

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

5
6 Marriott Beachside Hotel Key West, Florida
7

8 June 10, 2015
9

10
11 **CORAL COMMITTEE VOTING MEMBERS**

12 Roy Williams.....Florida
13 Martha Bademan (designee for Nick Wiley).....Florida
14 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
15 Jason Brand.....USCG
16 John Sanchez.....Florida
17 Greg Stunz.....Texas
18

19 **HABITAT PROTECTION COMMITTEE VOTING MEMBERS**

20 Dale Diaz (designee for Jamie Miller).....Mississippi
21 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
22 Jason Brand.....USCG
23 John Greene.....Alabama
24 Corky Perret.....Mississippi
25 John Sanchez.....Florida
26 Roy Williams.....Florida
27

28 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

29 Kevin Anson.....Alabama
30 Doug Boyd.....Texas
31 Roy Crabtree.....NMFS, Florida
32 Pamela Dana.....Florida
33 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
34 Campo Matens.....Louisiana
35 Harlon Pearce.....Louisiana
36 Lance Robinson (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas
37 David Walker.....Alabama
38

39 **STAFF**

40 Steven Atran.....Senior Fishery Biologist
41 Assane Diagne.....Economist
42 John Froeschke.....Fishery Biologist/Statistician
43 Doug Gregory.....Executive Director
44 Karen Hoak.....Administrative and Financial Assistant
45 Morgan Kilgour.....Fishery Biologist
46 Ava Lasseter.....Anthropologist
47 Mara Levy.....NOAA General Counsel
48 Emily Muehlstein.....Fisheries Outreach Specialist

1 Charlene Ponce.....Public Information Officer
2 Ryan Rindone.....Fishery Biologist/SEDAR Liaison
3 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
4 Charlotte Schiaffo.....Research & Human Resource Librarian
5 Carrie Simmons.....Deputy Director
6

7 **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

8 Pam Anderson.....Panama City Beach, FL
9 Steve Branstetter.....NMFS
10 Shane Cantrell.....Galveston Charter Fleet, TX
11 Martin Fisher.....FL
12 Richard Gomez.....Key West, FL
13 Frank Helies.....Tampa, FL
14 Scott Hickman.....Galveston, TX
15 Judi Jamison.....FL
16 Bart Niquet.....Panama City, FL
17 Chris Niquet.....Panama City, FL
18 Kelli O'Donnell.....NMFS Contractor, Summerland Key, FL
19 Bonnie Ponwith.....SEFSC
20 George Sedberry.....NOAA
21 Rick Turner.....Marathon, FL
22 Daniel Willard.....EDF, Austin, TX
23

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25
26 The Joint Coral/Habitat Protection Committee of the Gulf of
27 Mexico Fishery Management Council convened at the Marriott
28 Beachside Hotel, Key West, Florida, Wednesday morning, June 10,
29 2015, and was called to order at 11:05 a.m. by Chairman Roy
30 Williams.
31

32 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
33 **APPROVAL MINUTES**
34 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**
35

36 **CHAIRMAN ROY WILLIAMS:** I will call the Joint Coral/Habitat
37 Protection Committee to order. The Coral Committee members are
38 myself, Greg Stunz, Leann Bosarge, Jason Brand, John Sanchez,
39 and Martha Bademan. On the Habitat Protection Committee, Dale
40 Diaz is the Chair and John Sanchez, Leann Bosarge, Jason Brand,
41 Fish and Wildlife Service has a rep and I don't think he's here,
42 Johnny Greene, Corky Perret, and myself.
43

44 Dale and I have talked about this and we've talked with staff
45 and we suggest that the two groups just meet as a committee of
46 the whole rather than making motions back and forth and is that
47 all right with everybody? Does anybody object to that? Hearing
48 no objections, we will go ahead and meet as a committee of the

1 whole.

2
3 The first item of business then is to approve the agenda as
4 drafted behind Tab N, Number 1. Any changes to the agenda? Is
5 there a motion to adopt?

6
7 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** Motion to adopt.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** By Dale and a second by Jason Brand. Any
10 objection to adopting the motion? Hearing none, it's adopted.
11 Next would be Approval of Minutes at Tab N, Number 2. Any
12 changes to those minutes?

13
14 **MR. DIAZ:** Motion to approve.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Motion to adopt by Dale Diaz and second by
17 Jason Brand. Any objection? Hearing none, the minutes are
18 adopted. The next item then would be the Action Guide and Next
19 Steps, which appear at Tab N, Number 3 and I am going to turn it
20 over to Morgan Kilgour at this point to tell us what is
21 expected.

22
23 **DR. MORGAN KILGOUR:** Today I'm going to be presenting you with
24 the report from the Joint Coral SSC/AP meeting that we had a
25 couple of weeks ago and so the committee may recommend that
26 staff initiate the appropriate document to address the
27 recommendations and then I would prepare draft options for the
28 council to review. With that, if you wanted me to just jump
29 into the coral summary, I can do so.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Please.

32
33 **REVIEW JOINT CORAL SSC/AP MEETING REPORT**

34
35 **DR. KILGOUR:** The summary is more of a novella and so I made a
36 presentation to kind of shorten it up a little bit that gets to
37 the meat of the summary. It's N-4. The Coral SSC/AP met to
38 review the working group recommendations that were -- The
39 working group met in December of 2014 and they identified forty-
40 seven different areas and some of these were -- I believe nine
41 of them were already existing HAPCs with no regulations and then
42 the other thirty-eight were new.

43
44 Coordinates were provided to the group ahead of time and we
45 invited members of the shrimping community to attend this
46 meeting so that they could plot the areas that were recommended
47 by the working group and see if there was going to be any
48 interactions.

1
2 We were also notified at the meeting that the royal red shrimp
3 fishery has more information available and some of them, I think
4 less than three of them, have ELBs installed on their vessels.
5 There is only a handful of royal red shrimpers that have
6 endorsements that actively royal red shrimp and so it would be
7 up to me to contact those folks and see if they would provide me
8 with where they're royal red shrimping to better modify some
9 boundaries.

10
11 Then there were several areas that had boundary revisions
12 suggested to alleviate potential shrimping interactions and so
13 when the working group identified these areas, they do so in
14 lease blocks, to try and make them nice square boxes for
15 enforcement purposes, but the shrimpers on some of these boxes -
16 - They seem to be a little large and there definitely is
17 shrimping effort that is on the edges.

18
19 With that, I was going to go over that, that we have some HAPCs,
20 or habitat areas of particular concern, with regulations
21 already. We have National Marine Sanctuaries already and
22 reserves out already that in total are about 1,600 square miles.

23
24 These were not areas that were reviewed by the working group or
25 the Coral SSC/AP. All the areas that will be presented today
26 are new areas that either already have HAPC status but don't
27 have regulations or are brand new.

28
29 As drawn currently, and, again, several of these areas need
30 boundary revision, this would be an additional 1,186 total
31 square miles. The areas were all selected based on known coral
32 presence and study and so none of these are based on a habitat
33 likelihood model and these are all based on actual coral
34 records.

35
36 Just to review, the existing coral HAPCs or reserves are the
37 Florida Middle Grounds, the Flower Garden Banks, including
38 McGrail Bank, Madison Swanson, Pulley Ridge. A small portion of
39 the Pulley Ridge area actually has fishing regulations.
40 Steamboat Lumps, Stetson Bank, the Edges, and the North and
41 South Tortugas.

42
43 These were all -- Some of these were identified as HAPCs through
44 the last coral EFH amendment and the area in square miles of
45 each of those areas is given on the right-hand column and so
46 existing HAPCs with no regulations that were looked at by the
47 working group and the Coral SSC/AP are Alderdice, Bouma, Fathom
48 29 -- I can read them all off, but Pulley Ridge is one of the

1 ones that I wanted to look at in particular.

2
3 It has a very large area right now for the existing HAPC and the
4 working group is only recommending extending the regulation area
5 just by a little bit and there were several areas that the group
6 felt even though they're already HAPCs identified by the council
7 that they could possibly be revised to accommodate some
8 shrimping effort that occurs, again, on the Edges but not on the
9 Banks themselves. To shrimp on these banks would be really
10 damaging to the gear and so some of these could be further
11 refined.

12
13 To go over -- If I'm going too fast or if you have questions,
14 please just let me know right at the beginning, especially there
15 are so many of these areas.

16
17 The Florida Banks are -- I am just going to go from east to west
18 and so the existing -- The Pulley Ridge itself is that small
19 like piece of pie shape down at the bottom corner of that big,
20 large box. That small triangle shape is the existing coral HAPC
21 with regulations and so there is no bottom tending gear and no
22 anchoring by fishing vessels. The large rectangle is the HAPC
23 identified in the 2006 document, but it doesn't have regulations
24 that extend throughout that whole box.

25
26 Based on some new information by John Reed and some other
27 individuals, they suggested extending the current regulation
28 HAPC to the northwest, because there are coral beds there and in
29 between there are lots of red grouper pits and so it would be
30 doing a double service, where you have lots of corals that
31 you're also protecting, but also potential red grouper spawning
32 habitat.

33
34 John Reed also identified a site to the south of the Pulley
35 Ridge and it's a small green box. This is a box that was looked
36 at by the royal red shrimping community and they thought that
37 maybe we needed to revise this box. That seems to be an area
38 that there may be a lot of royal red shrimping activity going on
39 and so that's why that's in green. It's an area that needs more
40 information and possibly boundary revision.

41
42 The other four areas that I didn't identify up to the north, the
43 Okeanos Ridge, the Many Mounds, the North Reed Site, and Long
44 Mound Site are all sites that were identified as having lots of
45 corals and they also don't have any overlap with the shrimping
46 effort according to the ELB data that I have and none of the
47 royal red shrimping community seemed to have issue with those
48 areas and so those were all recommended as potential coral HAPCs

1 for investigation. Are there any questions?
2

3 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** I did have a question on that one that I was
4 confused at the meeting. On that particular one, the huge
5 rectangle, it's currently an HAPC without regulations?
6

7 **DR. KILGOUR:** Right. Only that small piece of pie down in the
8 bottom corner has regulations.
9

10 **MS. BOSARGE:** Right and what the Coral AP/SSC was asking for was
11 the square box that's actually adjoining the piece of pie --
12 That's the portion that they wanted to possibly put further
13 regulations on?
14

15 **DR. KILGOUR:** Exactly, just that little pink box. They didn't
16 think that it was appropriate to do the whole entire HAPC.
17

18 **MS. BOSARGE:** Right. I thought so and then the green box we
19 talked about tightening up, because some of these areas that we
20 were looking at down here essentially -- That was about 75
21 percent of the Key West royal red grounds, what we call the Key
22 West royal red grounds, and so we're going to tighten some up.
23

24 **DR. KILGOUR:** Right and just a slight correction there. That 75
25 percent was the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary
26 expansion, that little box at the bottom. You will see that
27 presentation later. This was an area that our royal red
28 shrimper that attended the meeting didn't have actual data for,
29 but he had thought that there were some fishermen that actually
30 royal red shrimped there and so we need to get that information
31 better, but that wasn't that hotspot area. That will come in a
32 later presentation.
33

34 **MS. MARTHA BADEMAN:** Morgan, what are the restrictions in the
35 regulated area at Pulley Ridge? Is it just trawl restrictions?
36

37 **DR. KILGOUR:** I am going to read them verbatim, because I have
38 them in the SSC summary. It is fishing with bottom longline,
39 bottom trawl, buoy gear, pot, or trap and bottom anchoring by
40 fishing vessel are prohibited year-round in the area of the HAPC
41 and so it's pretty much bottom-tending gear.
42

43 **MR. CORKY PERRET:** We talk about that little red box and how
44 many square miles is that little red box?
45

46 **DR. KILGOUR:** The little red box off the side of Pulley Ridge?
47

48 **MR. PERRET:** Yes.

1
2 **DR. KILGOUR:** That little red box, including the existing Pulley
3 Ridge, is 257.3 square miles. Pulley Ridge currently is -- That
4 can't be right. I must have had a typo there. It's not that
5 much bigger and so I will find out. I apologize.

6
7 **MR. PERRET:** I am just saying we talk about a little red box or
8 whatever is little, but that's a substantial amount of ocean and
9 that's lines and that's regulations and that's law enforcement
10 and that's impact on fishermen and so on and so while it's a
11 little red box, it's still a pretty large area that's got lines
12 and enforcement implications. Thank you.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** If I could just say something here, Morgan.
15 One of the things that I was impressed with when that working
16 group met last year was the perfection of these deepwater
17 cameras and they are much better able to identify these
18 deepwater corals nowadays than they could back when I was active
19 and I think that's some of the change that's occurred here.

20
21 They're able to put cameras down and identify these areas and
22 remote-controlled vehicles and identify these areas, whereas
23 twenty years ago they couldn't do that and so the information is
24 much better nowadays than it used to be. Back to you, Morgan.

25
26 **DR. KILGOUR:** Okay and so the next area is the Northeastern Gulf
27 Banks and so there were several areas here that were identified
28 as having potential interactions with the shrimping community.
29 Those were all highlighted in green and that's Alabama Alps and
30 Mountaintop Bank. The Far Tortugas, over to the very right-hand
31 side of the map, that was an area that I had requested to put in
32 this needs more data. I haven't been able to find coral data.

33
34 It was identified by the working group, but I haven't been able
35 to find it and so that's one area that I would like to
36 investigate more, because it possibly needs to be eliminated if
37 -- The reason why that was included was based on an older paper
38 that said that that area had a lot of corals, but when I plotted
39 the GPS coordinates, they don't match up with that particular
40 box and so I am going to investigate that further and that
41 potentially will be removed.

42
43 There are two areas on here, the Viosca Knolls area that you can
44 see down in the pink boxes at the bottom, slightly towards the
45 bottom, and those two areas are heavily royal red shrimped and
46 so when that information was brought to the Coral SSC/AP, they
47 made a recommendation, and I want to say it verbatim so that I'm
48 not speaking off the cuff again, but to have those areas be --

1 The royal red shrimp fishery be exempt from the boundary
2 proposed from Viosca Knoll 862 and 906 and to propose that the
3 Viosca Knoll 826 site belong to the category that needs more
4 data.

5
6 That probably should be a green box, but basically that area in
7 particular -- The royal red shrimpers are pulling up their nets
8 and they're not on the actual coral mounds, but they would be in
9 those boundaries and the way that the actual coral community is
10 down there, there is no way to redraw those boundaries without
11 affecting the fishermen and they're not on the bottom.

12
13 It's also probably the area that the coral working group and the
14 Coral SSC/AP thought was one of the most valuable areas
15 warranting coral protection. There is extensive studies on the
16 Viosca Knolls areas and there is lots of documentation of
17 lophelia and other types of corals that are protected and so
18 they suggested a recommendation that those areas be exempt --
19 That the royal red shrimp industry be exempt from any
20 regulations in those areas, but still any other types of bottom-
21 tending gear would be prohibited.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Questions anybody or comments? Okay.

24
25 **DR. KILGOUR:** This is going a lot faster than I thought. The
26 Northwestern Gulf Banks, a lot of these are in really deep
27 water. The shrimping industry representatives that came to the
28 meeting didn't seem to have any issue with these, because
29 they're so deep. There wasn't any overlap of the ELB data with
30 any of these areas and so they liked the -- There have been,
31 again, extensive coral surveys for these areas.

32
33 Moving on to the Northeastern Banks to the west, this is over by
34 the Flower Gardens area and those aren't highlighted here,
35 because I felt like there were a lot of boxes already, but you
36 can see the Flower Garden Banks are over to the western part of
37 the map, but there are several banks that are highlighted in
38 green that need boundary revision, because there seems to be
39 extensive shrimping going on.

40
41 **MS. BOSARGE:** I wanted to say it on that last item about the
42 royal reds and that's, just to refresh everybody's memory on the
43 Shrimp Committee, that's what I was referring to about the
44 endorsements, where it could prove that they are necessary for
45 enforcement purposes.

46
47 If you're going to be trawling, shrimp trawling, in those boxes,
48 you would have to be trawling for royal reds and have that

1 endorsement on the vessel as far as enforcement, because they
2 are the ones that would have the exemption to actually trawl
3 through there and nobody else.

4
5 I wanted to say how well the group worked together, the Coral
6 AP/SSC and the shrimpers. It was very collaborative and I was
7 concerned that it wouldn't be, but it really was and they came -
8 - The Coral AP are the ones that actually said how about we make
9 an exemption, once they understood how we fish that area and
10 that we knew where the coral was and the way we fish doesn't
11 touch the coral and so it did go very well and when we got to
12 this right here, the Northwestern Gulf Banks Part 1, a lot of
13 the discussion we had had at the council level prior to this was
14 on the deepwater coral and I guess deepwater means different
15 things to different people.

16
17 In the shrimpers' minds, we thought, okay, this is going to be
18 800 to 2,000 feet of water that this is in and then when we
19 received our documentation for the meeting, we realized that to
20 the Coral AP and scientists that deepwater means essentially
21 fifty meters or greater and so we're talking about 150 foot on a
22 lot of this stuff and so it does affect the penaeid shrimp
23 fishery as well, because a lot of these are in pretty shallow
24 water.

25
26 You can see that one, 29 Fathom Bank, and so they worked with us
27 and we're going to put it into these categories where we go back
28 and tighten up these boxes, because we're not trawling over the
29 coral. We know where it is. We're trawling all around it, but
30 we need them to tighten up the box so that we can still trawl in
31 the areas where we normally do and not be breaking the law,
32 essentially.

33
34 **MR. JOHN SANCHEZ:** I just wanted to ask you, Leann, in your
35 estimation then, you're satisfied with the level of industry
36 participation and arriving at the combined objective of
37 protecting the coral yet not financially needlessly impacting
38 the shrimp industry?

39
40 **MS. BOSARGE:** No, I'm not yet. We're getting there. It's a
41 work in progress. This was a meeting of the -- We are doing a
42 great job at it and that's not to say this is going down the
43 wrong path.

44
45 We had two representatives from the shrimp industry at that
46 meeting, one royal red shrimper and then one penaeid shrimper.
47 That's a lot to ask of a shrimper to go through the entire Gulf
48 of Mexico and speak for the entire fleet that this is okay and

1 we don't trawl there and so what I hoped, and Morgan I'm sure
2 will get into this later, is we hoped that once these boxes are
3 tightened up by the Coral AP/SSC that this will be presented to
4 the full Shrimp AP and have maybe a couple representatives from
5 the coral community there to answer questions.

6
7 Then it's probably going to have to be presented to some other
8 stakeholders that this may affect to get their feedback and
9 hopefully that will be just as collaborative as the last meeting
10 was, where we're all working together.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Do you want to respond to that, Morgan,
13 because I've got a couple of people that want to talk.

14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just really briefly, we invited two royal red
16 shrimpers and two members of the Shrimp AP to come.
17 Unfortunately, one of the royal red shrimpers didn't come after
18 saying that he would and one of the Shrimp AP members was unable
19 to because of weather.

20
21 Also, I do want to note that I did present the working group
22 summary to the Shrimp AP back in February and so that they were
23 able to see that this was going on, but that's all I -- I just
24 wanted to do a little bit of a clarification there.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** So they've looked at it and the Shrimp AP is
27 aware that this is going on?

28
29 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, they were given the summary and the reason
30 why I presented it to them was I was asking for who would be the
31 royal red shrimpers to contact for this.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Okay. I've got a bunch of people that want
34 to talk now and, Leann, is this part of this discussion?

35
36 **MS. BOSARGE:** There were some -- Some of the information was
37 presented to the Shrimp AP and we tried to get somebody from the
38 royal red fishery during that meeting to figure out who needed
39 to come, but this has evolved since then. There's much more
40 shallow-water HAPC in here than what we understood, because
41 shallow water meant something different.

42
43 There are boxes on there that need to be addressed by the shrimp
44 fishery once they're tightened up and I think it will go
45 smoothly, but I do think they need to see this. Two men from
46 the entire Gulf of Mexico does not a representative sample make
47 and so I think they need to see it again.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** I have Johnny Greene and then Corky and then
2 Greg Stunz.

3
4 **MR. JOHNNY GREENE:** I have failed to look at this prior, because
5 I've been wrapped up with Reef Fish and Data Collection. Is
6 this just a shrimp document at this point? Is the shrimping
7 industry going to be impacted or is this commercial or
8 recreational or reef fish? Is this everybody? I'm sorry to ask
9 such an ignorant question, but I just --

10
11 **DR. KILGOUR:** So the recommendations from the Coral SSC and
12 Coral AP were the same regulations would apply to these areas as
13 already apply to Pulley Ridge and Madison-Swanson and so it's
14 basically bottom-tending gear, pots, traps, trawls, anchoring by
15 fishing vessels.

16
17 Recreational fishing shouldn't be affected unless they're doing
18 bottom-tending gear and so one thing that was noted and we're
19 working on is we need to get ahold of VMS data to find out where
20 the bottom longliners are and that's going to be a pretty big
21 challenge and so that's something that we will proceed with if
22 the council wants us to move forward on this document.

23
24 **MR. GREENE:** One follow-up, if I may. Where did the designation
25 of fifty-meters of water or deeper is deepwater coral? Where
26 did that come from?

27
28 **DR. KILGOUR:** NOAA.

29
30 **MR. PERRET:** I just want to echo some of the things Leann said.
31 I was able to attend the coral meeting and there were two
32 representatives from the shrimp industry there and I think it
33 really went well. Those two individuals and the coral people
34 were able to communicate and work out some of the things, the
35 methods, that the shrimp fishery utilizes in some of those
36 areas.

37
38 I think it was very helpful and motions were made by the coral
39 people to modify some of their suggestions that they started out
40 with and I think it would be really important, and Johnny Greene
41 brings up an excellent point, that there are other fisheries
42 involved and perhaps there might be some input from those user
43 groups that needs to be incorporated into this whole process.

44
45 I mean we want to protect the coral and we want to do it in a
46 fashion that does just that, preserves the coral areas, but we
47 don't want to unduly influence other users if it's not
48 necessary.

1
2 **DR. GREG STUNZ:** My comments were addressed with those.
3
4 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Martha, you had your hand up earlier and did
5 I recognize you?
6
7 **MS. BADEMAN:** I can't even remember what I was going to ask if I
8 was going to ask something and so --
9
10 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Okay. I apologize. David, did you have
11 something?
12
13 **MR. DAVID WALKER:** This is definitely going to be in some areas
14 of vermilion snapper and that's why I think the Reef Fish AP
15 needs to meet about this.
16
17 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** You say they fish for vermilion snapper and
18 that's just vertical line gear though, right?
19
20 **MR. WALKER:** Right, vertical line gear, but you go to the
21 bottom. You anchor and you run your bandit gear to the bottom.
22 Sometimes you can catch them up in the water, but a lot of times
23 we're fishing right on the bottom.
24
25 **DR. KILGOUR:** The group did extensively discuss bandit gear and
26 that wasn't on the restricted, but the anchoring by the vessel
27 would be restricted and it was noted that it needs to go to the
28 Reef Fish AP by actually Doug Gregory.
29
30 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Okay. Leann, one more?
31
32 **MS. BOSARGE:** Morgan, did we -- You will have to refresh my
33 memory, because we had a discussion about the deep dropping and
34 did they say that they were going to potentially include that in
35 the regulations? They are making the boxes now, but they were
36 very upfront with us and said, look, we're going to make these
37 boxes, but our intent is to put regulations with these boxes
38 once we have them all drawn out the way that we want them.
39
40 We appreciated them being upfront with us so that we knew where
41 we were headed with this and when we discuss those regulations,
42 obviously that's not set in stone yet as to what's going to be
43 allowed and disallowed and it may depend on the different areas,
44 but I know deep dropping was one of the things that was on the
45 list at one point for discussion.
46
47 **DR. KILGOUR:** Right and I don't think that -- The actual
48 recommendations by the Coral SSC/AP were to have the regulations

1 be consistent with what's in Pulley Ridge and that does not
2 include deep dropping. Again, it's bottom longline, bottom
3 trawl, buoy gear, trap, pot, and bottom anchoring.

4
5 They also included Madison-Swanson, which is essentially the
6 same, except for they also add dredge on there, but deep
7 dropping or bandit gear would still be allowed and so that
8 wouldn't be part of the fishing regulations. However, anchoring
9 your vessel would not be allowed.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Didn't deep dropping come up in the context
12 of the Flower Gardens expansion? Yes, I think that was a
13 western Gulf issue. It's kind of coming back to me.

14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** G.P. from the National Marine Sanctuary clarified
16 that that is allowed in the Flower Gardens. You are allowed to
17 use bandit gear in the Flower Gardens right now.

18
19 **MR. GREENE:** You mentioned Madison-Swanson and that's a no
20 harvest, no take area. That's different than what you're trying
21 to do here.

22
23 **DR. KILGOUR:** Right and so I clarified with the group, because
24 they kept lumping it together, because I guess it was part of
25 the same amendment, that they're different and that these are
26 coral HAPCs versus that's a no take area and so they modified it
27 to have their regulations be consistent with an existing HAPC,
28 which is Pulley Ridge.

29
30 **MR. GREENE:** One more thing. Just trying to get feedback here
31 and the deep dropping thing is something that is not overly
32 popular, but it may be gaining some popularity and increasing.
33 When you go put a chart out that has these red boxes, you are
34 basically showing these people where they've been missing all
35 these years and I, for the life of me, cannot imagine how
36 Lieutenant Brand and these guys are going to enforce these
37 things. It's just a comment and you don't have to reply, but
38 I'm just putting it out there.

39
40 **DR. KILGOUR:** They are kind of far from shore and they're really
41 deep, most of these areas.

42
43 **MR. GREENE:** I have seen triple engine outboards 150 miles
44 offshore and so I beg to differ. The definition of deepwater
45 coral and distance offshore are up for interpretation.

46
47 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR DOUG GREGORY:** My comment is similar. Has
48 there been discussion or do you know if there is a process for

1 NOAA to put the boundaries of these on charts once they're
2 established, because once they're on the charts, then the
3 companies doing the chart plotters would pick them up and they
4 would be on everybody's boat. If there's not a process or it
5 hasn't been discussed, let's look into it.

6
7 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's something I will need to look into.

8
9 **MR. CAMPO MATENS:** I would echo those comments. I mean I don't
10 mean to be flip about this, but I can find Green Canyon 354 and
11 in my community, some of these deeper fisheries have become of
12 great interest and I think we could see an increased utilization
13 of the recreational community out here. Thank you.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Morgan, back to you.

16
17 **DR. KILGOUR:** I do want to point that it's not showing up on
18 this map and it's probably because it's so small, but the 29
19 Fathom, McNeil, Sonnier, and Alderdice Banks that are all in
20 green and need boundary revisions, those are all currently HAPCs
21 with no regulations and so that's why they were included in
22 this.

23
24 The working group and the Coral SSC/AP wanted to revisit areas
25 that have HAPC status but they don't have regulations and so
26 with that, there are also several areas that are included on
27 this -- Maybe not the whole box, but part of the box is being
28 considered for the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary
29 expansion and that presentation was given to you by G.P. back at
30 the April meeting.

31
32 There has been a lot of collaboration with them, because they
33 have a lot of unpublished coral data about these areas and
34 species richness. Some of the best data that we have on some of
35 these areas is from the National Marine Sanctuary.

36
37 The last part is the South Texas Banks and this seemed to be the
38 most contentious and so these banks are very small. The boxes
39 that were drawn around them are very large and this is a very
40 heavily shrimped area and so pretty much all of these boundaries
41 need to be revisited to accommodate for the shrimping effort
42 with the exception of that unnamed bank down in the south that's
43 tentatively named Harte Bank.

44
45 There didn't seem to be any shrimping effort in that box and so
46 there wasn't any issue with that, but all the rest of them there
47 is shrimping effort all around and if you plot it, you can
48 actually see the banks in the middle of all the shrimping effort

1 and so we need to modify all of these boundaries for this and
2 resubmit that to the coral folks and the shrimping folks to make
3 sure that the boundaries are appropriate. Any questions on
4 these?

5
6 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Questions from the committee or non-
7 committee members? Does that complete your --

8
9 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just the last bit. So the overall
10 recommendations, it was noted that the council has removed
11 octocorals from the fishery management unit and so this includes
12 bamboo corals and a lot of corals that are present on these that
13 are -- Some of these are actually mentioned in Magnuson as
14 warranting protection under the Deep Sea Coral Authority and so
15 when the octocorals were removed, it was because there was some
16 harvest of octocorals that were shallow off the coast of Florida
17 for the aquarium trade and so they delegated the responsibility
18 for all octocorals to the State of Florida.

19
20 That was, I think, before a lot of the biological information
21 about deep sea octocorals was known and so the group
22 recommended, and let me read the exact verbatim motion, that the
23 council reincorporate deepwater octocorals known to exist in
24 fifty meters of water or deeper into the fishery management
25 unit.

26
27 The group also recommended that staff initiate a document to
28 designate new coral HAPCs. The group proposed boundaries for
29 fifteen areas that need revision and those were all the green
30 areas that you saw on the maps and I need to incorporate more
31 fishery data and that group also recommended that I try and get
32 my hands on some of that VMS data so that we can include that as
33 well.

34
35 The group proposed boundaries for thirty-two other areas that
36 were recommended as the coral working group addressed them and
37 there are so many motions in this that I'm consolidating all of
38 them into one, because they pretty much made a motion almost
39 about every single area.

40
41 The group also recommended that the council develop regulations
42 that are similar to those of other coral HAPCs like Pulley
43 Ridge. There were two areas that they thought should have
44 special exemptions for royal red shrimpers, the Viosca Knoll
45 areas, and they recommended that there be a joint meeting once
46 all of these revisions and new data are incorporated between
47 representatives of the Coral SSC, the Coral AP, the Shrimp SSC,
48 and the Shrimp AP to look at these revised boundaries, to make

1 sure that they're appropriate.

2
3 **MR. SANCHEZ:** In addition to the shrimp-related folks, would it
4 be appropriate to add the reef fish concerns and some of those
5 folks into that, so that as they're jointly looking at all this
6 that you have the benefit of their input as well?

7
8 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Yes, we've had some discussions in the
9 background about doing that. Leann.

10
11 **MS. BOSARGE:** To follow up on that, what John said, we discussed
12 in Shrimp Committee that the Shrimp AP is going to need to have
13 another meeting to look at some of these revised boxes, so the
14 coral stuff, and possibly some revisions that we made to that
15 Shrimp Amendment 17.

16
17 That would be one meeting and at that Shrimp AP meeting, we
18 would like to have at least one or two members from the coral
19 community there to answer questions when the shrimpers have
20 questions, so that they're not just some person off in the sky
21 somewhere that we never see and so that worked well.

22
23 Then I think that there probably should be another meeting where
24 you have your Coral AP/SSC group and these reef fish
25 stakeholders that may be impacted by this and so it may be two
26 separate meetings, your Shrimp AP with a handful of coral people
27 there and then your reef fish people with your coral.
28 Otherwise, I think the meeting might get a little unwieldy.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** I've got a couple of people that want to
31 talk here, both John and David and Martha, but when will the
32 revised document be available? Would it be available by the
33 time the Shrimp Advisory Panel meets in October? It would be?
34 Okay. I have John and then David and then Martha.

35
36 **MR. SANCHEZ:** In speaking with Martha and Doug just left the
37 room, but I don't know if -- There may or may not be some
38 lobstering going on in some of these areas too and so we might
39 want to talk to some of these folks, because in Key West they do
40 go way to the west towards the end of the season and we just
41 want to make sure that if it's going to be impactful to them
42 that they give some input.

43
44 Also, I would be very curious to see -- I know we're kind of
45 making recommendations and so there is nothing real focused yet,
46 but I would be real curious to see what the Sanctuary
47 presentation has for us, because like Corky mentioned red boxes
48 and they probably won't hit you with a red box upfront, but they

1 will give you a yellow one and it will be thousands of square
2 miles, I promise you.

3
4 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just to follow up, I forgot to mention that we
5 also got presentations at this meeting from the Flower Garden
6 Banks National Marine Sanctuary expansion that was given to you
7 guys at your last meeting and then the Florida Keys National
8 Marine Sanctuary expansion, which will be presented to you later
9 on today and so I didn't go into great detail about that,
10 because you're going to get it straight from the horse's mouth
11 later.

12
13 **MR. WALKER:** I would just mention one of the things the AP may
14 be interested in looking at is probably trying to shape these
15 boxes somehow, where they could still anchor and not be anchored
16 in the coral areas and maybe shaping the boxes somehow. There's
17 a substantial amount of bottom there off of Alabama and
18 Louisiana and I think they're looking at some of that at the
19 Flower Gardens, but shaping these boxes somehow where they could
20 still fish them.

21
22 **DR. KILGOUR:** Would it be helpful if I was able to get the
23 outline of the actual features that they're trying to protect
24 that have the corals, because some of these features are pretty
25 large and the boxes are not very far from the edges of those
26 features and so it might not be that helpful to just -- I can do
27 that and I can add the shape of the features inside the box.
28 This is going to be a very long document.

29
30 **MS. BADEMAN:** My comments were basically what John said and
31 particularly Pulley Ridge and if we're doing a significant
32 expansion there, we need to pull in the lobster fishery and I am
33 certainly supportive of the collaborative approach that we've
34 been talking about here between these different fisheries and
35 the Coral AP and SSC.

36
37 I think we've got to get everybody together and working in the
38 same room and collaborating on what the boundaries of these
39 areas and whether or not we should even add these areas and
40 working on that problem.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** So the advisory panel, the Coral SSC and
43 Advisory Panel, had recommended that we initiate an amendment to
44 designate these and it sounds like the committee wants to see
45 more frontend work before we do that and so I think what we're
46 looking is to meet with the Shrimp AP to better define the
47 boundaries for the ones that aren't well defined, to meet with
48 the Shrimp AP when they meet in October.

1
2 The Reef Fish AP, I don't know when they will be convened. They
3 haven't been announced yet, but then somehow we're going to have
4 to coordinate with the lobster people as well.
5

6 **MS. BOSARGE:** Would you like me to make a motion that will give
7 Morgan direction to convene her coral group, which she can do
8 the whole SSC and the whole AP if she wants, whatever the case
9 may be, but those coral scientists along with the other
10 stakeholders, exempting the shrimp, because they're going to
11 have their own meeting, but the other stakeholders that may be
12 impacted, to convene a meeting of those people to collaborate
13 and go over these boxes and that would be the stakeholders that
14 David mentioned and the stakeholders that Johnny mentioned and
15 that John mentioned and that Martha mentioned and I think she
16 has that on the record.
17

18 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Would you help with the motion here then,
19 Leann, and give us your motion?
20

21 **DR. KILGOUR:** Just as an aside, I think it might be helpful, if
22 I'm revising the boundaries before I present it to all of these
23 people, to have representatives from the shrimp and just have a
24 couple of people from each of those groups come together and
25 that way if there is an open discussion and not wait until the
26 Shrimp AP meets again, because it would be nicer to have a more
27 solidified plan for the Shrimp AP, because when I presented the
28 working group recommendations -- I mean forty-seven areas is a
29 lot to take in and especially if I'm revising the boundaries. I
30 would like to have them better defined, but that's completely up
31 to you, but it might be appropriate, since they requested the
32 boundary revisions for shrimping, to look at them before all
33 these other groups get to see them.
34

35 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** How would you do that? You would bring a
36 few shrimpers and a few reef fish fishermen and longliners and
37 whatever into Tampa, I guess, to all meet together and is that
38 what you're thinking of?
39

40 **DR. KILGOUR:** So the recommendation from the Coral AP/Coral SSC
41 was to have representatives from the Coral AP and Coral SSC and
42 Shrimp AP and Shrimp SSC and perhaps we could add the Lobster AP
43 or Lobster SSC or just -- I mean it's going to get out of
44 control, but two people I guess from each group to come and
45 discuss this, so that everyone is equally represented. That
46 might be the way to go and so that we can all fit into one room,
47 too.
48

1 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Johnny wants to talk here, but do you have a
2 motion yet that you want to make?
3
4 **MS. BOSARGE:** Let's talk about it some more, because I do want
5 this presented to the entire Shrimp AP and that was the motion
6 that the shrimp representative made that was there at the
7 meeting, that he wanted this presented to the entire Shrimp AP
8 when we have that next Shrimp AP meeting.
9
10 **DR. KILGOUR:** I'm not suggesting not to do that. I am
11 suggesting in addition to.
12
13 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Let's let Johnny speak and then we'll do it.
14 Johnny, go ahead.
15
16 **MR. GREENE:** Has law enforcement been given the opportunity and
17 where are they going to fit into this? Because we've got a
18 whole bunch of boxes here and these guys are going to have a
19 monumental task. I mean has that been given any consideration?
20
21 **DR. KILGOUR:** It has been given consideration. It was actually
22 part of the original council motion. We decided to first define
23 these boundaries before we brought law enforcement in. It's a
24 lot and so I was kind of hoping to shrink the number, but that's
25 not happening.
26
27 **MS. BADEMAN:** That was kind of going to be my suggestion. Let's
28 figure out what areas we're going to go with, or at least lean
29 in, and figure out what fishery interactions we may have and
30 then I think maybe pull law enforcement in so we can tackle
31 specific problems. That's just my suggestion.
32
33 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Martha. Leann, do you have
34 something for us?
35
36 **MS. BOSARGE:** I would like to make a motion to instruct staff to
37 convene a meeting of the appropriate coral scientists, along
38 with other fishery stakeholders, and I don't think we need to
39 list the specific stakeholders and I think we've had enough
40 discussion, to review potential coral HAPCs.
41
42 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Is your motion shown correctly there? I
43 think she got you verbatim.
44
45 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think that looks good if the committee is okay
46 with it.
47
48 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Do we have a second for that motion? Second

1 by Martha. This is pretty much what we've been discussing here
2 for the last ten or fifteen minutes and so is there more
3 discussion on the motion? **Hearing no discussion, is there**
4 **objection? Hearing none, this motion is approved.** Morgan, is
5 there something else that we need to do or is this -- Can we
6 leave it here?

7
8 **DR. KILGOUR:** It's up to you. If you don't want me to start
9 working on a document, but you want more of this analysis, I
10 mean we're pretty much at the draft options stage with all the
11 analyses that have currently been done, but I can wait until the
12 Shrimp AP reviews this and start working on it then. Just I'm
13 given a little bit more flexibility on how much analysis I can
14 do when I'm working on an amendment.

15
16 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think we're definitely going to get to the
17 options paper amendment stage of this. As someone from the
18 fishery side of it, I was very impressed with the way that
19 meeting went between the shrimpers and the coral scientists.

20
21 When we get to the point where we have an amendment, I believe
22 that you will see those fishermen get very defensive and your
23 collaboration is going to start to tail off. I would rather see
24 some of these meetings happen right now before we get to the
25 amendment stage, where they feel like they still have some input
26 on this. The box has not been drawn for sure yet and they're
27 asking me how do you feel about this and I think we'll get a lot
28 more collaboration that way and it will be a lot less staff
29 effort in taking things out and putting things in and doing this
30 as we start to butt heads. I would rather see us be efficient
31 and do a few more meetings before we get to that point.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Okay. With that, is there anything else for
34 this committee to do? **Hearing none, do you have anything to**
35 **add, Morgan?**

36
37 **DR. KILGOUR:** Not at this time.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN WILLIAMS:** Motion to adjourn by John Sanchez and second
40 by Martha. Any objection? **Hearing none, we are adjourned.**

41
42 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m., June 10,
43 2015.)

44
45 - - -