
48 discussed about Hospital. Gary may be able to elucidate that

1 information.

2
3 **MR. GRAHAM:** It became more recognized. There's not just one
4 bank there. There's three, and I guess that was one of the
5 things that kind of -- It became kind of difficult, and I knew
6 that Southern was also an area of particular interest, and so,
7 quite frankly, Judy, that's why we decided that. We thought it
8 was probably a little simpler.

9
10 **MR. BOSARGE:** It looks like it has a lot of good topography.

11
12 **DR. LANG:** Southern was one of the highest rated ones in my own
13 evaluation originally, and so, personally, I am comfortable with
14 it.

15
16 **MR. BOSARGE:** It gets you up a little bit further in the state,
17 a little distance, but, Paul.

18
19 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I am just looking at Sandra's notes here, and she
20 is saying that the species diversity is the highest ranking, as
21 Judy had said, for all of these, with high-relief features, and
22 I can tell you that high-relief features usually means high
23 diversity.

24
25 It's not as big as Hospital Bank, and it has a higher number of
26 different taxa, 420, which is pretty high. 420, compared to
27 what we've seen, I think, in the northern Gulf, is pretty high,
28 and a lot of them are unique to the bank, unique meaning that
29 she hasn't seen them in other banks, and so I would support
30 Southern Bank.

31
32 **MR. BOSARGE:** Walt.

33
34 **MR. JAAP:** It also clustered out or came out in the analysis
35 that I did as one of the -- Harte and Southern were the two that
36 came out, because they're quite a bit different from one
37 another, in terms of the fauna, even though it was a marginal
38 list of fauna, and so I guess it has some benefit from the fact
39 that it is quite a bit different than Harte.

40
41 **MR. BOSARGE:** Frank.

42
43 **MR. HELIES:** This is just for my education, and I am not a coral
44 scientist. I am a marine biologist, but it's interesting to
45 hear those. I don't know much about coral, and so, moving
46 forward, as these processes continue, having a one-page white
47 paper on how you all decide what should be high priority -- Like
48 high relief equals high diversity, I didn't know that, and so

1 that's interesting information for me to have when I want to
2 make some of these decisions, just moving forward, as a point of
3 order.
4
5 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right.
6
7 **MR. JAAP:** Do we have a motion? Paul.
8
9 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I would like to move that we include Southern
10 Bank as a high-priority area for an HAPC in the western Gulf.
11
12 **MR. JAAP:** Have we got a second?
13
14 **MR. BOSARGE:** Rob seconds it.
15
16 **MR. JAAP:** Is there further discussion on Southern? **All in**
17 **favor; any against. The motion is unanimous.**
18
19 **MR. BOSARGE:** Coral AP.
20
21 **MS. KRUEGER:** Do we have to do a motion and a second or can we
22 go ahead and vote? I am lost now.
23
24 **MR. BOSARGE:** I think you're voting on this motion.
25
26 **MS. KRUEGER:** Okay. Coral AP, do we support the motion to make
27 Southern Bank a priority area for HAPC status? Opposed. **All in**
28 **favor.**
29
30 **MR. BOSARGE:** Okay. The Shrimp AP is not going to support the
31 motion. We're with you, but we're not going to support it, and
32 we have a motion supported by the Coral AP and the Coral SSC.
33 All right. Where do we move from here?
34
35 **MR. JAAP:** We could crank up the music and dance, I guess, but
36 my suggestion is take a minute or two to think about the one
37 deep reef area that we haven't really addressed, and that was
38 the Reed South site. It's in the Florida Bank area.
39
40 **MR. BOSARGE:** Morgan.
41
42 **DR. KILGOUR:** I kind of suspended your conversation about the
43 other deepwater sites that Erik had brought forth that were
44 uncontested that were named after lease blocks and moved you to
45 the South Texas Banks, in the interest of making sure everybody
46 was going to be here.
47
48 Before we go all the way back to Florida, I just want to make

1 sure that there was no further discussion on those deepwater
2 sites, the MC 751 and -- Maybe I wrong, but it was the
3 northwestern Gulf. It was Garden Banks 299, Green Canyon 354,
4 those banks that you were talking about that were all deep water
5 that were kind of uncontested, but what did you want to do with
6 those?

7
8 I know that you had already made priority areas of the two
9 deepwater waters, of two or three of the deepwater ones, but I'm
10 just making sure that I didn't artificially suspend the
11 conversation and forget to come back to it.

12
13 **MR. SCHMAHL:** In the absence of other discussion, I would make a
14 motion for discussion that all of those deepwater coral sites --
15 We should probably just list them out, but that they be
16 identified as priority sites for HAPC designation.

17
18 **MR. BOSARGE:** Leann.

19
20 **MS. BOSARGE:** Morgan, just as we're going back to these, I think
21 we're -- How many sites are we at, twelve or thirteen or
22 something like that? Fifteen? Okay. Before we add these.
23 Maybe, as the coral group has this dissuasion, to help the
24 council -- Because you can imagine this is going to come to the
25 council and it's going to say these were the coral scientists'
26 priorities.

27
28 When you have this discussion, if these are a -- I don't know
29 what your priorities are, but if these are like a medium
30 priority and all the ones you had before this are high priority,
31 if you could have that discussion and put that on the record, it
32 might help the council, rather than us just end up seeing
33 nineteen or twenty sites that are all priority and then, if we
34 decide whatever number we're comfortable with in one document,
35 honing it down, we really have nothing to go on as to what your
36 true highest priorities were.

37
38 **MR. BOSARGE:** Steve.

39
40 **DR. ROSS:** I think that's a good idea, but it's going to be
41 difficult to do, because of the diversity and sometimes lack of
42 data we've got for these sites. I'm not sure how exactly we
43 would do that.

44
45 I don't know whether Walt or G.P. have a suggestion there, but I
46 would support G.P.'s motion that the deepwater sites are all
47 equally important and seem to have fairly low contention. I
48 don't know how to sort those out into two different priority

1 levels though any better than we did.

2
3 **MR. BOSARGE:** Walt.

4
5 **MR. JAAP:** Well, I can see we're in a little bit of a dilemma
6 here. I have no problem supporting them, but I guess I would
7 say, philosophically, with this process, I was sort of hoping to
8 sort of make sure that we had some sites from the different
9 depth ranges throughout the Gulf, as we divided it into Florida
10 northeast and northwest and south Texas, even though the south
11 Texas sites were limited to the shallow areas, because of the
12 depth that we're dealing with.

13
14 I would say that I can support it, but, right now, there is no
15 deep site for Florida, and even though I am a Floridian, that's
16 my problem and not yours, but that's the reason I would suggest
17 we go there, because I think if we have too much -- I'm not sure
18 it's all redundancy, but if we have these great number of deep
19 sites in the northwest, it makes for a little bit of a challenge
20 for the council, as you pointed out, Leann, to say where are
21 they going here and why did they do that, and so I think that's
22 the only thing I would say.

23
24 **MR. BOSARGE:** Shelly and then Erik.

25
26 **MS. KRUEGER:** What if we amended that to say an HAPC with no
27 fishing regulations, since it's very deep and really the main
28 concern would probably be oil and gas?

29
30 **MR. BOSARGE:** Erik, do you want to weigh in and then Paul?

31
32 **DR. CORDES:** Just a couple of things real quick. I think there
33 is a few things. There were some deepwater Florida sites.
34 Those were the ones that we discussed yesterday that Steve was
35 trying to get the three combined into one. Those are lophelia
36 sites, and they are right off the shelf break, and they're a
37 little bit a deeper, 400 or 500 meters.

38
39 The two Viosca Knoll sites that we discussed before, I would
40 very strongly suggest that they be included in the ten and not
41 lumped with the other sites, but, all of the other ones, I think
42 the suggestion here is that this recommendation be made that
43 they not be included in the ten priority sites, but be
44 considered, and this amendment is fine, HAPC status with no
45 fishing regulations, so that we get them out of the ten, because
46 you're right, Leann, that they're not -- Because of the lack of
47 pressure, I wouldn't say they're the top priority, and I don't
48 want the council to get confused about that. Again, the two

1 Viosca Knoll sites and the three Florida sites that we talked
2 about yesterday I think should stay in the ten. Does that make
3 sense?

4
5 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Just, as the maker of the motion, I do accept the
6 no fishing regulation amendment.

7
8 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Paul and then Steve.

9
10 **DR. SAMMARCO:** I have a question for Morgan and for the Chair,
11 for Steve, and that is we've been going through this process and
12 we've identified what we -- We've discussed fifteen or more of
13 these reefs and banks or whatever. There is obviously a balance
14 of thirty or whatever it is, but is this pretty much the end of
15 the process or will we be reconvening in the future, at some
16 point in time, to discuss the balance of these banks?

17
18 **MR. BOSARGE:** I will have to defer to Morgan on that. I'm sure
19 that -- I feel we will be.

20
21 **DR. KILGOUR:** I will probably be working on this until I retire,
22 but this isn't the end of the process, but this is to get the
23 ball rolling for a scoping document, and so there will
24 definitely be reiterations. However, the areas that you are
25 putting forth will be the primary areas that that document
26 focuses on.

27
28 Now, if you have these areas with no fishing regulations, I
29 still have to do the same biological, economic, and social
30 analyses, and so you're still going to get the same information
31 whether they have regulations or not, and so it will all be
32 there in a nice package sometime by 2050, but it will all be
33 there, if that makes any sense.

34
35 **MR. BOSARGE:** Steve.

36
37 **DR. ROSS:** I think I was going to -- If I'm not mistaken,
38 somewhere in this process, and this comment maybe is for you,
39 Erik, but we didn't limit ourselves to just ten sites as the
40 magic number, but agreed we would go to twelve or fifteen or
41 even eighteen. We're still reducing the overall number by a
42 significant amount, but we're not stuck with that one target, I
43 think, and I believe that's the way we've been operating.

44
45 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Walt.

46
47 **MR. JAPP:** I guess you would say we have identified other sites,
48 some of which Erik brought up in his last comment, and so I

1 think the Knoll sites are all there, and they're going to be on
2 the priority list. It's just, as I said, that I think we give
3 the council some better information that if we -- Be
4 conservative in terms of not giving them eight deep sites.
5 That's just my feeling about it, and I would like to have a
6 little discussion, as I said, on this deep Florida site, because
7 I think it's the other -- When we're talking about deep, we're
8 talking 1,000 to 1,500 meters and not less than 1,000, and so
9 that's what we were trying to do with these deep sites. That's
10 my feeling about it, and I may be wrong, but that's sort of my
11 philosophy on it.

12
13 **MR. BOSARGE:** That's a discussion between you two groups. Go
14 ahead, Portia.

15
16 **MS. SAPP:** Would this be a good time to maybe just go back over
17 the sites that we have nominated or the sites that we've agreed,
18 because I think there's a little bit of confusion, and I just
19 want to make sure that we're all on the same page.

20
21 **DR. KILGOUR:** I think that's an excellent idea. If we just
22 scroll up to the top of the motions, that's how I'm going to do
23 this, since I haven't been able to take excellent notes. The
24 first site is Viosca Knoll 862/906. The second site that you
25 recommended was the three existing of Long Mound, North Reed,
26 and Many Mounds sites. You also recommended that Pulley Ridge
27 be a priority area, and so I don't know why that's not up there.
28 Oh, I missed it. This is what happens when you're on decaf
29 coffee.

30
31 We have Pulley Ridge, Long Mound, Many Mounds, and the North
32 Reed Site. Those are all Florida. Viosca Knoll 862/906, and we
33 also have Alabama Alps, Rough Tongue Reef, Viosca Knoll 826.
34 Those are all the northeastern Gulf of Mexico.

35
36 Again, L&W Pinnacles and Scamp Reef, that's the northeastern
37 Gulf of Mexico. AT 047 and AT 357 and GC 852 and Mississippi
38 Canyon, those are all deepwater areas. Then we went to South
39 Texas Banks, and so --

40
41 **MR. SCHMAHL:** That's fifteen, by my count.

42
43 **MR. BOSARGE:** Go ahead.

44
45 **MS. SAPP:** Can we just go back to the very first motion,
46 because, the way I read it, it didn't necessarily say that
47 Viosca Knoll is going to be made a priority, but it was just to
48 redraw the boundary, and so do we need to clarify that, or is

1 everybody getting that that's a priority site?

2
3 **DR. KILGOUR:** You're absolutely right. I guess that motion was
4 never made, but it was discussed that that was a priority site,
5 and so that was my interpretation, but if you would like to make
6 a formal motion that that become a priority site, that would be
7 fine.

8
9 I am not sure how we can really go about the redrawing of the
10 boundaries without me providing that to the whole group, and so
11 I guess that's something that I am going to have to figure out
12 my way around, or I might need a motion from the group letting
13 me know that I can redraw the boundaries based on that input and
14 everybody would be okay with that. I guess that would be okay,
15 because, if we have to have another meeting, that just delays
16 this process even more, and so --

17
18 **MR. BOSARGE:** Steve.

19
20 **DR. ROSS:** I think the way we left that discussion was that you
21 might start those boundaries or that Erik or I would, but that
22 all three of us would be involved and then pass that to the
23 royal red shrimping group as well, to come up with the final
24 boundary for the group to look at, but, regardless of what
25 boundary we end up with at that Viosca Knoll site, it would be a
26 priority. Maybe we could state that as a motion. The boundary
27 is still pending, but the concept is not.

28
29 **MR. BOSARGE:** Do you want to make that motion, Steve?

30
31 **DR. ROSS:** Very well. I move that --

32
33 **MR. BOSARGE:** Wait. There still is a motion on the floor.

34
35 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, you still have this motion, and so --

36
37 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes, we have a motion on the floor.

38
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, and so do this motion first, so we don't have
40 the same trouble as we did last time.

41
42 **MR. BOSARGE:** We've got the --

43
44 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I don't believe it was ever seconded.

45
46 **MR. BOSARGE:** No, it wasn't, G.P.'s motion. We have a motion on
47 the floor. Do we have a second? Of course, this is the Coral
48 SSC's motion.

1
2 **MR. JAAP:** We have an SSC motion to make GB 535, GB 299, GC 354,
3 GC 140 and 272, GC 234, MC 751 and 885 as priority HAPC status
4 with no fishing regulations.

5
6 **MR. BOSARGE:** Paul seconded it.

7
8 **MR. JAAP:** That's the motion. Do we need any more discussion on
9 that? Those in favor.

10
11 **DR. LANG:** Maybe we should just clarify that this, I believe,
12 was being discussed as a medium/high priority rather than a
13 high/high priority.

14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** I understood that, but you're automatically
16 putting it in a different category by adding that no fishing
17 regulation part, and so I understood that.

18
19 **MR. JAAP:** Okay. **The motion, all in favor; all opposed.** I
20 abstain on that.

21
22 **MR. BOSARGE:** The motion passes four to one.

23
24 **MR. JAAP:** With one abstention.

25
26 **MS. KRUEGER:** Same motion for the Coral AP. **All in favor; any**
27 **opposition. No opposition and the motion passes.**

28
29 **MR. BOSARGE:** Shrimp AP, do you support that?

30
31 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I don't think we need to vote on it.

32
33 **MS. BOSARGE:** Okay, and so we abstain. All right. Now we can
34 go to Steve's motion.

35
36 **DR. ROSS:** Okay. Back to the Viosca Knoll sites. **I move that**
37 **Viosca Knoll 862/906 be accepted as a priority deep coral site,**
38 **with the provision that the boundaries will be redrawn by the**
39 **council, with input from Steve Ross, Erik Cordes, and the**
40 **industry representatives.**

41
42 **MR. BOSARGE:** Shelly, it's your motion.

43
44 **MS. KRUEGER:** Okay. The motion is that Viosca Knolls be made
45 priority areas for HAPC status with provisions for boundary
46 revisions for Morgan. The motion is to make Viosca Knoll
47 862/906 with input for boundary revisions from Steve Ross, Erik
48 Cordes, and John Nelson be made a priority area for HAPC status.

1 Is there a second?
2
3 **MR. BOSARGE:** Joe seconds.
4
5 **MS. KRUEGER:** So now we will vote on it. **Motion to approve this**
6 **motion, any opposition? The motion carries.**
7
8 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right.
9
10 **MR. JAAP:** Does the SSC support the motion? **All in favor. The**
11 **motion carries.**
12
13 **MR. BOSARGE:** The motion carries. The Shrimp AP should support
14 this motion. I mean we've looked at it. Do you want to vote?
15 **All in favor of supporting the motion; against. We're all in**
16 **favor? All right.** Good deal. We all support it. All right.
17 We're starting to wind down here. I know you want to get down
18 in Florida, but --
19
20 **MR. JAAP:** I just think it needs to be discussed.
21
22 **MR. SCHMAHL:** We need to discuss it, at least.
23
24 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Let's be quick.
25
26 **MR. JAAP:** I will be quick on it. It's just basically it's the
27 South Reed site. It's a little bit -- It's very close to the
28 Pulley Ridge site, and it's on, I guess you would say, right on
29 the margin of the shelf break. It's a deep site. There
30 potentially are, from what we heard yesterday, some, I guess you
31 would say conflict areas there, because of the longline guys.
32
33 It's not a very big site. It's way down south. It's 400 to
34 1,500 meters deep. It's a small area. When we're concerned
35 about Pulley Ridge being 666 square kilometers, this place is
36 23.28 kilometers, and it's quite small. The depth is 400 to
37 1,500.
38
39 They have identified a number of both stony corals as well as
40 black corals and octocorals on the site. This was recommended
41 by John Reed. He's the guy that sort of found it, and, as I
42 said, it's -- I don't know if you can get the chart up there,
43 but --
44
45 **MR. BOSARGE:** Are you working on it, Morgan?
46
47 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes.
48

1 DR. LANG: What was the depth range?
2
3 MR. JAAP: The depth was 400 to 1,500 meters.
4
5 DR. LANG: So 1,300 to 4,500 feet.
6
7 DR. KILGOUR: Again, I apologize. My bathymetry doesn't want to
8 pull up on another site that we are looking at. I have fine-
9 scale bathymetry, but here is the fifty-fathom line.
10
11 MR. BOSARGE: Do the shrimp points -- Will they pull up?
12
13 MR. JAAP: Is this an area that would be potentially or is a
14 royal red area?
15
16 MR. BOSARGE: I don't think.
17
18 DR. KILGOUR: At the last meeting, it was thought that this
19 might potentially be a royal red shrimping area, but I spoke
20 with Mr. Nelson after the meeting, and he talked with who he
21 thought was shrimping down there, and that was not an area of
22 concern.
23
24 MR. BOSARGE: I believe it appears it's pretty well outside of
25 that bottom.
26
27 DR. KILGOUR: My computer is giving me issues again, but there
28 is a line of tracks right here and right over here.
29
30 MR. BOSARGE: That was someone who is very brave.
31
32 MR. JAAP: Perhaps an option here is to do as we did with some
33 of the others and say that this would be a medium priority site
34 in the context of perhaps no fishing regulations on it.
35
36 DR. LANG: If you make that a motion, I will second it.
37
38 MR. JAAP: The motion is to make Reed South an HAPC with the
39 stipulation of no fishing regulations.
40
41 MR. BOSARGE: All right. We have a motion. Judy seconds.
42
43 MR. JAAP: Any comments? Should we vote? All in favor.
44
45 MR. BOSARGE: It looks like unanimous.
46
47 MS. KRUEGER: Coral AP, all in favor of the motion on the board;
48 any opposed. The motion passes with no opposition.

1
2 **MR. BOSARGE:** I think we're going too fast for them, for once.
3 Shrimp AP?

4
5 **UNIDENTIFIED:** I don't think we need to vote on anything like
6 that.

7
8 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. The Shrimp AP abstains. Frank.

9
10 **MR. HELIES:** Just a note. If we're not voting on it, we didn't
11 support a previous one, which didn't show up in the motion. I
12 just want to make sure that's on the record, that it's different
13 from not supporting and just not participating in the vote.

14
15 **MR. BOSARGE:** Do you want to make that clear?

16
17 **MR. HELIES:** Does that matter, Morgan? I know we haven't been
18 attached to some of the previous motions from yesterday, and the
19 only one that I see a concern with is the Southern Bank for
20 Texas, where we did support, but -- Well, we supported, but it
21 we didn't want to officially participate in that.

22
23 **MR. BOSARGE:** I think we will just leave it as be. All right.
24 Have you got it all?

25
26 **DR. KILGOUR:** We have addressed all the sites that were
27 recommended. We went through a lot, and so, unless there is any
28 other comments or concerns or recommendations that the group
29 wants to make, I am good.

30
31 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. I am trying to find my agenda.
32 Anyhow, the --

33
34 **DR. LANG:** The portal.

35
36 **DR. KILGOUR:** That is the important thing, right? Bryan is here
37 to give you a little update on the portal that is now working
38 again. The server is back. Thank you for reminding me.

39
40 **MR. BOSARGE:** Go ahead, J.P.

41
42 **MR. BROOKER:** Can I just ask a quick question of Morgan before
43 we go into that? Morgan, who is going to be reporting out on
44 this to the council, and is that report going to be going to the
45 council at the next meeting in New Orleans?

46
47 **DR. KILGOUR:** I will be giving the summary to the council, and,
48 yes, it it already on the council's August agenda, and so a

1 summary of this will be going out to the Chairs, as usual, and,
2 as soon as they can turn it back around, it will make it into
3 the briefing book.

4
5 **MR. BROOKER:** Great. Thanks.

6
7 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Now we'll have an update on the
8 portal.

9
10 **CORAL DATA PORTAL OVERVIEW**

11
12 **MR. SCHOONARD:** My name is Bryan Schoonard, and I'm the GIS
13 Analyst for the Gulf Council staff. This is the portal site.
14 We've been working on it for about a year-and-a-half now. The
15 framework was here before I got here, but there have been a lot
16 of different websites added to it. It has a lot more content.

17
18 I am going to show you two today that pertain to this meeting.
19 The first one is the coral viewer. This one actually will
20 display coral points throughout the Gulf of Mexico. Right now,
21 the legend basically shows that we have stony corals, and it
22 displays the fifty-meter bathymetry contour and also the 200-
23 meter bathymetry contour.

24
25 It's also mobile friendly. It can be used on iPads and phone,
26 Apple and anything, and so we made it to where people can
27 actually get out and use this a lot more. You can click on the
28 individual points and it will show the species of coral and also
29 the depth associated with that coral.

30
31 You see that there was two points that are overlaying on each
32 other right now, and so you can click the little arrow, and that
33 will give you an idea of the one that was sitting underneath it,
34 and so every one of them is clickable. I will bring up what we
35 have for black coral, stony coral, octocorals, and sponges.
36 They are very quick to turn on, and all of these also can be
37 clicked on and have the information associated with them.

38
39 We also just made a simple welcome page that allows people to
40 understand why we made these sites, and it gives a little bit of
41 the background. We have it to where people can actually see the
42 coral data and actually get an idea of tabular from seeing all
43 the data itself. It's actually kind of a smart table. By doing
44 queries, you can query out just certain types of coral, and you
45 can it queried out just the black corals.

46
47 We also have it by species, and we also can do it by depths. We
48 have a depth range, where you can see just certain corals at

1 certain depths, and so I will change this, and now it's giving
2 me the corals from 963 to 3,075. You also have where you can
3 either get an Excel, PDF, or print, and so it allows people to
4 actually really get to the data and see it for themselves.

5
6 We have it to where people can download the data and bring it
7 into their own environments and do their own analysis. We have
8 a help video that allows people, actually step-by-step, to show
9 them how to use the site, and we thought it was a good idea to
10 come up with coral descriptions with pictures, to actually
11 understand about these corals and the different habitats they
12 inhabit.

13
14 We also have it to where people can do depth charts. You can
15 pick black coral, and I can basically define my own thing. You
16 can make it a polygon and hit "apply", and it will actually give
17 you the depth ranges. Everything that is circled in red, it
18 gives you the depth ranges of those corals. It also can do
19 this. If you click on the actual magnifying glass, it will
20 bring it out to a spreadsheet, and it's interactive, to where
21 you can click on each one and it tells you which coral has those
22 depths associated with them.

23
24 We built a nice little tool that says "find the coral near me".
25 You give it a range and say I want to see everything within a
26 click, thirty-four miles from this click, and so I will click
27 just right here, and it will search and tell me exactly which
28 corals are in that location by mileage of what you specified.
29 You actually can click and it will tell you which individual
30 coral it is, the depths, and the species name, and it tells you
31 how far away from that click it was.

32
33 **MR. BOSARGE:** Does it actually give you a location, I mean to a
34 lat/long location?

35
36 **MR. SCHOONARD:** Yes, you have a lat/long location at the bottom
37 of your screen right here, to the left. It tells you the
38 lat/long. You can see my mouse moving, and you will see the
39 lat/long changes, and you actually can click a little plus, and,
40 anywhere you click on the mouse, it will display the coordinates
41 of those clicks, and so that it now shows the coordinates of
42 that click, so you can exactly know exactly where these corals
43 are.

44
45 Then we have a simple measurement tool. We wanted people just
46 to be able to take simple measurements, and, if it will work for
47 me, just so you get an idea of how far things are, real quickly,
48 and it gives you different attributes to pick from. Here is the

1 kilometers. We also have it to where, if you want to get an
2 idea of an area, of an HAPC or something like that, you can
3 actually free-hand draw a polygon and it will display, in the
4 dialogue box, the exact square miles for that polygon, so you
5 actually can get an idea of exactly -- If we had an HAPC or
6 anything like that, you can get the exact square miles of that.

7
8 The next site I want to talk about is the HAPC viewer. This is
9 a little bit more complicated site, but it definitely pertains
10 to this meeting and the proposed or recommended and also the
11 ones that have no fishing regulations or ones that have fishing
12 regulations for HAPCs. Give it a second to load. It's got a
13 lot of data associated with it.

14
15 When it first loads, it just has an overview of the Gulf of
16 Mexico, and it gives you an idea of -- The legend is down here.
17 Everything is green is HAPCs with fishing regulations, purple is
18 recommended HAPCs, and I think it's kind of an orange is HAPCs
19 without fishing regulations.

20
21 We also have it to where the legend is over here, and you can
22 see black corals, and it gives you an idea, because we actually
23 incorporated the coral points to where you can click and it will
24 give you the coral points to show you, in those particular
25 HAPCs, where the corals are located. As long as our site works
26 with me, we will be able to zoom into one.

27
28 You can see now the purple are the recommended, and the chart
29 here actually is very nice, because it shows you, within your
30 screen, wherever you're looking, it tells you the actual square
31 miles of the purple versus the recommended versus the HAPCs with
32 fishing regulations, and so, as you move this, the chart will
33 actually change and tell you exactly in your view how much
34 square miles you are actually pertaining to these HAPCs.

35
36 The nice thing about this is we can turn on coral points, and
37 it's going to be a little bit jumbled, but you can actually see
38 the coral points that fall within these HAPCs. It gives you a
39 good idea of what corals were located in these areas.

40
41 Everything on the left-hand side here are the charts that have
42 to do with each HAPC with fishing regulations or without fishing
43 regulations or recommended, and so you actually get an idea of
44 what's being recommended, and these are the smart tables, like I
45 was talking about before for the coral viewer. They also have
46 the coral locations in tabular format too, and so you have a way
47 to see it on the map and you also have a way to actually
48 visualize it in a tabular format.

1
2 We also have a predictive model one. I will just real quick
3 show this one. We took Brian Kinlan's data and we brought it
4 into one of our frameworks, and we are able to display it in a
5 very user-friendly method.

6
7 This right now is just the black coral predictive model, and you
8 can see, from the legend, that it has different colors to
9 associate your high likelihood or low likelihood of corals being
10 in a location. The nice thing we were able to do was actually
11 incorporate the actual observations, and so now I have turned on
12 the black coral observations, where they actually saw black
13 corals, versus the model.

14
15 If I zoom in, you can see a lot of these guys are falling into
16 the very high likelihood of where the predicted black corals
17 were, but also they actually observed them too, and we have it
18 to where we have all of the different types of models that were
19 pertaining to the Gulf Council and the Gulf of Mexico outputs,
20 and I will turn on one more, and maybe we will turn on the
21 lophelia model. Then you can actually turn on the lophelia
22 observations. They're the white kind of triangles or diamonds.
23 You can actually see where these guys were located and where
24 they thought they were.

25
26 The same thing with this. You've got the legend. It tells you
27 what you guys are looking at, and all of these are mobile
28 friendly, and every single one of these has a print, to where
29 you can make your own map. It's just a really easy way. You
30 can take a PDF or a JPEG, and it will basically -- You can print
31 a map out and share it with your colleagues, and it makes it
32 very easy to stay on the same page when you guys are talking
33 about things, but we encourage you guys to use this as much as
34 you want.

35
36 We are going to keep enhancing these sites, and we have some
37 other sites coming out soon. We have the lionfish site and some
38 other things like that, but I just encourage you guys to use the
39 portal and mess around with it and understand it.

40
41 **MR. JAAP:** Bryan, is this going to be available to the general
42 public as well?

43
44 **MR. SCHOONARD:** It already is. You can type into Google the
45 "Gulf Council Portal", and it comes right up.

46
47 **MR. BOSARGE:** That's amazing. What I wouldn't have given for
48 that information about twenty-five years ago. That's great.

1 That's impressive, and good job.

2
3 **MR. SCHOONARD:** Thank you.

4
5 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Any more business? Johnny.

6
7 **OTHER BUSINESS**

8
9 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Before we get away from here, I would like to
10 recommend -- I don't know if we need a motion or just a
11 recommendation, but a strong recommendation for strong
12 consideration that anytime that there is more than one species
13 involved or a shrimp species and it's a coral habitat that we do
14 joint meetings like this in the future. This is amazing, and it
15 was certainly great working with you all, and I look forward to
16 all the future meetings.

17
18 **MR. BOSARGE:** Yes. That was going to be my comments exactly.
19 There was a lot camaraderie. I appreciate the back-and-forth.
20 We hammered out a lot of issues, and, of course, there's some
21 things that we didn't agree on, but, anyhow, it's all good.
22 That's what it's all made of. Kim.

23
24 **MS. CHAUVIN:** I had a question, because I came across something
25 last night, and it was on social media, and it had to do with
26 the coral reefs, and I looked at some of the comments that were
27 made or how much you had in favor of protecting the coral reefs
28 or what have you.

29
30 When I read it, it was directed at the oil and gas industry, and
31 I looked at that, and I have to wonder how many comments are in
32 favor of thinking that NOAA has anything to do in stopping the
33 oil and gas industry from doing anything when you're getting
34 these comments, because it was directed not at commercial
35 fishing, but it was directed at the oil and gas industry.

36
37 From what I know, in dealing with NOAA and the oil and gas
38 industry, because of the stuff that they blew up the rigs and
39 they have all the red snapper on them, I was told that they only
40 thing that they could do to regulate anything was to send a
41 letter and there was no regulations that they could do, and that
42 was by Roy Crabtree.

43
44 My question is, and I guess it would be directed at G.P., when
45 you got all those comments, was it directed -- Were you getting
46 them because people were thinking that this will have a lot more
47 to do with making sure that the oil and gas industry is nowhere
48 around them? It's just one of those things that just happened

1 last night, and I've just seen it, and so I was kind of curious
2 about it.

3
4 **MR. SCHMAHL:** I'm assuming that you were looking at the comments
5 that were coming in for the proposed Flower Garden Banks
6 National Marine Sanctuary expansion, and, in that case, in fact,
7 we would have some -- We do have authority to regulate
8 activities within the National Marine Sanctuary, and that
9 includes oil and gas activities.

10
11 I think, when Roy Crabtree was talking to you, he was talking
12 related to authorities under the Magnuson-Stevens Act and under
13 the fisheries act, whereas, under the National Marine
14 Sanctuaries Act, we actually do have authority to regulate oil
15 and gas, but obviously those comments are open, and they are
16 very wide-ranging. A lot of people are providing comments, a
17 lot of it because of the Deepwater Horizon incident and because
18 of the interest in the impacts of oil and gas, and so, yes, we
19 are getting a lot of those comments. We do have authority.
20 What we do about it, that's another question, but --

21
22 **MR. BOSARGE:** Paul and then --

23
24 **DR. SAMMARCO:** Different agencies have different
25 responsibilities by regulation, by law, and NOAA has theirs and
26 National Marine Sanctuaries has theirs. The other one, what
27 used to be MMS, is now BOEM, Bureau of Ocean Energy Management,
28 and BSEE, Bureau of Environmental Safety and something or other.
29 They keep changing it.

30
31 BOEM does regulate drilling. They are pretty heavy on
32 environmental regulations, and they are very sensitive about
33 coral reefs, about where you can drill and where you can't. Of
34 course, as you probably know, Florida is sacrosanct and there
35 ain't no drilling in Florida, because of decisions made years
36 ago, but it generally comes under BOEM, except when it's on one
37 of G.P.'s reefs or one of the National Marine Sanctuary reefs,
38 in which case it sort of defaults to them.

39
40 **MR. BOSARGE:** All right. Go ahead.

41
42 **MR. WEATHERBY:** I hadn't thought of that until Kim's question.
43 G.P., and I'm not trying to cause any trouble, but you can
44 regulate oil and gas within the sanctuary, correct? That's what
45 I just heard you say?

46
47 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes.

1 **MR. WEATHERBY:** How about proximal to the sanctuary? If I
2 wanted to drill a quarter of a mile over the boundary, I can do
3 that?

4
5 **MR. SCHMAHL:** Yes, we would only have authority inside the
6 boundary, however that's established. We do have some existing
7 regulations right now that say something like discharge that
8 happens outside of the sanctuary, but enters the sanctuary and
9 injures a resource, we have the ability to take an enforcement
10 action against that, but there is that extra step of we have to
11 show that injury did occur from the activity.

12
13 **MR. WEATHERBY:** FYI, I have no intention to drill a quarter of a
14 mile outside of the sanctuary. I just wanted to know how it
15 worked, that's all.

16
17 **MR. BOSARGE:** Besides, they've got directional drilling now.
18 Walt.

19
20 **MR. JAAP:** Just again, thank you very much for everyone's
21 participation and your open-mindedness to listen to one another,
22 and I think it was a good meeting. I would mention to Paul that
23 there were oil drilling rigs in Florida in the 1950s.

24
25 They drilled about a half-a-dozen wells between Key West and the
26 Dry Tortugas, and they actually --I went out to a well that was
27 drilled within a quarter of a mile of the Middle Grounds too,
28 and so I think drilling can be done if it's done in a good way,
29 and if it's regulated. It gets a lot of -- When you have a
30 Horizon-type incident, it really gets a lot of news.

31
32 **MR. BOSARGE:** Good deal. All right. Any other business? Do I
33 have a motion to adjourn? So moved. It's seconded. All in
34 favor. We are unanimous. Thanks, everybody.

35
36 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on August 4, 2016.)

37
38 - - -