

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
2
3 JOINT CORAL/HABITAT PROTECTION COMMITTEE
4

5 Astor Crowne Plaza New Orleans, Louisiana
6

7 August 15, 2016
8

9 **CORAL COMMITTEE VOTING MEMBERS**

10 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
11 Martha Guyas (designee for Nick Wiley).....Florida
12 Kelly Lucas (designee for Jamie Miller).....Mississippi
13 John Sanchez.....Florida
14

15 **HABITAT PROTECTION COMMITTEE VOTING MEMBERS**

16 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
17 Pamela Dana.....Florida
18 Myron Fischer (designee for Patrick Banks).....Louisiana
19 John Greene.....Alabama
20 John Sanchez.....Florida
21

22 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

23 Kevin Anson (designee for Chris Blankenship).....Alabama
24 Doug Boyd.....Texas
25 Leo Danaher.....USCG
26 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
27 Tom Frazer.....Florida
28 Campo Matens.....Louisiana
29 Robin Riechers.....Texas
30 Andy Strelcheck (designee for Roy Crabtree).....NMFS
31 Greg Stunz.....Texas
32 Ed Swindell.....Louisiana
33 David Walker.....Alabama
34

35 **STAFF**

36 Steven Atran.....Senior Fishery Biologist
37 Matt Freeman.....Economist
38 John Froeschke.....Fishery Biologist - Statistician
39 Douglas Gregory.....Executive Director
40 Beth Hager.....Administrative Officer
41 Karen Hoak.....Administrative & Financial Assistant
42 Morgan Kilgour.....Fishery Biologist
43 Ava Lasseter.....Anthropologist
44 Mara Levy.....NOAA General Counsel
45 Emily Muehlstein.....Fisheries Outreach Specialist
46 Claire Roberts.....EFH Specialist
47 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
48 Camilla Shireman.....Administrative Assistant

1 Carrie Simmons.....Deputy Director
2
3 **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**
4 Ken Anderson.....Panama City, FL
5 Pam Anderson.....Panama City, FL
6 Patrick Banks.....LA
7 Eric Brazier.....Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance
8 Derek Breaux.....New Orleans, LA
9 Chester Brewer.....SAFMC
10 J.P. Brooker.....Ocean Conservancy
11 Traci Floyd.....MS DNR
12 Benny Gallaway.....LGL, TX
13 Sue Gerhart.....NMFS
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16 James Kejonen.....NOAA OLE, LA
17 Bill Kelly.....FKCFA
18 Rich Malinowski.....NOAA, St. Petersburg, FL
19 Ron Messa.....NOAA, LA
20 Lance Robinson.....TX
21 Mike Rowell.....
22 G.P. Schmahl.....Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary
23 Clarence Seymour.....Ocean Spring, MS
24 Jessica Stephen.....NMFS
25 Bob Spaeth.....SOFA, FL
26 Stephen Szedlmayer.....Auburn
27 Helen Takade-Heumacher.....EFH
28 Amanda Wimbish.....CLS America

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30 - - -
31

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1 The Joint Coral/Habitat Protection Committee of the Gulf of
2 Mexico Fishery Management Council convened at the Astor Crowne
3 Plaza, New Orleans, Louisiana, Monday afternoon, August 15,
4 2016, and was called to order by Chairman Dale Diaz.

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

10 **CHAIRMAN DALE DIAZ:** I would like to call the Joint
11 Coral/Habitat Protection Committee to order. If you could, turn
12 to Tab N, Number 1. We have a proposed agenda for the Joint
13 Coral and Habitat Committee. I am the Chair of the Habitat
14 Committee, and Leann is the Vice Chair of the Coral Committee.
15 We had talked earlier, and we decided that it would probably be
16 best if I just chair the entire committee, and so that's the way
17 we're going to proceed for the rest of this meeting. We will be
18 voting jointly, and we are not voting separately. We will be
19 voting jointly.

20
21 With that, the first item on the agenda is the Adoption of the
22 Agenda. Does anyone have any modifications to the agenda?
23 Seeing none, can I have a motion from somebody to accept the
24 agenda?

25
26 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** So moved.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** It's moved by Leann. Is there a second to adopt
29 the agenda? It's seconded by Mr. Greene. The agenda is
30 adopted. Next on the agenda is the Approval of the June 2016
31 Coral and Habitat Protection Committee minutes. Any comments or
32 edits to the minutes? With that, I would entertain a motion to
33 adopt the minutes.

34
35 **MS. BOSARGE:** So moved.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Motion by Leann. It's seconded by Mr. Greene.
38 The next item on the agenda is -- We're going to skip the Action
39 Guide. I've talked to Morgan. As we come to each item on the
40 agenda, she is going to keep us on track and make sure and let
41 us know what the action guide says about that particular agenda
42 item. The first item on the agenda is going to be the Draft of
43 the Five-Year Essential Fish Habitat Review and Ms. Roberts.

44
45 **DRAFT OF FIVE-YEAR EFH REVIEW**
46

47 **MS. CLAIRE ROBERTS:** All right. Hi, everybody. I am just going
48 to get started by giving you all a brief overview of what's

1 going on here. This doesn't come up very frequently, and, in
2 case anyone missed it, I gave a presentation at the previous
3 council meeting about what I've been working on since I've been
4 here, and so I will just highlight a few of those things real
5 quick and then move into soliciting some of your feedback on
6 various elements of the document.

7
8 We are required, legally, to conduct this review approximately
9 every five years, and it pertains to any information that has
10 become available on the habitat use by species that we manage
11 since the previous review. The last one was conducted in 2010,
12 and there is a more detailed description of the legal
13 obligations that we have to fulfill on page 12 of the document.

14
15 The objectives of this document were to refine the habitat
16 association tables. Those were first developed in the essential
17 fish habitat environmental impact statement, which was done in
18 2004. We worked on adding some specificity to those and
19 updating them with any new literature that we discovered during
20 this review that re-informed or added information regarding the
21 species we manage and their habitat use.

22
23 Also, we are working to refine the mapped representations of
24 essential fish habitat by species and life stage, and we are
25 creating a web-based application as a platform for facilitating
26 the review and visualization of various elements of the textual
27 document. There are some more details about the objectives of
28 this document found in the approach section, which is on page
29 15.

30
31 Today, I am going to give you sort of an overview and walk you
32 through different elements of the document and solicit feedback
33 on what we've completed thus far. In October, I intend to
34 incorporate any feedback that I get today into the document and
35 finish it. If anyone read through it, you probably noticed
36 there are some sections that are still in progress, and so I
37 intend to bring a draft final document for review and feedback
38 in October and also to hopefully provide an example for at least
39 one species of the web application that we're working on
40 developing.

41
42 Then, in December, I hope to incorporate any feedback that I
43 receive at the October meeting, make any changes, and submit it
44 to NOAA for approval. From there, we will continue to develop
45 the web application, adding more species information to it.

46
47 To get started today, we're going to focus on the species
48 profiles, which they start on page 20. Today, I am mostly going

1 to walk you through the larger elements of the document, the
2 species profiles being one of them, and I am just going to go
3 through an example of one species for each of these different
4 bits, and you guys can let me know what you think.

5
6 Each of the species profiles start with a brief synopsis of the
7 general distribution of the species. Then they move into the
8 new literature review, and so that encompasses any information
9 that we found that added to or changed in any way what we know
10 about habitat use by that particular species and its life
11 stages.

12
13 Following that section, we have the habitat information split
14 out by life stage, and so that includes all the information from
15 the 2004 environmental impact statement document. It also
16 incorporates the information from the 2010 EFH review and any of
17 the new literature that I discussed in the previous section from
18 this current review.

19
20 If you scroll down a little bit further, there is also a plot of
21 length available for the species which we had that information
22 for, and, not included yet, but will be included in the next
23 draft will be a brief overview of the fishery history for each
24 of the species, when available, and a plot of recent landings.

25
26 Those are the elements that make up the species profiles. As I
27 mentioned, they are available for each of the species that we
28 manage, but they all basically have the same layout. I would
29 like to stop here and see if anyone has any questions or
30 comments or input on that particular element of the document.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions or comments for Ms. Roberts? I
33 have just a few.

34
35 **MS. ROBERTS:** Go ahead.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** First, I wanted to mention that I noticed that,
38 when you go from one species to the next, some of them are in
39 millimeters and some of them are in centimeters. It may not be
40 practical to change them all, but if there's a way to have them
41 consistent, I think it would read a little easier.

42
43 I also noticed that the scales are different. This is another
44 thing that probably you can't have the same scale all the way
45 through the document, but, whenever possible, if you only had a
46 few different scales that you were using, I think it would be
47 easier for me to read.

1 Also, this is a little bit beyond where you're at right now in
2 the document, but, as I read through the document, the order is
3 not necessarily where we tackle all the snapper, all the
4 grouper, all the shrimp species. It seems, if it's possible to
5 do it that way, if all of the fish in the same species were in
6 order, until you get to a new species, I think it might be a
7 little easier to read, if that's something that is doable.

8
9 **MS. ROBERTS:** Just so I'm clear, I think how it's formatted now
10 is it's alphabetical within each FMP, and so you want it to be
11 by species or groups of species within each FMP? I mean that's
12 fine. I just want to make sure that I understand sort of your
13 intent.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I would just say I'm making that comment as I
16 read through it. I didn't know that you had it alphabetical by
17 each, and so whichever way you all decide. I don't think it has
18 to be one or the other, but I was wondering why the reason it
19 was in the order it was in, and so that helps a little bit.

20
21 **MS. ROBERTS:** Okay.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I did also want to mention, and this is not
24 anything that I think you need to change in the report, but I
25 noticed in a lot of them that we make the same comment about
26 artificial reefs. We basically say that artificial reefs are
27 not to the level that they're considered essential fish habitat,
28 but I think what that does show is that the artificial reefs are
29 important to a lot of these species. If you read through the
30 document, you can see that. They are noted on primarily
31 artificial reefs. Any other comments for Ms. Roberts? Myron.

32
33 **MR. MYRON FISCHER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mine is not a
34 technical edit, but just to remind that the footer on all of the
35 pages is incorrect. You might want to adjust the footer.

36
37 **MS. ROBERTS:** Thank you. All right. If no one has anything
38 else, I will move forward. The next large chunk of the document
39 that I wanted to go over with you all are the habitat
40 association tables. Those start on page 130.

41
42 This section starts out by defining ecoregions. Within the
43 tables, it was hard to spell out that information, and so I
44 thought that it was helpful to include that upfront. These stem
45 from the shrimp statistical grids, and so you can see that in
46 the right-hand column of that table, and I think South Florida
47 should be 1. North Florida should be 2. East Louisiana,
48 Mississippi, and Alabama should be 3. East Texas and West

1 Louisiana should be 4, and West Texas should be 5.
2
3 Another thing that I wanted to do here was define the habitat
4 types and the related terms regarding those. One of the big
5 changes we made from the 2004 environmental impact statement was
6 to take the information that they had regarding habitat type and
7 try to lump it into specific categories that we have GIS data
8 available for, so that we can map each of the species by life
9 stage based on what's in the habitat association tables. That
10 kind of gives you an idea of the different habitats described by
11 a particular defining word. This is just one example, again --
12
13 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Hold on, Ms. Roberts, one second. Kevin, do you
14 have a question?
15
16 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** Thank you. I'm sure it's spelled out in
17 another document, or even this document, but I'm wondering if
18 you happen to know, offhand, what is the definition for reef
19 halos, as far as the distance, I guess, around the actual reef
20 itself? Do you have a sense of what that is or what that means?
21
22 **MS. ROBERTS:** I do not. Is that in the habitat description?
23 That information is likely available in the 2004 EIS document.
24 I took this table directly from there, and so I tried to use
25 habitats that were previously defined elsewhere in the making of
26 this document, for consistency sake.
27
28 **MR. ANSON:** Thank you.
29
30 **MS. ROBERTS:** These tables look considerably different than what
31 is in the 2004 EIS document, and, as I mentioned, the goals were
32 to make these more readable and synthesizable, but also the
33 first three -- Columns 2 through 4 are the primary information
34 that we're using to create the mapped representations of habitat
35 by species and life stage, and so I put a lot of work into sort
36 of I guess making that consistent across all of the different
37 species, to make the process of georeferencing a lot easier for
38 us. Does anybody have any feedback on the habitat association
39 tables? All right.
40
41 The last thing that I wanted to talk about, which are not
42 included in this document, are the other major component of it
43 will be the mapped representations of species by life stage, and
44 those will be available for you in the next draft, but,
45 essentially, what I will be doing is taking those Columns 2
46 through 4 in the habitat association tables for every species
47 and georeferencing those to the GIS data that we have available.
48 Within the textual document, we will include maps of all of the

1 benthic life stages or a composite map of all the benthic life
2 stages for each species, and so that will be the intended mapped
3 representation within the textual document.

4
5 I had mentioned earlier that we're working on creating a web
6 application, where all of this information will be available.
7 The elements of that will include species profiles, the habitat
8 association tables, a queryable bibliography of all the
9 references that we used in this document, and also a mapped
10 representation, by species and life stage, and, that one, you
11 will be able to view the different layers for each life stage
12 individually.

13
14 It just isn't very feasible to include that in the textual
15 document, and so the text will just be a composite of the
16 benthic life stages, but, within the web resource, we intend to
17 include a map of all of the life stages for each species.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Levy.

20
21 **MS. MARA LEVY:** Thank you. Just a question. Is the intent here
22 -- I mean are the essential fish habitat designations going to
23 need to be modified based on whatever new information you're
24 putting in here and the maps you're going to create? I mean is
25 that the intent going forward, that you're going to get this new
26 information and map it out and then the council is going to come
27 back and look at options or alternatives for modifying what is
28 designated as essential fish habitat?

29
30 **MS. ROBERTS:** I am going to punt this question to John.

31
32 **DR. JOHN FROESCHKE:** The answer, as best I can give you right
33 now, is it depends, and what we're working on is we're working
34 with the NMFS Habitat staff on this, and I will give you an
35 example of one we've done so far. We have refined the habitat
36 association table, for example, spiny lobster. We have updated
37 that. For example, hard bottom provides EFH for spiny lobster.
38 We have updated maps of the hard-bottom habitat in the Gulf, and
39 so then we can link the description to an actual map. If the
40 map, when we were looking at this, in this example, the map of
41 the hard bottom extends beyond the depths of which lobster are
42 currently defined as EFH, and so we have two choices.

43
44 We need to review the biology to figure out that either they do
45 occur in that area and we need to revise the description or they
46 don't occur in that area because it's too deep, and so then we
47 would need to revise the map, and so those are the things that
48 we're going to be working out over the next couple of months,

1 and so it's challenging a bit, because you've got to get all the
2 steps done in order to be able to identify those instances and
3 make a determination.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Anson.

6

7 **MR. ANSON:** Thank you. That answer may have answered my
8 question that I was going to ask, and that is whether or not you
9 were going to develop any layers related to the water depth. I
10 thought I heard Ms. Roberts say Columns 2 through 4, but you
11 have depth as well for many of the life stages, and I was just
12 wondering if you were also going to do a layer by depth, but it
13 sounds like you may not, but use depth to help develop another
14 layer within the other columns, and is that correct?

15

16 **MS. ROBERTS:** The way that we're intending to do it right now,
17 that depth parameter informs the habitat zone. Those habitat
18 zones were developed in the EIS document as well, and I think
19 there's a description of them in this document above the habitat
20 type descriptions, but the extent to which we're using depth
21 right now will be based on the estuarine, near-shore, or
22 offshore designation. Does that answer your question?

23

24 **MR. ANSON:** It does. Thank you.

25

26 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Do you have anything else, Ms. Roberts?

27

28 **MS. ROBERTS:** That's all I've got, unless anyone has any other
29 comments regarding any other portions of the document. I didn't
30 want to get too in the weeds with each individual section,
31 because it is quite a long document, but if anyone wants to give
32 me any feedback on anything that was outside of the two big
33 components that we talked about so far, I am happy to take that.

34

35 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right, committee, this is your chance. Any
36 comments for Ms. Roberts? All right. We will see the updated
37 version in October, and I do want to thank you, Ms. Roberts and
38 Dr. Froeschke. I know you all have worked very hard on this
39 document, and it shows. I think there is some significant
40 improvements over the last five-year review, and your hard work
41 is showing, and so thank you. With that, we're going to move on
42 to the next agenda item, which is going to be a Summary of the
43 Joint Shrimp AP/Coral SSC/Coral AP Meeting, and Dr. Kilgour.

44

45 **SUMMARY OF THE JOINT SHRIMP AP/CORAL SSC/CORAL AP MEETING**

46

47 **DR. MORGAN KILGOUR:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's a nice short,
48 ten-page report, and so I'm just going to go through the

1 highlights, if that's all right with everybody. One of the
2 findings of the group was they really stressed how much they
3 appreciated having the joint APs meet together to discuss a
4 fishery issue, and they really wanted me to highlight that to
5 the council, that the Shrimp AP and the Coral AP and the Coral
6 SSC really appreciated being in the same room to discuss this
7 issue, since a lot of these areas did have some shrimping
8 conflicts.

9
10 We also, at this meeting, invited some longliners to come and
11 give input on some areas that were thought to be contentious,
12 specifically off the Florida Shelf in Pulley Ridge.

13
14 The group narrowed down their areas of focus from forty-seven
15 priority areas to fifteen. This was done primarily because the
16 areas that were currently considered for consideration in the
17 Flower Garden Banks, under their Preferred Alternative 3, were
18 removed from discussion, because the group felt that, if those
19 became part of the sanctuary, that would be more beneficial than
20 a coral HAPC. However, they wanted to emphasize that if that
21 Preferred Alternative 3 does not go through for the sanctuary
22 expansion that they would like to be able to reincorporate those
23 areas for consideration.

24
25 That's pretty much the very, very *Reader's-Digest* version.
26 Included in the summary are a lot of maps that show the
27 highlighted areas. There were some areas that were discussed in
28 the Flower Garden Banks Preferred Alternative 3 that the group
29 discussed possibly needing some boundary revision, because there
30 is just a little corner that has a heavy shrimping influence,
31 but just a slight modification of the boundary might make
32 everyone leave happy.

33
34 I am going to cut this, but I would like to answer any specific
35 questions. Most of the motions that were made in this report
36 were from all three groups, the Coral SSC, the Coral AP, and the
37 Shrimp AP, with the exception of the prioritization of some of
38 the areas. Those were addressed by the Coral SSC, but I would
39 like to be able to answer any questions, since this is a pretty
40 lengthy report, and there might be specific questions on
41 specific areas.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions or comments related to the report?
44 Ms. Bosarge.

45
46 **MS. BOSARGE:** I just wanted to echo what Morgan said, that I
47 thought it was a very productive meeting, and I thought that the
48 three groups really worked collaboratively together to come up

1 with some middle-of-the-road conclusions and compromises, and so
2 thanks to everybody that was involved, because that was a lot of
3 people in one room, and, at times, it can get confusing when you
4 have that many different groups and voting on different motions,
5 and I thought it very went very smoothly, and I thought a lot
6 was accomplished, and so I just wanted to say kudos to everyone
7 involved.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Hearing no further comments, we're going to move
10 to the next agenda -- Dr. Kilgour.

11
12 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just as a summary, I'm going to take a lot of the
13 motions that were made in this report and provide them to you in
14 a scoping document at the October council meeting, and so you
15 will be seeing this again. At the meeting, it's my
16 understanding that we will have the Shrimp AP Chair and the
17 Coral AP Chair or Coral SSC Chair, one of the two, here to
18 answer any specific questions about those areas, and so that's
19 all I have to say.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Dr. Kilgour. I believe it was
22 brought up that it may be a good idea, at some point in the
23 future, to try to get the Reef Fish AP lined up with the Coral
24 SSC and the Coral AP. Do you want to speak to that, Dr.
25 Kilgour?

26
27 **DR. KILGOUR:** Sure. It was mentioned. It's on the Reef Fish AP
28 agenda for me to present these areas and this summary report and
29 to get their feedback. I also have aggregated VMS data for all
30 of these, so the Reef Fish AP can look at that in regard to the
31 areas that are being proposed, and so I will be there to give
32 them information, but another joint meeting I don't think was
33 planned at this time.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Bosarge.

36
37 **MS. BOSARGE:** Dr. Kilgour, how much time is dedicated to that
38 agenda item, just out of curiosity, because that was one thing
39 we learned with the Shrimp AP. We had actually had this on an
40 agenda for a previous Shrimp AP meeting, and, when we started to
41 get into it, we realized that there was just no way to get
42 through that in the amount of time allotted. Do they have a
43 decent amount of time to really take a hard look at each site?

44
45 **DR. KILGOUR:** I am going to punt that one to Carrie. I do know
46 that the Reef Fish AP has seen these areas before, and so
47 they're not going to be a surprise, but Carrie is the one
48 creating the agenda for that meeting, and so she knows how much

1 time she allotted for it.

2
3 **DR. CARRIE SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't actually
4 have the agenda set as to whether it's going to be one or two
5 days yet. We're waiting to see what our availability is and how
6 many people can come and what two days, if it can be two days or
7 not, and then we can determine the priority items for them to
8 focus on and talk about how much time is needed for these agenda
9 items.

10
11 I guess, in trying to plan ahead, if we're bringing a scoping
12 document in October, should we think about areas or locations
13 that you might want to take the scoping document out to for full
14 council, so we can go ahead and start that planning process
15 moving forward, because we have typically tried to get those
16 areas two council meetings before, so Kathy has some time to
17 work on them and staff can get all the materials together for
18 those meetings.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Walker.

21
22 **MR. DAVID WALKER:** I would just like to listen to some public
23 testimony on some of these. There were not very many regulatory
24 alternatives in the document, and, in public testimony from some
25 of the panels, they had wanted to expand more on being able to
26 anchor in these areas, and I would like to hear a little bit of
27 public testimony on some of that for full council, too.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Bosarge.

30
31 **MS. BOSARGE:** Carrie, what you're saying is if we could give you
32 locations now for each state that that would give staff time to
33 find the hotels and the meeting rooms, but this still wouldn't
34 happen -- It wouldn't actually go out to scoping until after the
35 October meeting. That would just give staff a little more
36 leeway to plan?

37
38 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Simmons.

39
40 **DR. SIMMONS:** Yes, thank you. That's exactly what I mean, and,
41 also, just for clarification, on the Reef Fish AP agenda, what
42 we're currently thinking about putting on that agenda I believe
43 is the fifteen areas that were recommended by this body in a
44 scoping document and in a summary that would go that group and
45 then the draft regulations that the Flower Garden Banks is
46 proposing for the expansion, for the Flower Garden Banks
47 expansion, and those draft regulations is what the AP would be
48 focusing on. It's not the actual Preferred Alternative 3 letter

1 that we're going to be talking about later on the agenda,
2 because that has to be submitted before we're convening the Reef
3 Fish AP.
4
5 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Bosarge.
6
7 **MS. BOSARGE:** I mean, for Mississippi, and Dr. Lucas and Dale,
8 Mr. Chairman, I mean we could do the Biloxi area, the
9 Biloxi/D'Iberville area.
10
11 **DR. KELLY LUCAS:** That's fine with me.
12
13 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I guess we need to go through each state and
14 figure out a location for each state. Ms. Guyas.
15
16 **MS. MARTHA GUYAS:** I know we need Key West. I am trying to open
17 the document and see how close some of these northern Gulf areas
18 are to the -- Doug, go ahead.
19
20 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DOUG GREGORY:** If I may, the one big gap
21 we're having is we have no longline fishermen on our Reef Fish
22 AP, and that's why we invited them to sit in with the Shrimp AP,
23 to give them a heads-up, and they provided good input. I would
24 definitely recommend a scoping workshop in the Madeira Beach
25 area.
26
27 **MS. GUYAS:** That's fine with me. Madeira Beach and Key West,
28 you think? Okay.
29
30 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Fischer.
31
32 **MR. FISCHER:** What type of participation would you be looking
33 at, from what industries?
34
35 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Gregory.
36
37 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I think mainly the reef fish
38 industry and the shrimp industry.
39
40 **MR. FISCHER:** Houma, Louisiana.
41
42 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Anson.
43
44 **MR. ANSON:** Mobile.
45
46 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Lance.
47
48 **MR. LANCE ROBINSON:** This is a tough one, because our fisheries

1 aren't geographically -- They are isolated, in a lot of ways,
2 and so, for shrimp, I would say Brownsville. There's a big
3 fleet in the central part of the coast, in the Palacios area,
4 and it should be somewhere in the Palacios, Bay City, or
5 Victoria area of Texas, to hit that fleet, and then I guess the
6 Galveston area, to help pick up some of the reef fish folks.

7

8 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Guyas.

9

10 **MS. GUYAS:** Could we request Panama City for Florida as well? I
11 may change it, based on some feedback I'm getting, but it
12 probably would be good to put a Panhandle one in there as well
13 for Florida.

14

15 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Gregory, I guess this question is for you.
16 Are those locations workable?

17

18 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Most definitely.

19

20 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, sir. Dr. Kilgour, anything else on
21 this agenda item?

22

23 **DR. KILGOUR:** No, but we're just over here trying to make sure
24 that -- We have some other areas that we need to do coral
25 workshops, and so we're hoping that a lot of these areas line
26 up, but that's okay. I will talk to you about it later. Can I
27 talk to you about it before full council?

28

29 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Yes, ma'am. All right. Anything else on this
30 agenda item? Any other comments? All right. We are going to
31 move on. The next item on the agenda is the Letter Regarding
32 the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary Draft
33 Environmental Impact Statement.

34

35 This letter, it's required that we have this submitted by the
36 19th, and so what we're going to need eventually out of this
37 committee meeting is, after we go through and review the letter
38 and make any necessary changes, we're probably going to need a
39 motion to send that letter to full council. Dr. Kilgour.

40

41 **LETTER REGARDING THE FLOWER GARDEN BANKS NATIONAL MARINE**
42 **SANCTUARY DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT**

43

44 **DR. KILGOUR:** Thank you. I will go just go through the
45 highlights of the letter, if that's all right with the
46 committee. If there are any specific areas where you want me to
47 address specific things, just feel free to interrupt me.

48

1 I make it very clear that this letter specifically is in regard
2 to the DEIS for the expansion of the Flower Garden Banks
3 National Marine Sanctuary. We have until December of 2016 to
4 comment specifically on the regulations that are proposed in the
5 DEIS, and so I focused this letter based on the analysis that
6 was contained in the document and not on the regulations.

7
8 I also focused this letter in response to the sanctuary's
9 Preferred Alternative 3, and I did not go into discussing
10 Alternative 4 or Alternative 5, since the sanctuary clearly
11 states, in their letter, that that is outside their current
12 operational capacity.

13
14 There were a lot of great things about this DEIS. They used a
15 lot of new and innovative information to do the biological
16 analysis. There were a couple of things that I felt, and I got
17 some input from the Shrimp AP, the Coral AP, and council
18 members, and just other staff members, and one in particular is
19 that nowhere in the documents are the coordinates for any of the
20 areas that are proposed in the document.

21
22 One of the things that I think that would be better for the next
23 iteration of the document is to include those coordinates, so
24 people can look and see where they actually are, instead of just
25 being on a map, and that was something I was dinged at from my
26 Coral AP and Shrimp AP meeting, was I provided them with a bunch
27 of maps with no fathom lines or coordinates. Anyway, that is
28 helpful for us, to make sure that we include those things when
29 we're giving information to the public.

30
31 It was also noted in the DEIS that oil and gas exploration were
32 kind of grandfathered in. A lot of these areas that they are
33 considering already have pipelines or oil platforms, but it
34 seems that fishing was not considered for being grandfathered
35 in, and so I felt like that probably needed to be addressed.

36
37 I included language about the fact that a mooring buoy isn't
38 necessarily beneficial for fishermen. It concentrates all the
39 fishing in one area. I have been advised that that also
40 incorporates a safety-at-sea concern, and that is not
41 incorporated in this letter right now, and so, if you would like
42 me to include some language about safety at sea -- When a
43 captain is trying to keep his vessel on point, he is not able to
44 -- First of all, you're short one hand on the deck, and, second
45 of all, you might entangle your gear in the props or other
46 issues that might have some safety-at-sea concerns, and that is
47 not addressed in the DEIS.

48

1 Many of the areas that are in the current sanctuary's DEIS are
2 already HAPCs that have been designated by the council, but they
3 just do not include fishing regulations. I was encouraging the
4 Flower Garden Sanctuary staff to share their information with
5 council staff, especially since we're working on the new EFH
6 review. That information would be very helpful.

7
8 Then there was some social and economic analysis that staff felt
9 was a little short-sighted and it probably could use some
10 further development, and so there is some language about that,
11 and I would really like to turn it over to you guys for
12 discussion and not rehash the letter.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Okay. I will start and then I will go around
15 and see if some other folks want to make some comments on the
16 letter. I did want to say a few other things about safety at
17 sea, Dr. Kilgour. Bear in mind that I am not trying to -- I
18 don't want to come across like I don't think that anchoring on
19 coral reefs is a bad thing. I do think it's something that can
20 cause some potential damage to reefs, but when I think about
21 stopping anchoring in all areas, or maybe not even right up to
22 the perimeter of the reef, I do worry about some different
23 things that I'm not sure are going to be a net positive for the
24 reef, and I don't know that there's research to prove one way or
25 the other if it is or not.

26
27 Regarding safety at sea, generally, when a boat is anchored,
28 it's into the wind, and the boat is not necessarily side-sea.
29 With the captain having to hold the boat on station with the
30 engine, I believe that there might be some safety at sea issues
31 for the crew. The boat is probably going to be side-sea more,
32 and it's probably going to be more dangerous for the captain,
33 crew, and passengers. Bear in mind this is something that
34 applies to recreational and commercial boats. There's going to
35 be no anchoring for anybody in these areas.

36
37 The other thing about safety at sea is I believe more fishing
38 line is going to be caught up in propellers, and, more than
39 likely, people are going to catch fishing line in propellers
40 when sea conditions are at their worst. Monofilament line is
41 notorious for tearing up bearings and doing damage to shafts. I
42 think a lot of people might be forced to or consider going
43 overboard to try to cut some of this gear off the shafts or out
44 of the propellers, which could be something that could cause a
45 situation for safety at sea.

46
47 When I said that I'm not sure there's a net benefit for the
48 reef, this is kind of the things that was going through my mind

1 when I said that. With the captain having to hold the vessel on
2 station with the engines, I believe more line is going to get
3 caught in the propellers, and probably cut off, and a lot of
4 this line is going to drop to the bottom and potentially be gear
5 down there on some of these sensitive areas we're trying to
6 protect.

7
8 The other thing is not really something that I came up with, but
9 I do remember, at the last public comment session that we had,
10 Mr. Werner brought up a comment about the fact that having to
11 hold his boat on station, he is considering that he will
12 probably have to use heavier weights, and those heavier weights
13 might actually have some impacts also.

14
15 Anyway, I just wanted to make those comments. Dr. Kilgour, if
16 it's anything that you think is worthy of putting in the letter,
17 please feel free to do that. I would like to open it up now, if
18 anybody has got any comments. I've got Mr. Fischer and then Ms.
19 Bosarge.

20
21 **MR. FISCHER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We had some constituents
22 call in, and this was their concern, and it may not be anything
23 we can address in a letter, but it's along some of the lines
24 that Dale brought up.

25
26 These people are prosecuting a fishery in a specific way.
27 Specifically, they were free divers who speared fish right up on
28 the surface. By expanding some of the zones, expanding some of
29 the Flower Gardens, into areas where they now fish, it will be
30 illegal for them to do this, even though they learned it from
31 their grandfather. On the same token, I have heard, I believe
32 similar to what Wayne Werner said, that boats that anchored
33 historically on spots would now not be allowed to anchor. These
34 were the two concerns. One, it totally took away a historic
35 fishery. The other made it much more difficult.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Mr. Fischer. Ms. Bosarge.

38
39 **MS. BOSARGE:** Morgan, I know our Shrimp AP, Coral AP, and Coral
40 SSC meeting was about the same time that this went into the
41 briefing book, and I don't think one from that meeting was
42 captured in here. There was a motion made by all three groups
43 at that meeting that the -- They requested that the discussion
44 and comments made pertaining to the Flower Garden Banks boundary
45 expansions be included in the Gulf Council's letter to the
46 Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary.

47
48 That conversation centered around -- I will summarize it. There

1 were three banks, I believe there were, that when the groups
2 looked at the electronic logbook data, in other words, where the
3 shrimpers have been trawling over the last decade or so, they
4 could see that, on a couple of those banks, there is some tracks
5 that go through the proposed boundaries, the new boundaries.

6
7 That would lead you to believe there is no coral there. That's
8 where we're dragging, and we don't want to be in the coral.
9 G.P. was there, the head of the sanctuary, and he said, yes, I
10 will definitely go back and take a look at those three sites and
11 see if we can't adjust those boundaries so that they no longer
12 take in those shrimp grounds. Could you make sure though those
13 three sites and the specific revisions asked for are in the
14 letter, as the APs blessed?

15
16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any other comments from the committee in
17 reference to the letter? Mr. Walker.

18
19 **MR. WALKER:** I would just like to add -- I would agree with what
20 you had to say, Dale. Wayne, I think he hit on it when he was
21 talking about the weights. When you're on anchor, you have less
22 chance of entangling your weight. If you're dragging, if the
23 boat is moving around, you're dragging your weight around.
24 Maybe a heavier weight might have kept it more stationary, but,
25 when you're anchored, you're able to send your weight straight
26 down and you have less problems.

27
28 Net benefits, I don't see -- Fishermen do not want to get
29 tangled in these areas, and they have anchors that are devices
30 in which they can release, and I think they brought them to some
31 of the meetings, one of the meetings in Louisiana, to show how
32 these anchors were designed to release, if they did get
33 entangled in the coral, safely.

34
35 Fishermen just think there has not been enough analysis of
36 commercial fishing and the impacts and some of the data. The
37 VMS data used was not complete, was not very much. The
38 industry, you know this is a big historical part. They anchor
39 in ways that they don't lose their anchors or get entangled in
40 this coral, and there is talks of mooring buoys, and that
41 wouldn't work really, but if there was a way they had
42 coordinates to give these positions to them, they would be able
43 to anchor and have some net benefits.

44
45 These are big areas, and, like you said, there could be problems
46 with safety at sea. If you get a captain who is holding up the
47 boat all day who is used to anchoring -- I've anchored there, in
48 those areas, for two days or longer. You're tired and you're

1 trying to hold the boat up, and I think taking away the ability
2 to anchor can cause a lot of problems. Like I said, they're not
3 out there to destroy the bottom. They just want to catch the
4 resource and be productive and conduct their fishery.

5
6 I think that's what they're worried about, not having enough
7 analysis. There was discussion about endorsements. I heard
8 endorsements at some of the meetings, and of education of
9 fishermen. A lot of your older fishermen know, but there is
10 some -- If they had some type of endorsement, where they could
11 go and have a class, like you have incidental shark and so forth
12 endorsements. If there was some type of endorsement that they
13 could obtain to be able to allow them to take a class and be
14 able to still fish these areas and anchor in these areas.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Mr. Walker. Dr. Kilgour.

17
18 **DR. KILGOUR:** I am getting a lot of good feedback, but a lot of
19 what I'm hearing are specific to the regulations, and so I am
20 just wanting to clarify. Do you want me to include this in this
21 letter on the DEIS or should I use this as information to
22 include on the discussion on the regulations, which is going to
23 be probably a more comprehensive document, probably going bank-
24 by-bank about this? I want to make sure that I do what you want
25 me to do.

26
27 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thoughts from the committee? Unless somebody
28 disagrees with me, Dr. Kilgour, my thoughts are that, for this
29 letter, we address the DEIS like you planned it, and hold the
30 things for the regulations for that document that you're going
31 to put together before the next meeting, but I would like to
32 hear if any other committee members have any different thoughts
33 on that topic. Ms. Bosarge.

34
35 **MS. BOSARGE:** No, I think I agree with you, Dale. Maybe,
36 Morgan, you could put something in there that's just a
37 generality that the council feels that -- I will leave the
38 wording up to you.

39
40 You do a great job, but essentially that the council doesn't
41 think that maybe the status quo regulations that generally are
42 used with sanctuaries -- That maybe that there should be an
43 analysis of some different regulatory options for these, because
44 that is part of the DEIS, and we're going to address it very
45 specifically when we get these regulations together and
46 essentially send our wish list. Maybe just a brief blurb that
47 kind of encompasses what some of these people were saying.

1 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Kilgour.

2
3 **DR. KILGOUR:** There currently is there was a failure to consider
4 alternate regulatory regimes for the proposed expanded areas.
5 Would you like me to expand on that or is that sufficient? I
6 will add some language about the three different banks for
7 boundary revisions and a sentence about safety at sea, but, if
8 you want me to expand on the regulations, I can do that easily.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I think hold it up, Morgan, for the document
11 that's coming in October on the regulations, unless somebody on
12 the committee changes it. Dr. Kilgour, do you have anything
13 else on this letter?

14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** No, that's about it.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Bosarge.

18
19 **MS. BOSARGE:** Did you need a motion, Morgan? So you're okay?
20 You've heard what we've said and we will submit it in whatever
21 the timeframe is. I think it's Friday that it has to be
22 submitted by.

23
24 **DR. KILGOUR:** We have until Friday, and so I can present you
25 with a modified version for full council and you can tell me to
26 send it off, if that's all right with you.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** That's fine with me. All right. Not seeing any
29 more discussion on this agenda item, Morgan, on this agenda
30 item, there is an a and b for the draft environmental impact
31 statements. Did you want to touch on anything related to those
32 or move into the next agenda item?

33
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** I could not do a better job than G.P. already did
35 in June, and so we can move on to the next agenda item, if
36 that's all right with you.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you. Moving on to the last agenda item,
39 this is a Discussion on Fishing Regulations on the Flower
40 Gardens National Marine Sanctuary Expansion. Dr. Kilgour.

41
42 **DISCUSSION ON FISHING REGULATIONS ON THE FLOWER GARDEN BANKS**
43 **NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY EXPANSION**

44
45 **DR. KILGOUR:** There is a tab with just the regulations for each
46 of the areas. Basically, what the DEIS does is it expands all
47 of the existing regulations for the Flower Garden Banks to all
48 of the expanded areas. I can go through these or, if you have

1 already done that, you can comment specifically on them. I have
2 already heard some comments on perhaps grandfathering in
3 historical fisheries or making some type of endorsement, if you
4 take a class and you learn what areas are particularly sensitive
5 on the banks, but you tell me what you want me to do.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** What's the pleasure of the committee? Ms.
8 Bosarge.

9
10 **MS. BOSARGE:** Well, just a question. In October, based on the
11 conversation that we will have here, hopefully, as we go along,
12 you will bring us -- This is kind of strange. We can't
13 promulgate the regulation, but we can essentially say, hey, if
14 we were doing it, this is how we would like to see it happen.
15 Will it be a paper that's more like a white paper, like we did
16 with some of the artificial reef stuff, or will it actually have
17 some action items that we will maybe pick preferreds on or how
18 will it look? That will kind of help me in how I structure my
19 comments.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Kilgour.

22
23 **DR. KILGOUR:** I was thinking of it as like a white paper, like
24 the artificial reef paper, where I could go area-by-area and
25 discuss the fishing that's currently on those areas. I have the
26 VMS data and I have the shrimp data. I could go area-by-area
27 and talk about the regulations and perhaps how they should be
28 modified per bank, if that's what you would like. I don't know
29 if we should do actions, because it seems like that would be a
30 much more involved document for one meeting, but I will do
31 whatever the committee wants me to.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Bosarge.

34
35 **MS. BOSARGE:** No, I think the white paper is fine. We tend to
36 get bogged down when we have action items, and, unfortunately,
37 we don't have that kind of time for this particular exercise.
38 We only have this meeting and October, because it's due, I
39 believe, in December. Those are the only two meetings we will
40 have to get this done, which is light speed for this council.

41
42 I have one quick comment specific to shrimp on the regulations.
43 In the deepwater shrimping, the royal red shrimping, there are
44 two sites that are not currently in the sanctuary's Preferred
45 Alternative 3, I don't think, but, for those particular sites,
46 if something changes and those are going to become part of the
47 sanctuary, I would like to see some sort of grandfathering,
48 whether it be an exemption, if you have a royal red endorsement

1 to trawl in those areas, or however it needs to happen. If you
2 can put something in the white paper about that.

3

4 I know there's been some different things discussed, possibly
5 even taking that particular site and breaking it into a northern
6 box and a southern box, so that those historical royal red
7 shrimpers could trawl straight through, like they need to, and
8 trawl the way they've been trawling, where they are not damaging
9 any coral. They essentially pull their nets up in the water
10 column at a certain point, before they get to the coral, and
11 then let the nets back out after they're past the coral, but I
12 definitely want to address that in the regulations.

13

14 There has been a lot of discussion on the record at the
15 meetings, the AP meetings, about that, but, more generally
16 speaking, to get away from shrimp a little bit and just
17 generally talk about them, I think we kind of have an
18 opportunity here to come up with a new -- Almost like a paradigm
19 shift in the way we see sanctuaries and the way we manage them.

20

21 I think that these are very pristine areas that need to be
22 protected, but, in the same sense, they are pristine because the
23 historical users of these areas have taken care of them. They
24 understand their importance and their significance and they
25 don't want to damage them, because they know that the reason
26 they're able to go there and fish is because of what is on the
27 bottom and that ecosystem that it creates.

28

29 I think that, on the commercial side say, if there can be a
30 program to permit historical users to go and fish in these
31 areas, and a lot of the problem is the anchoring. There would
32 have to be a lot of hoops to jump through in order to get one of
33 these permits or these endorsements.

34

35 You're going to have to essentially prove that you understand
36 the value of that environment there and that you're not going to
37 damage it, and so there's going to have to be an educational
38 component that you will actually have to sit down and go through
39 a class and be educated on these different aspects of what you
40 can and can't do and what is down there.

41

42 There may be some certain accountability measures involved, such
43 as either VMS on your boat, if you want to fish in that area,
44 and/or a live person, an observer, or some sort of electronic
45 monitoring, like video surveillance, on your boat. In other
46 words, you will have to fish to a higher standard in order to
47 enter these areas. You will have to prove that you are
48 accountable and sustainable.

1
2 I think that's something that we need to look at. I think that
3 the fact that these reefs are still in good shape shows that the
4 fishermen do care and they're not causing significant damage to
5 these areas. Therefore, I think that they should be shown some
6 respect for that and allowed to continue in their operations as
7 long as they do it in an accountable and sustainable way.

8
9 I hope you can bring us some sort of program that more actively
10 manages these areas. Right now, it's almost kind of like
11 they're put into a bubble, and most people are shut out from
12 these areas once they're put into that bubble, but I think that
13 you can have stakeholders still use these areas and provide that
14 resource to the people of the United States, and so I hope you
15 can bring us something back that shows that they're accountable
16 and sustainable, but yet protects that reef at the same time.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Swindell.

19
20 **MR. ED SWINDELL:** Mr. Chairman, I'm not a member of the
21 committee, but, listening to what Leann has to say and some of
22 my thoughts -- I've been trying my best to gather my thoughts on
23 this coral issue, and what I am looking at is resource. I'm a
24 strong believer in resource management.

25
26 Has there ever been any resource studies, management studies, of
27 the size of this resource before now? Do we have information
28 that this -- Coral grows. Everything on the Flower Garden Banks
29 has a growth potential to it, and it's constantly expanding and
30 getting larger, I would assume. What are we doing that is
31 reducing the size of the resource?

32
33 I mean, is there any reason to protect the resource bigger than
34 what it is presently? Is that what we're trying to do? That
35 seems to be what this wants to do, is to preserve and protect
36 the resource so it continues to grow, and why? I am sorry, but
37 it's been there for hundreds of years, and that's why we're
38 looking at it now. Why are we having to go through all of this?

39
40 I guess it's because of federal laws that says we're going to do
41 this. I am just having a real tough time understanding why we
42 can't anchor. I don't see where anchoring or anything has done
43 enough damage to harm the resource that we have on these reefs.

44
45 I went to one of the hearings in New Orleans, and I didn't hear
46 anything about reduction or damage, significant damage, to the
47 reefs, and so why are we talking about it? If you're got
48 something that's doing just fine, why do you want to do anything

1 else? Leave it alone. Let's go ahead and fish on it. Let's do
2 what you can on it. I have real difficulty with this. Thank
3 you.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Mr. Swindell. Any other comments for
6 Dr. Kilgour? Ms. Bosarge.

7
8 **MS. BOSARGE:** Morgan, this will probably muddy the waters, but I
9 had another idea, too. This was not my -- I have to tell you
10 that this was not my idea originally. It was somebody in the
11 audience, but I thought it was a really good idea.

12
13 Another option, or maybe in combination with that
14 endorsement/permit type of system, is that you can have the
15 reef, your new sanctuary boundary, and let's just assume, for
16 ease of imagination here, illustration, that it's a square, but
17 maybe you could have different zones or tiers, I guess. In
18 other words, within -- As you get -- The problem is anchoring,
19 right, a lot for the finfish fishermen. The anchoring is what
20 causes an issue.

21
22 I don't really see, realistically, how you can get enough
23 mooring buoys out there to really make it feasible for them to
24 do what they need to do. Historically, my understanding, and
25 we're not in this fishery, me personally, but, in speaking to
26 them, my understanding is that they typically anchor right
27 outside the reef area.

28
29 The problem is that if you tried to draw the boundary that is
30 going to prohibit large ships from anchoring and that's going to
31 prohibit shrimpers from trawling and all of this, if you try and
32 get it that tight and that close to the coral reef, as close as
33 these finfish fishermen are going to need it in order to anchor,
34 then you kind of defeat the purpose. You are really not
35 providing that much protection for the coral at that point,
36 because you certainly don't want a shrimper getting that close
37 to the coral. There needs to be a little bit of a buffer area
38 there for that type of fishery.

39
40 Maybe, and I will show you -- I think I can illustrate it, and I
41 didn't tell staff to pull this up, but, staff, if you can go
42 back to G.P.'s presentation from the last meeting, if you go to
43 our briefing book from June and you go to the Flower Garden
44 presentation. If you go back to that presentation, the
45 PowerPoint G.P. gave us, and go to Slide 28, and I think I can
46 illustrate it, because this is not unprecedented.

47
48 There is different -- Even within the sanctuary, yes, there is a

1 box that's drawn that says this is the sanctuary, but, for the
2 oil and gas industry, say, they still have areas within the
3 sanctuary boundaries where they are allowed to do certain things
4 and then areas within the sanctuary where they're not allowed.

5
6 They have a certain area for oil and gas that's called the no-
7 activity zone, and, usually, that area follows the features of
8 the coral on the bottom. In other words, it's a really tight
9 boundary around that coral and they can't do anything within
10 that area. Slide 28 is the one that doesn't have a lot of
11 background noise, and I think it would be easiest to see on the
12 screen. If we blow it up so that we can see the illustration
13 that has the boundaries, the purple box and the red box, if we
14 zoom in to see that.

15
16 What we're looking for is, inside that red box, is you will see
17 a contour. You will see a shape that has a lot of little dots
18 in it. Do you see that inside the red box, where all the little
19 dots are, inside that sort of oblong, circle looking thing?
20 That is the no-activity zone for oil and gas.

21
22 That red box is the line for fishermen, essentially. There is
23 no trawling inside there. There is all your gear restrictions
24 and your normal restrictions. They don't get inside that red
25 box. Oil and gas, on the other hand, can't get inside the area
26 that has the dots. That is their no-activity zone, but they are
27 allowed to do some things. Not everything, but some things
28 outside that dotted box inside the sanctuary.

29
30 Maybe we can do something that kind of builds off of this
31 concept and have tiers of activity. In other words, that no-
32 activity zone for fishing, obviously, no, you had better not be
33 anchoring in there and you had better not be doing anything that
34 would harm the bottom in there.

35
36 Then, right outside of that area, still inside the sanctuary,
37 maybe there could be a tier or a zone where you are allowed to
38 anchor right outside that coral. You will still have this big
39 box around the whole thing, which would be your highest level of
40 regulation, and you wouldn't want to bottom trawl in there or
41 anything else, but I think maybe we could come up with a tiered
42 approach to this that kind of mirrors the way the oil and gas
43 industry has been doing it. That's another option that Morgan
44 can bring to us. Did I explain it well enough, Morgan?

45
46 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any other comments from committee members? Mr.
47 Boyd.

48

1 **MR. DOUG BOYD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not on the
2 committee, but just a question. Are there mooring buoys
3 currently on the sanctuary at this point and how many?
4

5 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Morgan, can you answer that?
6

7 **DR. KILGOUR:** I can answer that, yes, there are currently
8 mooring buoys on the sanctuary, but I am not sure how many.
9 G.P. is right here, and so he can help me.
10

11 **MR. BOYD:** I asked the question, because the next question would
12 be do commercial fishermen utilize them now?
13

14 **DR. KILGOUR:** There are sixteen in total right now on the
15 existing sanctuary.
16

17 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I guess his other question was do commercial
18 fishermen utilize those buoys now? Ms. Bosarge.
19

20 **MS. BOSARGE:** If you can imagine, that's sixteen buoys over
21 fifty-six square miles, and so you can imagine that's kind of
22 limited, especially when you consider it's not commercial
23 fishermen that are going to use those mooring buoys. It's
24 recreational fishermen as well. You can imagine how many
25 stakeholders you have out there competing for those mooring
26 buoys.
27

28 When a commercial guy gets on it, he may be there a little
29 while, and so I don't think -- In other words, the mooring
30 buoys, I don't think, are going to be the answer to the problem.
31 I'm not sure we could get enough out there in the right spots to
32 really make it feasible on a commercial level. I do though
33 think you're right that more mooring buoys would be helpful on
34 the recreational side. I definitely think so.
35

36 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any other comments or concerns from the
37 committee? Mr. Walker.
38

39 **MR. WALKER:** I was just going to add one thing. I heard someone
40 mention it, I think in testimony, and that was maybe a forty-
41 fathom curve, that you could anchor inside of that, or maybe we
42 should even look at that, a fathom curve around the area.
43

44 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Kilgour, do you have anything else on this?
45 Do you need anything else from this committee?
46

47 **DR. KILGOUR:** No, I'm good, but I guess I'm going to get some
48 more instructions.

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CHAIRMAN DIAZ: Leann.

MS. BOSARGE: No, I was just trying to think about it from G.P.'s perspective in thinking about this anchoring, and, you know, obviously these would be fishing regulations, but I know one of his big concerns too are the large ships, tankers and such, that pass through here, and they have huge anchors.

If we did recommend something that's kind of that tiered approach, we might need to actually specify some threshold size of anchor that we're talking about, a certain threshold or below, so that no one could be confused and think that we were talking about allowing some huge tanker to get that close to the coral and drop an anchor.

CHAIRMAN DIAZ: All right. Dr. Kilgour, you said you needed some more instructions from the committee or you're okay? Does that conclude this agenda item for you? Okay. The last thing that we have on the agenda is Other Business. Does anybody on the committee have any other business? Seeing none, we are adjourned.

(Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on August 15, 2016.)