

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2
3 251ST MEETING

4
5 FULL COUNCIL SESSION

6
7 Grand Hotel Marriott Point Clear, Alabama

8
9 JANUARY 28-29, 2015

10
11 January 28, 2015

12
13
14 **VOTING MEMBERS**

- 15 Kevin Anson (designee for Chris Blankenship)Alabama
- 16 Martha Bademan (designee for Nick Wiley)Florida
- 17 Leann BosargeMississippi
- 18 Doug BoydTexas
- 19 Roy CrabtreeNMFS, SERO, St. Petersburg, Florida
- 20 Pamela DanaFlorida
- 21 Myron Fischer (designee for Randy Pausina)Louisiana
- 22 Johnny GreeneAlabama
- 23 Kelly Lucas (designee for Jamie Miller)Mississippi
- 24 Campo MatensLouisiana
- 25 Harlon PearceLouisiana
- 26 Corky PerretMississippi
- 27 Robin RiechersTexas
- 28 John SanchezFlorida
- 29 Greg StunzTexas
- 30 David WalkerAlabama
- 31 Roy WilliamsFlorida

32
33 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

- 34 LCDR Jason BrandUSCG
- 35 Glenn ConstantUSFWS
- 36 Dave DonaldsonGSMFC

37
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- 40 Assane DiagneEconomist
- 41 John FroeschkeFishery Biologist
- 42 Doug GregoryExecutive Director
- 43 Karen HoakAdministrative and Financial Assistant
- 44 Ava LasseterAnthropologist
- 45 Mara LevyNOAA General Counsel
- 46 Charlene PoncePublic Information Officer
- 47 Ryan RindoneFishery Biologist/SEDAR Liaison
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27
28 - - -
29

30 The Full Council of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management
31 Council convened at the Grand Hotel Marriott, Point Clear,
32 Alabama, Wednesday afternoon, January 28, 2015, and was called
33 to order at 1:30 p.m. by Chairman Kevin Anson.

34
35 **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**
36

37 **CHAIRMAN KEVIN ANSON:** Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to the
38 251st meeting of the Gulf Council. My name is Kevin Anson,
39 Chairman of the Council. If you have a cell phone, pager, or
40 similar device, we ask that you keep them on silent or vibrating
41 mode during the meeting.
42

43 The Gulf Council is one of eight regional councils established
44 in 1976 by the Fishery Conservation and Management Act, known
45 today as the Magnuson-Stevens Act. The council's purpose is to
46 serve as a deliberative body to advise the Secretary of Commerce
47 on fishery management measures in the federal waters of the Gulf
48 of Mexico. These measures help ensure that fishery resources in

1 the Gulf are sustained, while providing the best overall benefit
2 to the nation.

3
4 The council has seventeen voting members, eleven of whom are
5 appointed by the Secretary of Commerce and include individuals
6 from a range of geographical areas in the Gulf of Mexico and
7 with experience in various aspects of fisheries.

8
9 The membership also includes five state fishery managers and the
10 Regional Administrator from NOAA Fisheries Service, as well as
11 several non-voting members. Public input is a vital part of the
12 council's deliberative process and comments, both oral and
13 written, are accepted and considered by the council throughout
14 the process.

15
16 The Sustainable Fisheries Act requires that all statements are
17 to include a brief description of the background and interest of
18 the persons in the subject of the statement. All written
19 information shall include a statement of the source and date of
20 such information.

21
22 Oral or written communications provided to the council, its
23 members or its staff, that relate to matters within the
24 council's purview are public in nature. All written comments
25 will be posted on the council's website for viewing by council
26 members and the public and will be maintained by the council as
27 a part of the permanent record.

28
29 Knowingly and willfully submitting false information to the
30 council is a violation of federal law. A digital recording is
31 used for the public record and therefore, for the purpose of
32 voice identification, each member is requested to identify
33 himself or herself, starting on my left.

34
35 **MR. ROY WILLIAMS:** Roy Williams, Florida.

36
37 **MR. CORKY PERRET:** Corky Perret, Mississippi.

38
39 **DR. KELLY LUCAS:** Kelly Lucas, Mississippi.

40
41 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** Leann Bosarge, Mississippi.

42
43 **MR. DAVE DONALDSON:** Dave Donaldson, Gulf States Marine
44 Fisheries Commission.

45
46 **MR. MYRON FISCHER:** Myron Fischer, Louisiana.

47
48 **MR. CAMPO MATENS:** Camp Matens, Louisiana.

1
2 **MR. HARLON PEARCE:** Harlon Pearce, Louisiana.
3
4 **DR. PAMELA DANA:** Pam Dana, Florida.
5
6 **MR. JOHN SANCHEZ:** John Sanchez, Florida.
7
8 **MS. MARTHA BADEMAN:** Martha Bademan, Florida.
9
10 **MR. GLENN CONSTANT:** Glenn Constant, Fish and Wildlife Service.
11
12 **MR. ZACK BOWEN:** Zack Bowen, Georgia.
13
14 **MS. MARA LEVY:** Mara Levy, NOAA Office of General Counsel.
15
16 **DR. ROY CRABTREE:** Roy Crabtree, NOAA Fisheries.
17
18 **DR. STEVE BRANSTETTER:** Steve Branstetter, NOAA Fisheries.
19
20 **DR. BONNIE PONWITH:** Bonnie Ponwith, NOAA Fisheries.
21
22 **DR. GREG STUNZ:** Greg Stunz, Texas.
23
24 **MR. ROBIN RIECHERS:** Robin Riechers, Texas.
25
26 **MR. DOUG BOYD:** Doug Boyd, Texas.
27
28 **MR. JOHNNY GREENE:** Johnny Greene, Alabama.
29
30 **MR. DAVID WALKER:** David Walker, Alabama.
31
32 **LCDR JASON BRAND:** Lieutenant Commander Jason Brand, U.S. Coast
33 Guard.
34
35 **MR. DOUGLAS GREGORY:** Douglas Gregory, council staff.
36

37 **ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**
38

39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you and just for the record, Zack Bowen
40 from Georgia is representing the South Atlantic Fishery
41 Management Council here today. We have the council agenda,
42 which is Tab A, Number 4. We have Adoption of the Agenda and
43 does anyone have any changes to the agenda? Is there a motion
44 to accept the agenda as written?
45

46 **MR. PERRET:** So moved.
47

48 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Do we have a second?

1
2 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Second.
3

4 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
5

6 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's been seconded by Mr. Williams and is there
7 any discussion? Is there any opposition to approving the motion
8 as written? All right. The next item is Approval of the
9 Minutes. The minutes are at Tab A, Number 4 and 5. Any changes
10 to the minutes?
11

12 **MS. LEVY:** I just have a couple. On page 194, line 3, change
13 "be" to "are" and then on page 198, line 19, remove the extra
14 "at". Thanks.
15

16 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Any other changes to the minutes?
17 Is there is a motion to accept the minutes as amended?
18

19 **MR. WILLIAMS:** So moved.
20

21 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Is there a second from anyone?
22

23 **MR. PEARCE:** Second.
24

25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Pearce. Any opposition to the
26 motion? Seeing none, the minutes are approved. That takes us
27 to Item Number II, Red Drum Update, and, Mr. Rindone, were you
28 going to give an update on red drum?
29

30 **RED DRUM UPDATE**
31

32 **MR. RYAN RINDONE:** I sure was. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The
33 council had requested that the states each update the escapement
34 rates for red drum following the meeting of the Special Red Drum
35 Working Group and, to date, we have only received letters from
36 Alabama and Florida with respect to their efforts to update
37 those escapement rates.
38

39 Alabama is currently working on it and Florida plans to address
40 it when they assess red drum again, which is this year. As far
41 as the other states, we haven't heard anything back yet and so
42 we're still waiting on that.
43

44 **MR. RIECHERS:** Ryan, when we discussed it at the meeting, at the
45 time you had indicated that we had already updated from some
46 other states.
47

48 **MR. RINDONE:** That is correct, Mr. Riechers. We had updated

1 escapement numbers for Texas. Mississippi had rerun some of
2 their data and they were showing that they were perhaps under
3 the escapement rate, but they were going to analyze those again
4 and we haven't heard anything from Louisiana, but I'm just
5 talking about as far as letters back to the council in response
6 to the request that was sent out. We have only heard from two
7 of the states.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** What you're saying, Ryan, though is that Texas
10 has updated information and then Alabama and Florida you have
11 received positive comments and even Louisiana you received
12 comments that they are working on it, correct?

13
14 **MR. RINDONE:** Nothing from Louisiana. Texas has given us
15 information through 2014 and so a response from them is kind of
16 moot and then Mississippi is working on theirs. They had
17 initially explored a new method of determining their escapement
18 using a new model and so there is some testing that they were
19 doing with that, but nothing from Louisiana.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Based on the communications you've received
22 then, you should be getting something before the end of the
23 year, within the next six months, and is that how you think
24 things will shake out?

25
26 **MR. RINDONE:** From the remaining two states? I couldn't tell
27 you. I would only hope that that would be correct.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right. Thank you. Any other information
30 to add to the Red Drum Update, Ryan? Any other comments or
31 questions? That will take us to Item Number IV, the
32 Presentations, and the Briefing Regarding the NOAA Fisheries
33 Climate Science Strategy and is Dr. Griffis in the audience?

34
35 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** We have Dr. Roger Griffis here from
36 Headquarters to explain the climate strategy that NMFS and NOAA
37 has developed. We got a copy of it last Wednesday and I emailed
38 it to the full council.

39
40 The deadline for comments is before the beginning of our next
41 council meeting and so what we'll do is any comments you have
42 here today I will take note of and start drafting a letter of
43 comments from the council and then we will also go through the
44 strategy during a committee meeting of the Sustainable Fisheries
45 Committee at our March meeting and finish generating comments
46 for National Marine Fisheries Service.

47
48 That's the best game plan we have for meeting their deadline.

1 With that, thank you, Roger, for being here and I will turn it
2 over to you.

3
4 **PRESENTATIONS**

5 **BRIEFING REGARDING THE NOAA FISHERIES CLIMATE SCIENCE STRATEGY**
6

7 **DR. ROGER GRIFFIS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Council,
8 it's a pleasure to be with you here today to talk about what we
9 think is a very important effect to improve the Science Center
10 prize, the National Marine Fisheries Service Science Center
11 prize, to better deliver information to you all for making the
12 decisions that you need to make in a changing world that
13 includes changing oceans and changing climate.

14
15 What I have is a brief presentation describing the draft climate
16 science strategy. As you heard, NOAA Fisheries Service released
17 it for public comment last Wednesday, January 21. The Federal
18 Register Notice posting was Friday, the 23rd.

19
20 You all were notified by the Fisheries Service in a number of
21 different ways, but the bottom-line message is we are hoping
22 that you all will take an opportunity to give us some feedback
23 on this strategy. We really want to know what your science
24 needs are, so that you can make your decisions in the best
25 possible way with the best possible science, given the fact that
26 our world is changing, our climate is changing, and that affects
27 our oceans those resources.

28
29 I will proceed with a brief presentation and feel free to
30 interrupt me if there are questions and I will hopefully have
31 time at the end for questions, too.

32
33 The presentation basically has three parts: why did we develop
34 this strategy; what's the goal and some of the content of the
35 strategy; and then I will end with the ask and that is the ask
36 for input from you all. I will talk a little bit about that.

37
38 The first part of the presentation talks a little bit about why
39 the rationale for developing this strategy. There are a number
40 of reasons. At the largest level, the most recent
41 intergovernmental panel on climate change report that came out
42 the end of last year, in a series during last year, makes some
43 pretty startling conclusions, based on the best available
44 science, that climate-related changes, including ocean
45 acidification, are profoundly altering ocean ecosystems.

46
47 Most importantly for us, interested in fishery resources, those
48 -- They also conclude that there are some pretty significant

1 negative impacts expected for the world's fisheries. Those
2 negative impacts are particularly focused on particularly
3 tropical-related areas, where there are expected to be major
4 declines in the productivity and catch of fisheries, but
5 potentially some very positive impacts for high-latitude
6 fisheries, with warming oceans and expansion of cold-water
7 species into the northern areas or southern areas, in the poles.
8

9 They conclude that obviously there are other stressors that --
10 That climate will exacerbate other stressors, impacting major
11 resources. They do note very clearly that these changes will
12 bring significant challenges for resource management in these
13 changing conditions.
14

15 Closer to home, there really are five or six major issues in
16 thinking about how climate affects the resources that we care
17 about here in the United States, marine resources. There really
18 are these kinds of issues that we're thinking about and
19 observing changes, changes in water, precipitation that affects
20 drought. Most recently, I'm sure you've been reading about the
21 drought affecting our colleagues on the west coast.
22

23 Thermal stress, increasing ocean temperatures, affecting many
24 different areas, and I will talk more about that. Our
25 colleagues in the Alaska region are dealing with changes in both
26 temperature, but also in the coverage and timing of sea ice,
27 which affects productivity of major fisheries in that region.
28

29 You all are thinking a lot about rising seas and inundation and
30 the effect on habitats and people, coastal communities, and, of
31 course, we're all wondering what the effects of ocean
32 acidification might be, really a major concern, but also a major
33 question.
34

35 There is a strong body of science and we know that changing
36 climate can dramatically affect ocean systems. The real
37 question is how can we improve our knowledge of those changes
38 and better understand what may be coming in the future and use
39 that information, provide that to decision makers like
40 yourselves to use that information, wisely in making decisions
41 about resources.
42

43 This cartoon is meant to represent some of the ripple effects of
44 changing climatic conditions and how it may ripple through the
45 physical and chemical parts of our ocean system, from
46 temperature to sea ice to fresh water and acidification, as I
47 mentioned, but, of course, as you know well, the biological
48 productivity and all the vital rates of fish stocks and other

1 species are directly related to and affected by those kinds of
2 things, temperature of the water and chemistry, and so those
3 kinds of changes can ripple through the system, through the
4 biological impacts, and then potentially affecting those that
5 depend on it, the social and economic impacts.

6
7 These changes have a number of implications for fisheries
8 management, as you know well. Climate-driven changes in the
9 ecosystems can have dramatic effects on productivity and species
10 interactions and at the population level, it can affect vital
11 rates that affect population abundance, things like growth and
12 mortality and recruitment and those kinds of things, and
13 obviously those bear on fishery management and management
14 decisions, everything from biological reference points to
15 distributions in allocations to recovery planning and those
16 kinds of things.

17
18 We think this is a pretty important topic to be looking at. The
19 purpose of the strategy is to identify what some of those key
20 information requirements are and lay out a framework for filling
21 the gaps that we think exist in our ability to provide the
22 science to you and others to make informed decisions in a
23 changing world.

24
25 These four panels represent kind of the big bins of those
26 information requirements, as you might guess. The first one is
27 understanding what's changing now and what has already changed?
28 What was the baseline and how has it changed? Why is it
29 changing?

30
31 This one is pretty important, particularly for the next one,
32 because if we can understand why changes in climate affect
33 Species X or Recruitment Y, we can begin to better model and
34 project and perhaps respond to those changes. This is an
35 important process research area to inform the next one.

36
37 It will basically give us the power in our models and forecast
38 so we can provide better information about how it will change in
39 the future and what will these fish stocks look like and what
40 will the ecosystem look like five, ten, twenty-five, or fifty
41 years down the road?

42
43 Then the last one is how do we respond? How do we use this
44 information to help reduce impacts and build resilience, both in
45 the fish stocks and perhaps in the fisheries?

46
47 I am going to quickly -- Obviously there are a variety of
48 impacts in U.S. ecosystems. Changing temperature is affecting

1 nearly all of them and then any given region -- You can just
2 click through and a bunch of different things will pop up.

3
4 In the Alaska region, of course, they are dealing with warming
5 temperatures and changing timing of sea ice and seasonality and
6 we could pick any region here. My point here is that all of the
7 regions are dealing with some common issues, but each region has
8 a unique situation and so part of what this strategy lays out is
9 a common framework and seven key core information goals, but
10 it's designed to be tailored to the needs of each region.

11
12 Here in the Gulf, as you know better than I do, you all are
13 thinking about a number of climate-related changes in your
14 system and when I talk about changes, I am talking about both
15 the variability, the natural variability in the system, but also
16 potentially changes in that system over time.

17
18 The kinds of things that you're thinking about, of course, are
19 increasing temperatures or perhaps increasing frequency or
20 intensity of extreme storm events and what that might mean for
21 winds, currents, and ocean circulation and potentially ocean
22 acidification and, of course, that combination of things coming
23 off the land, changing precipitation patterns and maybe
24 affecting salinity of your estuaries and nutrient loading and
25 perhaps hypoxia and obviously the big one here in the Gulf
26 region is the rising sea level or changing inundation patterns.

27
28 We picked out just a few things to highlight here and there is a
29 lot more information available on the kinds of changes that
30 you're seeing here in the Gulf region, but temperature was
31 probably the one that is most well documented.

32
33 For example, there has been generally increasing, a slight
34 increase, in temperature over the past twenty years or so, but
35 there is a projected increase of two to three degrees Celsius
36 down to quite a bit of depth, down to 200 meters. Obviously
37 this has implications for productivity, vital rates, habitats.

38
39 If you haven't seen or heard about some really interesting work
40 going on by a team of scientists from the Fisheries Service and
41 other places looking at climate-driven changes in the Gulf of
42 Mexico, they have developed a very sophisticated regional ocean
43 model that they can push with some of the climate projections
44 and the reason they're doing that is because they wanted to
45 investigate the question of how climate-driven changes in the
46 Gulf may affect the habitat for larval tuna and other pelagics.
47 It's really, I think, one of the state-of-the-art efforts
48 underway across any of the regions and I would recommend it to

1 you.

2
3 Obviously there are other indicators of a warming Gulf of
4 Mexico. That's what that Atlantic Warm Pool Index goes to, but
5 obviously the sea level rise is the other major factor that you
6 all are thinking about that could have significant impacts,
7 particularly on those species that are dependent on those near-
8 shore habitats.

9
10 There is quite a bit of work and, again, you know better than I,
11 looking at what those inundation levels would be and who would
12 be affected. Obviously our fishing communities and sectors
13 should be and I think are part of those analyses, but they're
14 also looking at what habitats would be affected and potential
15 implications for the stocks that you all are interested in.

16
17 Here are some of the potential implications of some of these
18 changes, both observed and the ones that are projected.
19 Obviously there's a lot of interest now in shifting distribution
20 of species and the North Atlantic, for example, the Northeast
21 folks are seeing massive shifts in their stocks up the eastern
22 seaboard.

23
24 There is an interesting study that looked at shifting
25 distributions in all the U.S. marine regions and evidence over
26 the past forty or fifty years of shifting stocks in the Gulf and
27 obviously they can't go north, but actually the pattern has been
28 shifting west and at depth and so one of the questions is will
29 that continue and where will things go?

30
31 Obviously a major interest in how species productivity may
32 change with increasing temperature and other changes and concern
33 about hypoxia, the invasive species, with a warming Gulf and
34 changing ocean conditions. Will that continue to lend itself to
35 the spread of things like lionfish and others?

36
37 The ocean acidification question and when and how and if that
38 will begin affecting the base of the food chain and, again,
39 affect productivity and the coral bleaching issue that you all
40 are familiar with, I am sure, the fact that the Florida Keys
41 system has been seeing coral bleaching now for twenty years or
42 so and a general degradation of that system and actually the
43 lack of recruitment for most of the major corals, which is
44 obviously a serious issue for the reef system.

45
46 What I tried to do is just frame some of the issues that you
47 already know about. The changes in the Gulf, both observed and
48 projected, are not nearly as dramatic as some of the other

1 ecosystems, but, nonetheless, one of the key questions, of
2 course, is what are the implications not only for the marine
3 resources, but also for the fishing sector and the fishing
4 communities? Questions about what's at risk and how should we
5 prepare? How do we reduce those risks and then how can we
6 increase the resilience of both the resources and the
7 communities?
8

9 The goal of the strategy is to help build a science enterprise
10 in the Fisheries Service that can better begin to answer some of
11 these questions and provide you all with the information that we
12 think you and we need to manage these resources in a changing
13 climate and in a changing ocean.
14

15 The goal of the strategy is to do just that. It's to increase
16 the production, the delivery, and the use of climate-related
17 information to support NOAA Fisheries and you all and our
18 partners and stakeholders in their decision making.
19

20 The strategy identifies seven key objectives to meet those, our
21 requirements, and our legal mandates, and basically advance the
22 climate-ready decision making into the future and the intended
23 use is just that, to help guide development of our science
24 enterprise so that it can deliver the information that we think
25 you all and other decision makers are going to need as the
26 systems continue to change.
27

28 We designed the strategy and this strategy was developed over
29 the past year with a team that looked at all of the NOAA
30 Fisheries Service mission areas and looked at that process by
31 which we collect information, use that information to create
32 products, and then provide that information to you in one or
33 more forms of management advice.
34

35 Along that blue line is basically the observations or the
36 research, the modeling, the information review, and then the
37 assessments or other things that we provide to you and with you.
38

39 The strategy was, as I said, designed to address the information
40 needs across the NOAA Fisheries mission and so it includes not
41 just fishery management, but also our endangered species
42 mission, our marine mammal conservation mandates, our habitat
43 mandates, et cetera.
44

45 The seven objectives of the strategy, the seven core steps that
46 the strategy calls for, are the common needs across those
47 mission areas. The strategy basically identifies those areas as
48 if we did that, we would be able to provide much of the

1 information that's needed for all of our mission areas.

2
3 The seven key objectives are there in the little pyramid and I
4 will just step through each bin of them. The first three, the
5 top there, really are very much in your wheelhouse. The first
6 one is to be able to provide climate-informed biological
7 reference points and you all know you use biological reference
8 points, but similar reference points are used in our work on
9 marine mammals and other species.

10
11 The first objective is to provide those climate-informed
12 reference points and the second one is to provide robust
13 management strategies, so that we evaluate different management
14 strategies with you and other decision makers, to consider which
15 one might best meet our goals under different climate or ocean
16 conditions.

17
18 The third is having an adaptive management process that enables
19 us to do that and to circle back and ensure that those are
20 working well.

21
22 Objectives 4 and 5 are to provide the information to allow
23 Objective 1, 2, and 3 to go forward. I should have said that
24 these objectives are interdependent and that one depends on
25 another and we're cascading here and so Objective 4 is to
26 identify the likely future states to plan for.

27
28 We need to be much better, and the science is at a point where I
29 think we can now do this much more effectively, but to be able
30 to forecast and project what those future conditions might be
31 and how our oceans are changing and what might happen to the
32 resources.

33
34 Objective 5 is to identify the mechanisms of that change. If we
35 better understand why a change in temperature affects change in
36 recruitment or reproduction, we can build that into both stock
37 assessments and other mechanisms.

38
39 Objective 6 is critical. It's basically to have the
40 observations so that we can track the pulse of change in the
41 system and provide early warnings, so that we can react and not
42 be surprised, and Objective 7 is to have the science
43 infrastructure to support the rest of this. We can't do any of
44 this if we are continuing to have problems with ships or ship
45 time or other infrastructure.

46
47 Each of these objectives has a series of actions or
48 recommendations and there were three of those. The strategy

1 pulls out three of those as immediate actions, highly
2 recommended.

3
4 The first is to conduct a climate vulnerability analyses for
5 living marine resources and the second is to maintain and
6 develop ecosystem status reports to track change and provide
7 those early warnings and the third is to increase the capacity
8 to do informed management strategy evaluations and basically, be
9 better able to assess what our options are as things change.

10
11 We have got good progress on the first two, but more needs to be
12 done. Each of the objectives then has a series of actions and
13 recommendations and I am going to highlight just a few here that
14 were flagged as short-term important actions.

15
16 One of those is to complete regional-level action plans and that
17 is to take this strategy and have each region assess its
18 strengths and weaknesses and its priorities to implement the
19 strategy and provide this information.

20
21 The second is to strengthen the science capability nationwide
22 and the third is to increase resources for that mechanistic
23 process research and the fourth is to establish climate-ready
24 terms of reference so that we know when and where and how to use
25 this information effectively.

26
27 The last part of the presentation is the request to you all. We
28 very much hope that you will be interested and take time to look
29 at the strategy and give us some feedback. We need your input
30 to strengthen this call to action. We need your input to make
31 sure that it's addressing the needs that you feel are here in
32 your region.

33
34 There are two asks here. The first one is give us input on this
35 draft climate science strategy. This is the national framework,
36 from which we will then develop the regional scale
37 implementation plans.

38
39 The public comment period is through March 31, as was said.
40 Your input is vitally important to us and so we will tweak that
41 deadline as needed, if you let us know, to be able to
42 accommodate whatever schedule you have.

43
44 The second request, down the road, would be to be engaged in
45 development of the regional action plan to implement this
46 strategy in the Gulf region, so that what comes in the next two
47 years or so, over the next two to five years, we're building the
48 Science Center prize that will support you all in your decision

1 making as the Gulf of Mexico and its systems begin to change
2 further. Thank you very much and I would be happy to answer any
3 questions.

4
5 **MR. PERRET:** Thank you, Roger. That was a most interesting
6 presentation and I have a couple of questions. Sea level rise,
7 in the last 135 years, eight-inch rise, but the projection by
8 the year 2100, in eighty-five years, is one to four feet. I
9 hope it's more like one rather than four, but why the
10 accelerated sea level rise in a shorter period of time?

11
12 **DR. GRIFFIS:** Thank you for the question and I think the last
13 part of it, why the acceleration in the coming interim, I am not
14 an expert in the sea level rise, but the experts tell me that
15 there are really two reasons for that.

16
17 One is the physics of water and changing temperature. Most of
18 the sea level rise to date, or the change in the rise, is
19 largely due to the warming of the planet. Of course, you know
20 what happens to water as it warms. It expands and so a
21 significant portion of the sea level rise to date is physics and
22 the warming ocean.

23
24 The ocean, as you know, is absorbing over 50 percent of the
25 increased heat that's been trapped by the increased CO2 around
26 the planet and so if you put a CO2 blanket around the planet and
27 we've trapped more heat and the oceans have been saving our --
28 Because they've been absorbing all that heat, that heat expands
29 and warms the ocean.

30
31 The second piece of it is the accelerated, and this is where
32 many of the models, even as of two years ago, were not
33 adequately able to model the impact of the melting massive ice
34 sheets, both in Greenland and in the Arctic. The more recent
35 models, in my understanding, have been able to take that into
36 account and this is becoming increasingly a key contributor to
37 that acceleration.

38
39 **MR. PERRET:** My second question is under recommendations and
40 immediate action, Number 2 was ecosystem status reports. At
41 least my primary interest is the Gulf of Mexico and how has your
42 group defined the ecosystem for the Gulf? Is it one ecosystem
43 or has it been broken down into smaller units?

44
45 **DR. GRIFFIS:** Thank you for the question. I would defer to
46 Bonnie or others on how you all are defining the ecosystem. The
47 vision there is that each region or each ecosystem would have a
48 set of indicators that they would use to track changes in the

1 condition.

2
3 My understanding is that such a set of indicators and an initial
4 ecosystem status report has been developed for the Southeast
5 and, Bonnie, you can tell me if the Gulf is part of that, but
6 the goal here, and the Fisheries Service has been putting some
7 resources into it and trying to help, is to have each of our
8 major ecosystem regions, the Gulf of Mexico being one, have a
9 core set of indicators that we're tracking regularly so that we
10 can understand and give you to you all regular reports that
11 indicate whether the system is cruising along just the same or
12 if there are changes up or down and particularly the power of
13 these, if we do it right, is that they can provide early
14 warnings for potentially major changes that are happening very
15 quickly.

16
17 We have seen this used up in the Northeast, where things seem to
18 be changing very quickly. I would say that the North Pacific
19 Fishery Management Council and the Alaska Ecosystem Report is
20 probably the most mature, the most advanced, and they've been
21 using it for a number of years.

22
23 **MR. PERRET:** I just have one more comment, if I may. We know
24 one of the problems we've got in the Gulf is hypoxia and we know
25 the source of our problem and so anything you and your group can
26 do to help us with the problem from the Midwest and agriculture
27 and nutrients and all that coming down the great Mississippi
28 River system, we would certainly solicit your assistance in
29 that. Thank you very much.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other questions?

32
33 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Thank you, Dr. Griffis. A couple of times early
34 on, you talked about building resilience and what did you mean
35 by that?

36
37 **DR. GRIFFIS:** Thank you for the question. I think that is one
38 of the most challenging questions right now that many people are
39 asking. Resilience is usually defined as the ability to -- I
40 will just lump this in, but the ability to perhaps resist
41 stress, but if when knocked down by stress, be able to come back
42 quickly to a state similar to what you were in the beginning and
43 so resilience, being able to get back up after a major stress-
44 type event, say a storm or something like that.

45
46 Given that the kinds of changes that are anticipated or expected
47 with climate-related shifts in our systems are more extreme
48 events or perhaps trends in warming and the idea is to build --

1 Ideally, how can we manage these systems so that the resources
2 we care about are able to do just that?

3
4 They're able to resist or at least bounce back from devastating
5 stressors and perhaps be resilient over time, as say temperature
6 or other things continue to change, say in a warming condition.

7
8 The same is being thought about for communities, coastal
9 communities, and how can we help communities from a hazards
10 perspective or a storm response perspective? How can we have
11 them better prepared to bounce back from storm events, for
12 example?

13
14 Similarly, one can apply the same kind of series of questions to
15 say a fish stock and think about what are the characteristics
16 that would lend itself to having a stock be more resilient to
17 certain stressors or changes and, in fact, as you know, one
18 could think about certain fisheries or fishing communities and
19 ask a similar question.

20
21 Some of this work that I'm most familiar with is happening in
22 the Gulf of Maine, where they are seeing and expecting fairly
23 large-scale rapid changes in the oceanography that could have
24 dramatic effects on the resources that those communities are
25 dependent on.

26
27 There are a number of efforts, led by NMFS and other partners
28 and universities and Sea Grant, engaging the fishery-dependent
29 communities in conversations about what are they dependent on
30 and what are some of the risks and how can they reduce those
31 risks and help lead them to some discussion about perhaps
32 diversification of their fisheries, to make them perhaps more
33 resilient if any one of them begins changing over time.

34
35 The resiliency could be applied to either the resource and how
36 would we manage say Fish Stock X to make it better able to
37 resist change, but able to bounce back? One can think about
38 some age structure scenarios, but also the fishery and perhaps
39 the fishing communities.

40
41 **DR. PONWITH:** Thanks very much, Roger, for the presentation. I
42 really appreciate it and you touched a little bit on the
43 question that I was going to ask, but I will frame it up anyway.
44 That is that I see this as the great interdisciplinary problem,
45 because it's a problem that's big enough and sweeping enough
46 that you can't rely on just physics to touch and you can't rely
47 on just biology to touch.

48

1 In fact, you've talked a little bit about the importance of
2 understanding those physical processes to understand changes in
3 rate and in sea level rise and some of the uncertainty we have
4 associated with ocean acidification. There is a lot of work
5 that needs to happen there and being able to link that physics
6 into the biology and understand what those responses are going
7 to be for those fish stocks.

8
9 My real question -- That's actually the place where I reside,
10 that I'm the most comfortable, is sort of dancing on the
11 interface of those two areas, but I think the really happening
12 place in this continuum and the place where the council is going
13 to be really valuable in lending those extra set of eyes and
14 those additional viewpoints that we're so eager to get is going
15 from the biology to the socioeconomic and understanding if a
16 stock's distribution is going to move, what options exist for
17 the social implications of that.

18
19 My question to you is do you feel as though that science and the
20 planning for that science and the steps that need to be taken to
21 translate those other two disciplines into the information we
22 need for making critical social decisions exists? Are we giving
23 that the emphasis we need to be able to translate that into
24 usable products for decision support?

25
26 **DR. GRIFFIS:** I think the answer is no. I think that's probably
27 the weakest link in that cascade, our ability to anticipate or
28 understand the social and economic implications, Bonnie. My
29 caveat is that there is some great work going on.

30
31 The Fisheries Service, with partners, has developed a series of
32 fishing community vulnerability indices and so, again, being
33 able to have some indicators to help communities assess their
34 risk and that's now nationwide and so I think there's a
35 tremendous now baseline of information that could be used to
36 begin asking those questions.

37
38 I think it's also the weakest link in our chain because one has
39 to -- It involves a whole other set of assumptions and
40 uncertainties about how people will react and one can explore
41 their options, but not necessarily about which ones they will
42 take.

43
44 Again, there is some really interesting work, both in the Alaska
45 region and the Northeast, looking at, over the past forty years,
46 as many of their fish stocks have shifted pole-ward, or deeper,
47 how have the fleets -- Have the fleets shifted and where have
48 the landings shifted?

1
2 I think there is data and information that can be gleaned. I
3 think we're not using what we have as effectively as we could,
4 but it also is perhaps the most difficult of the cascade and in
5 the modeling efforts. Thank you, Bonnie.

6
7 **DR. CRABTREE:** Roger, thanks for being here and I'm glad we
8 could get you away from the snow and cold up north for a little
9 bit. We spent a good part of yesterday discussing fishery
10 reference points, particularly for red snapper, and I noted that
11 one of the things highlighted in your presentation were climate-
12 informed reference points and I wonder if you could expand a
13 little more on what you mean by that.

14
15 **DR. GRIFFIS:** Here again, I need to clarify that I am not a
16 fishery biologist and there is tremendous talent in that area,
17 but from what I understand from the experts is the setting of
18 those reference points and the calculation of those reference
19 points, whether it be in fisheries or deciding how many gray
20 whales to allow to be taken by incidental take, often involves
21 some consideration of what the existing conditions are.

22
23 There is a tremendous amount of work going on on some stocks, as
24 you know, particularly in places where the systems are changing
25 quickly, that suggests in some cases, with changing temperature
26 or other oceanographic characteristics, one may need to
27 readjust, certainly relook at and readjust, some of those
28 reference points, because they may no longer be appropriate if
29 the system has changed enough and if we keep them as is, we may
30 be setting ourselves up to try and get to targets that no longer
31 exist.

32
33 I would defer to the great knowledge and expertise of the
34 fishery biologists and I would be happy to point you to some
35 really interesting work recently on that. Thank you.

36
37 **LCDR BRAND:** Thanks for your presentation. I sit on the Flower
38 Garden Banks Sanctuary Council and I am just curious. You
39 mentioned the bleaching of the Keys coral in that Sanctuary, but
40 have you seen any reports or impacts on the salt domes or the
41 Flower Garden Banks?

42
43 **DR. GRIFFIS:** Thank you for the question. I haven't followed
44 the Flower Garden stuff. When I was doing coral reef
45 conservation a number of years ago, and it was almost a decade
46 ago now, we were having reports of bleaching even in some of
47 those top areas, but I haven't followed it since then.

48

1 **MR. PEARCE:** Thank you and I've got a couple of points, Dr.
2 Griffis, and thank you for your presentation. The first one is
3 fairly simple. I live on a lake, Lake Pontchartrain, and all
4 the sea level rise, as you're talking about, made me consider
5 what I may need to do. The sea level rise is going to be a lot
6 greater now than it was in the last eighty or ninety years and
7 so in consultation with my investment counselor, we decided to
8 get a reverse mortgage very quickly.

9
10 All kidding aside, I think that there are many indicator species
11 that we need to look at in our fisheries, whether we're managed
12 by the council or within our states.

13
14 One that comes to mind right away is our oyster crop in the
15 State of Louisiana that we're having a very difficult situation
16 bringing it back from -- We go back to whether it was Katrina,
17 Rita, Gustav, Ike, or the oil spill, but quite possibly maybe
18 that's not what it is, to where our spat set is not working like
19 it should be and we're looking at some huge hatcheries to try
20 and redevelop that spat set better than it is on the east side
21 of the river.

22
23 A lot of that is because we're getting heavy saltwater and then
24 heavy freshwater, but not back and forth like we normally used
25 to get, to where it was a constant flow of salt and fresh back.
26 We have too much of one or too much of the other now and so it
27 may be some of these things that we can look at that can help
28 you guys understand or help us understand what our problems
29 really are.

30
31 We are very perplexed about how to solve it, because Louisiana
32 is the most profound oyster factory in the world and we're
33 losing it and we're not quite sure why, but indicator species
34 like that and indicator species that we manage in the Gulf here,
35 we need to consider those and think what those are and see what
36 -- It could be forage fish and there's no telling what it could
37 be, but as they change, we need to be very cognizant of the fact
38 that it might be because of what you're talking about here
39 today. Thank you.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other comments to Dr. Griffis?

42
43 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Thank you very much and I realize
44 it's probably too early in the development of the strategy and I
45 haven't read the strategy that came out last Wednesday, but is
46 there a timeline for getting some of this information that NOAA
47 has to the stock assessment people so we can have those
48 indicator species?

1
2 For instance, in the Gulf, we are seeing evidence of reduced
3 recruitment in the last few years and we have no idea if it's
4 related to the oil spill or not, but if there's data, if there's
5 oceanographic information out there, that could help inform the
6 stock assessments, that would be very helpful to us in the short
7 term. I am hoping the strategy within NOAA is to get some of
8 this stuff down to the stock assessment level as soon as
9 possible.

10
11 **DR. GRIFFIS:** I think that is the goal. We are trying to move
12 very quickly. We don't want to sit on a national strategy and
13 say that we're done. We are trying to move quickly into having
14 you all and having the Science Center, with our partners, lead
15 an effort that identifies the priorities here in this region and
16 each region. It would be very helpful if you all want to
17 articulate some of those needs, some of those priorities.

18
19 One of the things I hear in every region, wherever I go on this
20 topic, is similar to what you've said, is where is the
21 information that we can use now? I think there is information
22 out there that is perhaps not as accessible as it could be.

23
24 In our internet age, there is too much information and it's not
25 that anyone is hiding it, but it's that it's often hard to find.
26 I think part of the goal when we highlight this in the strategy
27 is making this information much more accessible on a region-by-
28 region basis, decision-maker-to-decision-maker basis.

29
30 That is part of the goal of the strategy and I would be happy to
31 talk with you and I'm sure Bonnie has a team at the Science
32 Center and we could talk with you about some of the key products
33 and tools that we just rolled out a couple or three weeks ago
34 that might be useful to you, that handful that might be really
35 useful to you right now. Thank you.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I would just like to add -- I was going to ask
38 you, Dr. Ponwith, offline, but inasmuch as now that there is the
39 need and there is the process that's going to be developed here
40 for trying to synthesize the data and have some products
41 developed, as far as the information pipeline, if there is a
42 suite of data that's minimum elements, if you will, or those key
43 priority species, at least from the state I represent, we might
44 be interested in trying to pass on the data that would help in
45 the information and so having a format for how the data is
46 collected and all the variable structure and all that in
47 advance, we might be able to streamline that end of the process
48 to help to get more information into the decision making

1 process.

2
3 **DR. PONWITH:** In direct response to that, we are working right
4 now on our response to an Executive Order that makes all federal
5 data readily accessible to the general public in an electronic
6 format. The data that we have in electronic format will be
7 accessible to the states, to academic researchers, to whomever
8 would have a use for it.

9
10 That is a monumental task, because imagine your own data
11 holdings, whether it's your household budget or whether you're
12 an academic or a state person, it's a massive undertaking, but,
13 philosophically, it is the right thing to do, because what it
14 does is greases that pipeline for getting that information into
15 the hands of people who can use it to help develop those value-
16 added products quickly.

17
18 I know that's something that we're all waiting for and to Mr.
19 Gregory's point, a lot of times it's not the raw data that are
20 going to be the tool that the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management
21 Council needs. It's derived products from those raw data that
22 requires a physical oceanographer and a stock assessment expert
23 to be collaborating on to develop the tool that we need to
24 answer those questions and so when we talk about needing to
25 support research being done in the Science Center, this is the
26 kind of thing that we're talking about.

27
28 We are talking about getting those stock assessment scientists
29 who are as familiar as anybody with the basic biology and life
30 history of that animal and the population dynamics and to be
31 able to add a brand new facet into those stock assessments that
32 would be these physical signals, the cycles and the trends that
33 we're seeing in the physical oceanography that forms the habitat
34 for these animals, to make sure that we're refining our ability
35 to answer the question of what will happen if.

36
37 I agree that we need to get the data and we need to get those
38 products into the hands of the users as quickly as possible and
39 we are certainly committed to that.

40
41 **DR. GRIFFIS:** I just wanted to say thank you again for letting
42 me be here with you all and also to clarify the ask. We welcome
43 input from any of you, any of the members, with your
44 institutional hats on. We are looking for broad input and your
45 comment made me think about this. We welcome input both from
46 the council as a body, but also the individual organizations.

47
48 I also wanted to flag that I think just before the holidays we

1 were notified by the General Accounting Office, which, as you
2 know, is the research arm of the U.S. Congress, that the Senate
3 had asked them to look into the question of what the Fisheries
4 Service has been doing to prepare for and respond to climate
5 change, but, in particular, they referenced the councils and
6 what have the councils received or are interested in and what
7 are the challenges therein.

8
9 I say that simply to, perhaps, if you haven't been notified, let
10 you know that I think that you may soon get a call from the
11 folks at the GAO asking some of these very same questions, where
12 do you see the challenges and where do you see the needs. Thank
13 you very much.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Dr. Griffis. That was a very good
16 presentation and a good discussion and thank you. That takes us
17 to the next item under Presentations and that would be Dr.
18 Ponwith discussing Council Member SEDAR Workshop for June 2015
19 Meeting.

20
21 **DISCUSS COUNCIL MEMBER SEDAR WORKSHOP FOR JUNE 2015 MEETING**

22
23 **DR. PONWITH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At the SEDAR Steering
24 Committee meeting, we had a discussion and that was a discussion
25 about how important it is that the council members are familiar
26 with the SEDAR process and that is not how do you do a stock
27 assessment as much as how do we manage the decision process of
28 what stock assessments are going to get done and when they're
29 going to get done and how those decisions are made, to make that
30 as open and transparent a deliberation as possible and also make
31 sure that all the considerations in those choices are made as
32 well, given the way that the SEDAR Steering Committee is
33 structured.

34
35 We had originally talked about doing kind of a SEDAR 101 at this
36 meeting to do that, but opted instead to introduce this idea to
37 you and propose that we do this in June at the joint council
38 meeting, so that we can benefit from having both of the councils
39 together, having John Carmichael there, and the presentation
40 would be led by John.

41
42 Again, the idea is that I know we talk about stock assessments
43 and the SEDAR process in the orientation for new council
44 members, but this really represents a unique opportunity to just
45 kind of push the reset button and get everybody together and
46 talk about the SEDAR Steering Committee and that decision making
47 process.

1 It gives us a chance to talk about the roles of the SSC and how
2 the SSCs for the individual councils serve those councils in
3 providing scientific advice to the councils for their
4 consideration, but also then the other things that the councils
5 would weigh in addition to the scientific aspects of that
6 decision, the management and the social implications, to help
7 guide how those decisions are made, and then talk a little bit
8 about how SEDAR looks across its full range, because I know that
9 the Gulf Council views SEDAR from a Gulf Council lens, which is
10 appropriate, but the process spans into the South Atlantic and
11 into the Caribbean as well.

12
13 If you can understand sort of the lay of the land across the
14 range of where this system is used, it, I think, equips all of
15 us to function as efficiently as possible in making those
16 decisions and so I just wanted to talk with you a little bit
17 about that and get any feedback that you might have on things
18 you can envision that would be helpful for you to include in
19 that discussion in June and then, after that, and once we've
20 finished our discussion on that, I will talk about something the
21 influences the SEDAR process and that is the outcome of the peer
22 review that we conducted in 2014 on our stock assessment
23 programs in the Southeast Fisheries Science Center. I will stop
24 there and see if there are any questions or comments.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Anyone have any questions or comments? I look
27 forward to the presentation, Bonnie. My first experience at the
28 SEDAR Committee meeting was this last October and so I went into
29 the meeting with not a lot of background and as I found during
30 our discussions, there wasn't a lot of background written that
31 could help guide a council member, whether it be a Chair or a
32 Vice Chair or anything, through that committee and that process
33 and so we discussed it at that time and I'm looking forward to
34 something that I think would be helpful for us in the near term,
35 but potentially in the long term, too.

36
37 We talked about it being more of a kind of an educational
38 document for the public, for that matter, and for council
39 members, something that we can refer to from time to time, and
40 it would be helpful, I think, in serving our needs to give some
41 feedback on SEDAR and these prioritizations that we make
42 relative to species and assessments.

43
44 **MR. RIECHERS:** The only other thing, Kevin, is in the earlier
45 discussion today, I think you had mentioned that maybe at that
46 meeting that you all, as a SEDAR Committee, had requested of the
47 Science Center some notion of the number of assessments, the
48 number of scientists, and how those assignments are being made,

1 the number that you think you could produce each year so that
2 there basically is a matching up of kind of the assets of the
3 agency with the work that needs to be done.

4
5 I would hope maybe by the time we get together, or even before
6 then, at our March meeting, that we could see some of that,
7 because that certainly would help with that understanding.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes and as I envisioned and talked to Bonnie on
10 a couple of occasions here, it's kind of akin to a matrix. You
11 have one staff scientist and that staff scientist has a budget
12 of 20 percent of their time goes to this and 50 percent to that
13 and such and so if you expand that out by ten staff stock
14 assessment scientists and you look under the column of stock
15 assessments and add all of that up, then you can kind of come to
16 a kind of a general idea as to what the production would be at
17 that staff level and so yes, that's what I envision and that's
18 what I think Bonnie is going to be presenting. Any other
19 questions or comments to Dr. Ponwith on SEDAR Committee? Very
20 good.

21
22 **DR. PONWITH:** What I would like to do is bring to your attention
23 the slide that's on the screen right now. As you know, we have
24 embarked upon a cycle of programmatic peer reviews in the
25 Southeast Fisheries Science Center that's mirrored in each of
26 the six fishery science centers around the coast.

27
28 Our first peer review in 2013 was focused on the data
29 collections that we do that feed stock assessments for stocks
30 that are managed under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This year, in
31 2014, or last year now, but in 2014, the peer review focused on
32 that stock assessment process, the programs themselves.

33
34 The results from our peer review, the individual peer review
35 panelist reports, are now posted to the website that's up there
36 and also to my website at the Southeast Fisheries Science
37 Center, but this is sort of the master one, so you can see all
38 of them. Then the Center response to those individual peer
39 review reports is also posted there and then there's a national
40 overview.

41
42 Basically, by conducting a peer review program that's in sync
43 across all of the six fishery science centers, it enables us to
44 look not only within each science center, to know what's working
45 and what needs work, but it allows us to look across them and
46 look for emerging findings that bubble up at a national scale
47 and give us an opportunity to make course corrections and
48 improvements at a national scale.

1
2 What you will see there at that website is the peer review,
3 individual peer review, reports for each of the six science
4 centers and a summary and response report from each of the six
5 science center directors for their specific and then you will
6 see a national overview that was prepared by the Office of
7 Science and Technology and our Chief Science Advisor, Dr.
8 Richard Merrick.

9
10 I know those reports will be of interest to you, because it
11 certainly influences the way the SEDAR process functions and
12 then also how we will be functioning in the future when we make
13 some of these improvements to the program based on the feedback
14 that we got.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Bonnie. That takes us to Recess and
17 we will begin Public Comment at three o'clock and so please be
18 prompt. It's almost quarter to. Thank you.

19
20 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

21
22 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We will begin public testimony. For those in
23 the audience that wish to continue their conversations, if you
24 could do so outside, please, in deference to our folks that
25 would like to provide testimony.

26
27 Just as a reminder, for those that it might be their first time
28 here, providing public comments -- In knowingly and willfully
29 submitting false information to the council is a violation of
30 federal law and a digital recording is used for the public
31 record.

32
33 To instruct those that may be new, we have a green light, yellow
34 light, and red light there at the podium and each person will
35 have three minutes to provide their comments. I will read out a
36 name and that will be the person that's up at the podium and
37 then a second name and if that person could kind of be waiting,
38 standing off to the side, to come up to the podium once the
39 person is done speaking, that would help speed up things.

40
41 We have about forty-five cards and so it should take us out to
42 our full two-and-a-half hours of public testimony time. That
43 being said, the first person to speak is J.P. Brooker, followed
44 by Dewey Destin.

45
46 **PUBLIC COMMENT**

47
48 **MR. J.P. BROOKER:** Thank you, Chairman Anson, and thank you to

1 the council for the opportunity to give comment. My name is
2 J.P. Brooker and I'm with the Ocean Conservancy, based in St.
3 Petersburg. I am also a recreational fisherman, born and raised
4 in Cocoa Beach, and I've been fishing throughout Florida my
5 whole life.

6
7 I would like to offer two brief comments to the council on
8 behalf of the Ocean Conservancy's 120,000 members. First, with
9 respect to gag grouper, Ocean Conservancy commends the council
10 on taking into account ecosystem factors such as the recent red
11 tide event.

12
13 Seeking out possible ecosystem effects and analyzing their
14 impacts on managed stocks leads to strong management decisions
15 with strong scientific underpinnings. Although the council is
16 now faced with the prospect of nearly doubling ACLs for gag, the
17 Ocean Conservancy recommends that the council take a
18 precautionary approach. Acting conservatively now, when setting
19 catch limits for gag, would alleviate concerns among the fishing
20 public about the accuracy of the gag stock assessment and it
21 would allow for more time to ensure that the stock is actually
22 rebuilt.

23
24 Among other conservative approaches, the council should consider
25 using the previously established ACLs for 2015, as this would
26 still mark an increase in catch levels, while also taking into
27 account uncertainty regarding the stock assessment.

28
29 Ocean Conservancy also urges the council to undertake an
30 analysis as to why gag landings have fallen short of the catch
31 limits in 2014 and in previous seasons and take this information
32 into account when setting catch limits for 2015 and onward.

33
34 Second, if the decision is made to go forward with a plan
35 amendment that would adjust the SPR for red snapper, Ocean
36 Conservancy recommends the council consider a broad range of
37 possible options, including alternatives that would increase the
38 SPR above 26 percent, up to levels of 30 to 40 percent, as is
39 consistent with the biology of the stock. We also remind the
40 council that the SSC has already made past motions to maintain
41 SPR at 26 percent.

42
43 Given the council's interest in setting constant catch levels,
44 lowering the SPR is likely to have the opposite effect, creating
45 a less resilient stock with variable catch levels into the
46 future. Accordingly, Ocean Conservancy urges the council to
47 fully explore and understand the risks associated with changing
48 SPR levels. Again, thanks for the opportunity to give comment.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, J.P. We have Dewey Destin, followed
3 by John Braswell.
4

5 **MR. DEWEY DESTIN:** Thank you, council, for this opportunity to
6 speak. I come today to speak in opposition to Amendment 28,
7 which I think purports to reallocate some of the snapper quota
8 from the commercial over to the recreational side. I speak in
9 opposition to it for two reasons.

10
11 One of them is fairly simple and straightforward. I am in the
12 restaurant business now and my restaurant and a number of
13 restaurants in Destin serve fresh, local fish, primarily a lot
14 of snapper, Harbor Docks, McGuire's, Lulu's, who is opening in
15 Destin, and a number of others. The fresh fish that we serve is
16 what makes us stand out from the chain restaurants. It's what
17 makes it possible for us to compete with them. Without those
18 fresh, local fish, we will not be able to be economically
19 viable.
20

21 We serve, I would guess, probably somewhere between 500,000 and
22 a million, amongst us, fresh meals, seafood meals, each summer
23 and the great majority of it is red snapper, our most popular
24 fish. If we reduce and reallocate 400,000 pounds, or whatever
25 the amount is, it can, at four-ounces, come out to around
26 750,000 meals at \$15.00 a meal and if my Auburn math serves me
27 correctly, that will be around \$10 million. That's a big, big
28 hit for us and we need those fish.
29

30 The second reason I oppose it, which is more near and dear to my
31 heart, is that my friends and family have made a living fishing
32 for red snappers in Destin, Florida for over 175 years and many
33 of them still do. I fear that this will be a feel-good, easy
34 solution to the problems that face the economic viability of the
35 recreational fishermen, whether it's the bait shops that sell
36 bait and tackle or the charter fishermen or the boat dealers.
37 This I don't want to be construed as a fix to this problem.
38

39 The problem of the economic viability of those entities is far
40 more complex than a simple fix like this. I know it's very hard
41 to turn around a train that's been on a track for thirty years,
42 but tag and release for a deepwater reef fish does not work. We
43 kill millions of fish every year and throw them back in the
44 water.
45

46 This council is going to have to get out of the box and be
47 innovative on how they address these problems. We need an
48 aggregate reef fish bag limit and we need some recharge areas to

1 go along with that, so we can go back to the way fishing was
2 before World War II and there were always areas where the fish
3 were safe and they weren't fished.

4
5 I urge all of you to do whatever is necessary so that you can
6 come up with some ways that we can move away from a system that
7 obviously can't work. I looked at a congressional record from
8 1890 that had testimony in it that was on the live boat well
9 fishing that was going on in the 1890s and they studied that
10 even back in the 1890s and they understood that fish that were
11 caught, I believe the number was out of eighty-feet of water,
12 didn't live in the wells more than two or three days. Thanks
13 for this opportunity.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Dewey. We have a couple of
16 questions for you.

17
18 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Dewey, it's good to see you again. You say that
19 what makes your restaurant unique -- I haven't been to your
20 restaurant. I did try to go one time a couple of years ago and
21 maybe it was too early in the day and you weren't open yet, but
22 what makes you different than Red Lobster, I guess, is that you
23 are serving all fresh fish or mostly fresh fish?

24
25 **MR. DESTIN:** Yes, we serve as much fresh fish as we possibly can
26 that comes out of the Gulf of Mexico.

27
28 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Red snapper is your signature species?

29
30 **MR. DESTIN:** That's the one that everybody comes to look for.

31
32 **DR. DANA:** Just a comment and I appreciate you being here,
33 Dewey. For those who don't know Dewey Destin, his family,
34 great-grandfather, et cetera, is the namesake of Destin and
35 their family has long been in the commercial fishing industry
36 and it ebbs and flows positives and negatives and they have
37 withstood it and Dewey's restaurant -- I am sorry you haven't
38 been there, Roy, and make it a point to go. Their restaurants
39 truly do drive tourism in our area, because of the focus that
40 they place on local seafood. Thank you.

41
42 **DR. DESTIN:** Thank you and the point I want to make is that
43 allocating a few hundred thousands pounds and giving the
44 recreational guys a few more days won't fix the problem. They
45 need to be fishing four or five months out of the year and with
46 some innovative, think-outside-of-the-box ideas, I think that
47 you guys could fix it and really could be heroes. Thanks.

48

1 **MR. PEARCE:** Mr. Destin, one more quick question. I too share
2 your opinion that reallocation is a just a Band-Aid, a fix. Do
3 you have any definitive ideas that would help or that we could
4 help to solve the problem, any ideas that you could come up with
5 right now? If not, when you do get them, please give them to
6 us.

7
8 **MR. DESTIN:** One simple one was an aggregate bag of fish, reef
9 fish. That way, we stop killing fish and throwing them away. I
10 really think we need to get back to the way it was before
11 electronic innovations allowed us to hunt every fish down and
12 recharge areas, we would do them like the farmers do and rotate
13 them, so we can be fair to all the communities up and down the
14 coast.

15
16 I have talked to my law enforcement friends who are worried that
17 it would be hard to enforce and vessel monitoring systems are
18 now under \$1,000 and if I thought I could fish two or three
19 months out of the year if I bought one, I would buy one in a
20 heartbeat, put the electronics on the boat. These boats all
21 have advanced electronics and are worth much more now. That
22 way, we would know if somebody was in the recharge area.
23 Thanks.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Dewey. John Braswell I heard was
26 not here. Jim Braswell? Jim Clements, followed by Maurice
27 Fitzsimons.

28
29 **MR. JIM CLEMENTS:** Good afternoon. Approval of Amendment 28
30 must be justified biologically, economically, and socially.
31 Reallocation does not promote conservation and it does not stop
32 recreational overharvesting. It is not supported by the best
33 available information from your own scientists.

34
35 It penalizes commercial fishermen for living by the rules, which
36 is not fair or equitable. It illegally justifies recreational
37 quota overages and it does not give recreational fishermen a
38 management plan that works for them.

39
40 I have been giving this council reasons why this is a bad
41 amendment for over a year now. For those of you who still think
42 that Amendment 28 is necessary, please consider this.

43
44 You start an amendment to solve a problem and the first thing
45 you do is to identify the problem and the purpose and need. In
46 this case, the purpose and need is to, quote increase the
47 stability of red snapper fishing, particularly for the
48 recreational sector.

1
2 I don't know how many times Mr. Perret and other members of this
3 council have pointed out that taking fish away from the
4 commercial sector in order to reallocate fish to the
5 recreational sector does not increase the stability of the
6 recreational fishery. Your scientists have said this and
7 everyone knows it, whether you want to admit it or not.

8
9 What is even more absurd is that on Monday, of all people, your
10 legal counsel, which I'm kind of glad she's not here -- Oh,
11 there you are. You got me there. Your legal counsel said
12 something to the effect that this council needs to go ahead with
13 reallocation, but you may need to change the purpose and need of
14 the amendment.

15
16 Those of you who feel that reallocation, any reallocation, will
17 solve the problems in the recreational sector are grabbing at
18 straws and now feel so strongly about the solution that you're
19 willing to change the problem to fit the solution.

20
21 If you are going to change the purpose and need, why don't you
22 call it what it is, a political fish grab for the recreational
23 sector. Choosing no action as a preferred alternative is the
24 only fair and legal decision that can be made for Amendment 28.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Jim. Next we have Maurice
27 Fitzsimons, followed by David Riley.

28
29 **MR. MAURICE FITZSIMONS:** Thank you for the opportunity to
30 express the situation of the possibility of going to one snapper
31 for the charter sector. In my conversations with a lot of the
32 boats, it would cause extreme problems. They deserve to have
33 the same thing, a two snapper limit, as recreational.

34
35 It needs to be definitely two snapper and I'm speaking on the
36 bigger charter boats, the older fellas that have been doing it a
37 long time that I've talked to, but the biggest problem I have
38 with that is we feel that the government has never, ever given
39 anything back once they've taken it away and we see going to one
40 as a terrible, terrible situation, period. Thank you.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Maurice. David Riley, followed by
43 Pam Anderson.

44
45 **MR. DAVID RILEY:** Good afternoon. My name is Dave Riley and I
46 am a Vice Commander of the National Organization of Disabled
47 American Veterans and we help ensure that veterans live a life
48 with respect and dignity.

1
2 Locally, I run a program that takes disabled vets out fishing.
3 We work with the owner of the Oyster House and he brings out
4 veterans free of charge, disabled vets, and they are saving
5 lives on these trips. These guys are coming back and they need
6 somebody to connect with and on these trips, that happens.

7
8 Last year, we were only able to do a couple of trips, because of
9 the short season. Out of nine days, we get maybe two or three
10 days that we can take the guys out and I think that it would be
11 better for the area and for the veterans involved if we could
12 have a longer season and more than one snapper. It's hard to
13 get the people together and on the trips if there's not some
14 benefit more than what they're not told they're getting. Please
15 keep in mind as you all move forward that longer seasons would
16 be much better for the people involved and larger fish limits.
17 Thank you.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Riley. Mr. Riley, we have a
20 question over here from Harlon.

21
22 **MR. PEARCE:** I just want to say God bless you for what you're
23 doing, sir. You're doing a great job and I want to assure you
24 that this council is working hard to get rid of a nine-day
25 season and we're trying to figure out a way to make it better
26 for everyone in the Gulf, particularly the individuals like you
27 that have served our country. Thank you.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have Pam Anderson, followed by David Dekle.

30
31 **MS. PAM ANDERSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Dr. Crabtree, and
32 council members. I am Pam Anderson from Captain Anderson's
33 Marina in Panama City and Fisheries Rep for the Bay County
34 Chamber of Commerce Government Affairs Committee. Thank you for
35 this opportunity to share our thoughts.

36
37 First, on Mr. Boyd's motion to remove the red snapper SPR
38 consideration from the status determination document, et cetera,
39 I would ask that you consider adding requests in that document
40 that spell out which measures will require the rebuilding plan
41 timeline change and what that would look like compared to the
42 current quotas.

43
44 When discussing increasing quotas and changing SPR, you
45 discussed risk and let me remind you of a different risk that we
46 have brought to this council numerous times and it is the risk
47 of depleting other species due to the negative impact of an
48 excessive number of aggressive red snapper on the reefs.

1
2 Has the council actually analyzed this issue and is this the
3 cause of depletion or accessibility to other species, as anglers
4 and divers have said? We would like to see the answer to that.

5
6 Split seasons for northwest Florida will only work equitably if
7 all recreational anglers are given the same seasons, either
8 Gulf-wide or regionally. Otherwise, different subsectors may,
9 through no fault of their own, negatively impact the other and,
10 of instance, eliminating a potential fall season for the for-
11 hire component. It also causes much confusion for tourists and
12 marketing and law enforcement.

13
14 Reallocation was initially addressed due to the analyses showing
15 the recreational sector's increasing economic benefits to the
16 nation. That was the purpose and need and not as an
17 accountability measure.

18
19 While it is important to provide the non-fishing public with
20 product, it has been proven that it is better economically for
21 the excess red snapper to be allocated to the recreational
22 sector.

23
24 Bag limits for red snapper should stay at two per person. By
25 adjusting bag limits down on a popular species, such as red
26 snapper, you are shifting effort from longer, more lucrative,
27 trips to many short ones, losing the balance of effort on the
28 fishery. Any adjustments made for for-hire boats need to be
29 contingent on the final approval of Amendment 40.

30
31 Electronic monitoring with VMS can only impact enforcement and
32 not harvest data. They should be used for anyone caught
33 breaking the rules or laws and not the general law-abiding
34 operators. You have other, less expensive choices for the rest
35 of us.

36
37 We still advocate for regional management and I have a list of
38 choices, but I believe I am just about out of time, but, lastly,
39 I just wanted to say that I did send a message to Senator
40 Rubio's office asking if they could address the section in the
41 MSA that prevents the U.S. Coast Guard from arresting the lancha
42 operators who are illegally fishing in our waters. They were
43 unaware of this issue and will definitely look into it and I'm
44 sure it will help if others contact the office. Thank you.

45
46 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mrs. Anderson. We have David Dekle,
47 followed by Buddy Guindon.

48

1 **MR. DAVID DEKLE:** Thank you, guys, for letting me comment. I'm
2 a recreational fisherman and I've been fishing out there since
3 the 1970s. I take different groups of fishermen out. I take
4 kids, inner-city kids, that otherwise would never get a chance
5 to go out and even fish in the Gulf. I take Christian groups
6 and I take youth groups. I have a program with the disabled
7 veterans and I take those guys out all the time.

8
9 The limit of two snapper is at the very -- I mean that's it as
10 far as making it worthwhile going out even in the Gulf to enjoy
11 a fishing trip. I am also a consumer and I charter boats
12 sometimes too for different groups and I would never pay a
13 charter boat guy to go out and catch one snapper. It's just not
14 worth it.

15
16 There is unintended consequences when people make these rules
17 and not thinking of them of a one snapper limit. The unintended
18 consequences are I won't be able to take the disabled vets and I
19 won't be able to take these Christian groups and I won't be able
20 to take youth groups.

21
22 I am just one guy speaking for the group of people that I know
23 and I don't want those people to be deprived of a nice trip on
24 the Gulf and they really look forward to it and on somebody
25 sitting somewhere in the government and saying, make it one
26 snapper and that's fine. Well, there is unintended consequences
27 and I hope you all think about those unintended consequences
28 when you make these rules, because it does hurt people. Thank
29 you.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. We have Buddy Guindon, followed by
32 Jillian Williams.

33
34 **MR. BUDDY GUINDON:** Hi. I'm Buddy Guindon and I'm a, of course,
35 a fisherman and Executive Director of the Reef Fish
36 Shareholder's Alliance. I own a commercial fishing business in
37 Galveston.

38
39 I am here to reiterate the Amendment 28 flaws. We really need
40 to -- I was amazed that Roy and staff asked the committee to
41 come up with a few things and there was total silence. That's
42 amazing to me. I don't know what the endgame is there, but I
43 can't wait to hear it.

44
45 We really need to get away from dragging these issues through
46 the mud and down the road for many, many, many council sessions,
47 because there's a lot of other issues that need to be addressed.
48 The rest of the reef fish in the Gulf of Mexico, where we're

1 limiting the access to amberjack and we're setting a season that
2 keeps getting shorter and shorter so that the discard rate in
3 the commercial fishery keeps getting higher and higher and the
4 fact that vermilion snapper are being -- The catch rates have
5 gone to very low levels, even though there's just a few people
6 doing it.

7
8 We have a lot of work to do here and it would be great if some
9 of our representatives could start moving things forward instead
10 of just kind of acting on your own personal agenda and start
11 getting some of the work that needs to be done for the Gulf of
12 Mexico done and I especially speak to some of the state
13 representatives that are coming in here and just lining up and
14 making votes that aren't in the best interest of the fishery and
15 that are just in the best interests of what their personal
16 feelings or their state feelings are.

17
18 I think we need to take and put upfront the future of the Gulf
19 of Mexico and the things that can be done like a full retention
20 fishery in the commercial fishery. It will leave more fish in
21 the water for everybody and those things, because of the way
22 we're playing the game of council management and fisheries
23 management, are delaying everything else in the Gulf that needs
24 to be done and I hope you get your act together and start to
25 move this forward. I know that Roy would like to see nothing
26 more than the fishery get finished up and managed properly.
27 Thanks for your time.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Buddy. Jillian Williams, followed
30 by Mike Jennings.

31
32 **MS. JILLIAN WILLIAMS:** Hello, everyone. I am Jillian Williams
33 from Galveston. I'm a fourth-generation captain for Williams
34 Partyboats and as you all probably know, we are in the Headboat
35 Collaborative Program. It's our second year in it and we had a
36 wonderful season with it last year or I guess I should call it a
37 year instead of a season.

38
39 It was so beneficial to us and our customers and it was just
40 absolutely wonderful and I am hoping that we can push through to
41 eventually do this kind of thing for everybody. It's worked out
42 so great for us and our neighbors, an opposing company that's
43 next door to us, they're in the program this year too, because
44 they saw how great it worked out for us.

45
46 Without it, with the season being only nine days, I don't know
47 how well we would have made it through the year. You have to
48 consider, for example, we had an issue with an air conditioner

1 catch on fire in our wheelhouse this year and it only burned the
2 air conditioner and it didn't cause any kind of major damage,
3 but in the process, we had to have the fire department come out
4 and look at it and then the Coast Guard has to come out and look
5 at it.

6
7 Then once we fix it, the Coast Guard has to come back out and
8 look at it. If that had happened during our nine-day season
9 that we would have ended up with last year, we would have missed
10 every single day and with the program that we're in, that wasn't
11 a big deal.

12
13 We would just take the people fishing the next week, after we
14 get the problem solved. It's been really great for us, as well
15 as our customers. They don't have to worry about battling for
16 just the nine days and they can kind of come when it's easier
17 for them and things like that and so hopefully we can get
18 something like that done in the future and it's been working
19 wonderfully for us.

20
21 As far as Amendment 28 goes, I don't think reallocating or
22 giving more fish to the recreational sector or taking fish out
23 of an accountable program and putting it into a program where we
24 don't have a clue as to exactly what's going on right now is not
25 really the best idea, in my opinion.

26
27 As far as sector separation, I am pretty sure you all are
28 passing that through and hopefully some good will come of that.
29 We just need to make some changes and hopefully we'll get
30 something going for the best and thank you all very much for all
31 your help.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Jillian. Mike Jennings, followed by
34 Johnny Williams.

35
36 **MR. MIKE JENNINGS:** Hello and my name is Mike Jennings and I'm a
37 charter boat owner and hunting outfitter out of Freeport, Texas.
38 I'm also the President of the Charter Fishermen's Association.
39 From an association standpoint, we would like to thank this
40 council and the individuals on it who stood up against some
41 pretty stiff political pressure to do what we felt was the right
42 thing and move Amendment 40 forward.

43
44 Now that we've done that and we're going through the process of
45 waiting on the Secretary of Commerce to sign this thing, I am
46 hopeful that that's what is going to happen and we would like to
47 see this council continue to move forward with that. I am
48 hoping that the plan is not just to sit back and say, well, we

1 did it and now let's just let the sunset catch it and let's
2 start all over again. At least I'm hoping that's not the plan.

3
4 We would like to also ask that the council remove the charter
5 for-hire industry from Amendment 39 altogether. Regional
6 management, if the states would like to move forward with it and
7 try their hand at managing red snapper on the private
8 recreational side, we have no reason to not support that, but we
9 would like to have the charter for-hire industry removed from it
10 and we would like to work under a different path of management.

11
12 We support Alternative 1, no action, in Amendment 28 and we
13 would like the council to look at the thirty-four-inch fork
14 length on amberjacks.

15
16 We would also like to ask the council to leave the red snapper
17 at two fish per person. The one fish per person is not
18 something that any one of our membership, from Florida to Texas,
19 has supported in the least. There has been very, very few
20 charter boat operators that support that. Some are kind of
21 neutral, but the biggest majority are not in support of the one
22 fish bag limit.

23
24 I would like to ask the council to move forward with the AP
25 recommendation on that split season scenario, a short season for
26 2015, and then see what's left, if anything is left, for a later
27 fall season, with the importance there being placed on not going
28 over the allocation versus the longest season that we can get.

29
30 I would like to urge the council to start moving forward with a
31 comprehensive, accountable, and flexible charter for-hire
32 management system focusing on beyond the 2015 season and we
33 would like to ask the council to reconvene the Charter For-Hire
34 Ad Hoc AP or the Charter For-Hire Management AP with that
35 specific type charge and let's see, once the Secretary signs
36 Amendment 40, if we can move forward and make it useful, rather
37 than just a feel-good move that we're trying to chase a sunset
38 provision. I appreciate it and thank you for your time.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mike. We have a couple of questions
41 for you, Mike, from Harlon and then followed by Roy.

42
43 **MR. PEARCE:** Thank you, Mike. Mike, thanks for your comments,
44 first off, and, secondly, you're aware we've got a three-year
45 sunset and your industry that we've got to concern ourselves
46 with if we're going to do our job correctly.

47
48 I think you realize that we're trying to find money to get a VMS

1 and a validated program hopefully in 2015. Is your organization
2 willing to start putting VMS on the boats for us and begin to
3 collect real-time data for that program?

4
5 **MR. JENNINGS:** Yes, sir. Of course, with anything, just like
6 with the commercial industry, when we were discussing the VMS,
7 the first comment out of anybody is going to be where is this
8 money going to come from and we know there's been some money set
9 aside for that and we know some of the work that you have done,
10 Harlon, on that and we appreciate it, but for the most part, the
11 consensus has been that we'll do it if we have to.

12
13 If that's what it takes to move forward, most of these
14 businesses is what provides for these gentlemen's families and
15 their livelihood and as much as \$3,000 or \$2,500 or \$1,700,
16 depending on what kind of unit or what you're looking at on
17 price, it's a lot of money to any one of us if it puts us to
18 making three and four and five times that amount added to our
19 income over the year because of our access to a fishery within
20 biting the bullet and worrying about where the money is going to
21 come from later and it's just something we may have to do.

22
23 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Mike, thank you for coming and a question. When
24 you said you wanted charter for-hire to be managed separately,
25 are you talking about red snapper or are you talking about --

26
27 **MR. JENNINGS:** I would like to see it for all fish, but just not
28 within that regional management concept. We just would rather
29 work outside of it. Under Amendment 40, it gives us that
30 ability and we would like to see the council move forward with
31 it that way rather than planning on -- I suspect that the three-
32 year sunset was literally set in there for that reason and
33 that's just guesswork on my part, that it was put there so that
34 we would all be right back in the same management process under
35 regional management at some future date and it's just not
36 something we're interested in.

37
38 **MR. WILLIAMS:** You're speaking for the Association?

39
40 **MR. JENNINGS:** I am speaking for the Charter Fishermen's
41 Association, 527 members.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thanks again, Mike. Johnny Williams, followed
44 by Ken Haddad.

45
46 **MR. JOHNNY WILLIAMS:** Johnny Williams from Williams Partyboats,
47 Incorporated, in Galveston. I'm a third-generation partyboat
48 operator out of Galveston, Texas. My business was established

1 by my grandfather in 1946. First, I would like to thank
2 everyone at this table for passing Amendment 40. It was truly
3 the right thing to do and we're very grateful that you did this.

4
5 However, we don't want to drop the ball now. We had an ad hoc
6 committee meeting for the for-hire sector where we got some
7 stuff accomplished, but I think we need to reconvene the panel
8 and, as a matter of a fact, my idea was to have two panels, one
9 for partyboats and one for charter boats.

10
11 At our meeting, we decided that they probably are mutually
12 exclusive and we actually voted to separate the partyboats from
13 the for-hire sector and leave the two sectors, the partyboats
14 and the charter boats. These panels could be made up of members
15 that are on the partyboats on the party boat ad hoc committee
16 and the charter boats on the charter boat ad hoc committee.

17
18 Like I said, I've been asking for sector separation since 1989
19 when I got involved with the council and most of you all weren't
20 around then. There are a couple of us that were here then and
21 all I have to say is, man, I don't know how you guys managed to
22 stay so young while I got old over the years, but, anyway, you
23 all have worked real hard with me on this and I appreciate your
24 help, but let's not drop the ball now. Let's carry it over the
25 goal line.

26
27 I want to tell you a couple of benefits to our program. I am in
28 the program now where we have that pilot program where we can
29 fish outside the normal red snapper season and just a few
30 observations.

31
32 It's a lot more beneficial for our patrons. If I had to fish
33 during the nine-day season on the Captain John last year, there
34 was only one Saturday there and a lot of my patrons like to go
35 on a Saturday and if they would have gotten blown out on that
36 Saturday, they would have been shut out for the year.

37
38 Now if they want to go on a Saturday, they can make reservations
39 say for like this Saturday and we may not be able to go out and
40 the weather forecast looks pretty bad right now. We've got just
41 about a full boat ready to go this Saturday, but it's no big
42 deal and we can reschedule it for another day and so that helps
43 them out.

44
45 This time of the year, the release mortality is much better when
46 the water is colder. The fish don't seem like they float off
47 like they do in the summer months and so that's a benefit. As
48 far as safety at sea, if the weather is bad, the boats don't

1 have to go out fishing. They can wait until the weather is
2 better.

3
4 Also, we're able to keep crews around. When we have such a
5 short season, it's hard to keep the crew through the wintertime
6 and I see my time is out, but, once again, I want to thank you
7 for passing Amendment 40, but let's not drop the ball now.
8 Let's continue on and push it across the goal line. Thank you.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Johnny. We have a question from
11 Harlon.

12
13 **MR. PEARCE:** Johnny, thank you for your presentation and part of
14 your ad hoc committee meeting, you recommended that you have a
15 split season, 66 percent, and then a later season. You're at
16 risk of not getting that late season and I know you realize
17 that, probably, but why did you all decide to do that?

18
19 **MR. J. WILLIAMS:** The reason we chose to do that is we want to
20 be accountable. There's the possibility that we may not be able
21 to fish in the second season and our group as a whole wants to
22 be accountable in this fishery.

23
24 We want to be stewards of the resource and we want to be upfront
25 and we want to show that we're just not out trying to be greedy
26 or anything like that and we want to be accountable and we want
27 to be responsible. That's why we chose to do that, because if
28 it turns out that we harvest more fish than we thought the first
29 season and then we could take them off the second season, if we
30 get a second season at all, but we just want to be accountable
31 and be responsible. Thank you so much.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Williams. Ken Haddad, followed
34 by Randy Boggs.

35
36 **MR. KEN HADDAD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and council members.
37 My name is Ken Haddad and I'm here on behalf of the American
38 Sportfishing Association, which is the trade organization for
39 the sportfishing industry.

40
41 In past meetings, you have heard our industry tell you that
42 they're being impacted by the conflicting management of red
43 snapper and so please remember that in your deliberations, that
44 there is an industry, ranging from bait and tackle shops to
45 marinas and manufacturers, impacted by decisions you're making.

46
47 Speaking to Amendment 28, we've heard a lot about the purpose
48 and need and conflicts. To me, the key words are "fair and

1 equitable", "increase", "net benefits", and "increased
2 stability". This does not state that these actions will fix or
3 solve the recreational fishing issues in the snapper fishery.
4 It's not intended to. We know that. It will help, however.

5
6 We also believe that seemingly compelling arguments some have
7 been presenting against a reallocation are invalid. First,
8 allocation is not just about fixing the fishing issues. It's
9 about fair and equitable distribution of fish to the commercial
10 and recreational sectors. To argue against any change because
11 it does not completely fix the recreational issues is simply the
12 wrong way to look at it.

13
14 Second, over quota concerns have been seemingly mitigated by the
15 most recent AMs that, to date, have eliminated the overharvest
16 issue and the recreational community gave up one-million pounds
17 as a buffer to reach that point.

18
19 Third, the not so subtle arguments that portray the recreational
20 sector as irresponsible and unaccountable and the reason for its
21 problems is just not true. We follow the regulations that the
22 council gives us and so please don't use that as a reason not to
23 help us.

24
25 Then, fourth and most important, you now have clear and
26 compelling evidence, scientifically vetted by the SSC, that
27 concludes a long-term underestimate of recreational landings.
28 This has an impact.

29
30 The recalculation of allowable catch based on that underestimate
31 has produced additional catch and that catch should be allocated
32 to the recreational sector. It just is logical. How anyone
33 with a sense of fairness can argue against this new information,
34 it's very discouraging and it's just wrong.

35
36 Please add alternatives to Amendment 28, Action 1, that
37 recognize the new and best scientific information now available
38 and that recalculates allocation based on the underestimate of
39 recreational catch and change in the sensitivity calculations.
40 This would fit nicely in the current amendment, as it increases
41 net benefits, increases stability, and reduces the likelihood of
42 overharvest and now, more than ever, provides fair and equitable
43 allocation.

44
45 Is this the final solution? No, but it helps and you're going
46 to have to think outside the box, and this is the second time
47 you've heard this, to help us with an overall solution.
48 Finally, we encourage the states to take control of Amendment 39

1 and work for us the way you always have and figure out a best
2 path for implementation.

3

4 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Ken, you're going to have to wrap it up. You
5 are a little over time.

6

7 **MR. HADDAD:** Sorry. We need someone to help sort out the
8 confusion and conflicts created in the recreational fishery and
9 we're counting on you and the rest of the council to get us in a
10 better place. Thank you.

11

12 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you and we have a couple of questions for
13 you, Ken, from Harlon, followed by Roy.

14

15 **MR. PEARCE:** Thank you, Ken, for your comments, as always. I
16 appreciate all of your comments and I, like you, believe that
17 it's not the private recreational's fault that they overharvest.
18 It's the inability of this council to find a better way for them
19 to stay within their allocation.

20

21 You keep intimating that we need different ideas and different
22 thought processes outside the box other than allocation and do
23 you have any that you can share with us today or anything you
24 can help us with?

25

26 **MR. HADDAD:** Harlon, I think a number of ideas have been shared
27 even today by some fishermen. The problem is when we share
28 them, it doesn't get vetted through the council and it's just
29 public comment and so, to me, there needs to be a better way to
30 share our ideas, because this just isn't the best way to do it.

31

32 **MR. PEARCE:** I agree with you. Thank you.

33

34 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Ken, would you be willing to change Amendment 28
35 into just recalibration and dump the rest of it, the MRFSS
36 recalibration?

37

38 **MR. HADDAD:** Technically, I don't know. I mean I think right
39 now this new information is kind of a hit-you-in-the-face kind
40 of information that whether it's done -- I think it can be done
41 within this amendment and not throw the amendment out, but just
42 focus on that one part of it by adding the recalibration into
43 it. I guess I can't answer that, Roy. I mean I support moving
44 forward with something that looks at this new evidence.

45

46 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Ken. We have Randy Boggs, followed
47 by Susan Boggs.

48

1 **MR. RANDY BOGGS:** Good morning, everybody, and thank you all for
2 letting me speak. I appreciate you being here. I hear a lot of
3 talk about new ideas and I came to the council about five years
4 ago with a new idea and three years of work and we got it
5 implemented a year ago, the Gulf Headboat Collaborative. We
6 have electronic monitoring and we have fish receipts that go
7 with the fish and we had a great year this year. We stayed
8 within quota and we came in underweight on our fish and I'm
9 very, very proud of where we're at.

10
11 We're going into our second year this year and I heard a lot of
12 talk that the Headboat Collaborative would put a lot of people
13 out of business and I didn't see anybody around me go under this
14 year and so we've got over half the fleet of headboats now
15 clamoring to be in the program. We've had more applicants that
16 we have spaces and we need to move forward with this.

17
18 We've got a good idea and it's working. It seems to be going
19 really, really well. Again, I would love to see us reallocate
20 some commercial fish to the recreational side, but you can't
21 take fish away from a good steward and give them to a side
22 that's not doing anything.

23
24 When we get our own house in order, then maybe we can do
25 something. The recreational fishermen are being good stewards
26 of the resource and they're not abusing it. They are leaving
27 fish in the water and we're making sure that the fish are landed
28 like they should be.

29
30 The advisory panel voted to separate the headboats out. We've
31 got our own landings and I would be really, really careful with
32 the calibration workshop. I know how many fish we caught in
33 2011 and 2010 and with the headboat plan the way it is, the
34 total allowable catch has doubled since then and the amount of
35 fish that I caught then and what I'm allocated this year did not
36 double. It came in quite a bit under that and so the
37 calibration is close, but it's not exactly right.

38
39 We've got real hard numbers to work with in the headboats. We
40 have exact landings and know what we caught and if the total
41 allowable catch doubles, then you would think that the number of
42 fish that I harvested, based on this program, would have doubled
43 and it didn't and so we've got some work to do on the
44 calibration workshop. That's pretty much all I've got today,
45 guys, and thank you all.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Randy. Susan Boggs, followed by
48 Bill Butler.

1
2 **MS. SUSAN BOGGS:** Good afternoon. My name is Susan Boggs and
3 with my husband, Randy, he and I own two Gulf Headboat
4 Collaborative participating vessels, one charter-for-hire
5 vessel, a charter office that books for nine charter boats and
6 four inshore boats, and a dock store that sells fuel, bait, and
7 ice.

8
9 Currently, I do not support Amendment 28. I cautiously support
10 Amendment 39 and I have two concerns. First, the Secretary of
11 Commerce has not yet signed off on Amendment 40, which would
12 allow for separate allocations for private recreational anglers
13 and the charter-for-hire sector. Once Amendment 40 is in place,
14 then a move toward regional management would be favorable for
15 the private recreational angler.

16
17 Second, in three years, with the sunset provision in Amendment
18 40, the charter-for-hire sector could be thrown back into a
19 potentially unstable fishery. I believe the future for the
20 purely recreational fisherman is in regional management. Let me
21 caution you to please be careful what you ask for and if this
22 passes, do it right. This could be a great move for all
23 parties, but, if done wrong, could lead to no season for
24 recreational fishermen.

25
26 The Gulf Headboat Collaborative is in the second year of its
27 two-year EFP. It is important for the council to move forward
28 with the plan for the headboats that can extend these benefits
29 to all Gulf headboats.

30
31 This has been a very successful program. It has benefited
32 recreational fishermen by giving them greater access and has
33 benefited the families of those who work in this industry. I
34 ask that you move to make this a permanent program and I thank
35 you for your time to comment.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Susan. Bill Butler, followed by
38 Scott Hickman.

39
40 **MR. BILL BUTLER:** Hi and thank you, all. My name is Bill Butler
41 and I am co-owner with my brother of the Venice Marina in
42 Venice, Louisiana. I want to thank the council for passing
43 Amendment 40. It's a good thing. We have a big charter fleet
44 down in Venice and it's good to see. We also have a lot of
45 recreational people come down there and I would also like to see
46 them remove the permitted charter boats from Amendment 39 and I
47 support Alternative 1.

1 I would like to see the amberjack size get a little bit bigger.
2 That way, these guys can still have more fish and access to this
3 resource. It would be kind of foolish for guys to go try to
4 catch one red snapper. The guy is going to launch his boat and
5 put gas in his boat and ice in his boat and bait in his boat to
6 go catch one? It just doesn't make a lot of sense.

7
8 Two nice fish, ten-pound aggregate, is what's probably going
9 around the Gulf and that's twenty pounds and if you've got four
10 guys and eighty or a hundred pounds of fish, that's a good mess
11 of fish. It will get a pot dirty.

12
13 There is better ways to handle this recreational fishery.
14 You've got probably tens of millions of dollars of education
15 sitting at that table and it's a shame that we can't come up
16 with a system and I appreciate you for your time and hopefully
17 you will make some right decisions.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Mr. Butler, we have a question or two.

20
21 **DR. PONWITH:** Thank you very much for your testimony. You said
22 you would be interested in seeing the amberjack size increased a
23 little bit and do you have a feel for what size you think would
24 be the --

25
26 **MR. BUTLER:** Thirty-four to thirty-six inches.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I have Scott Hickman, followed by Gary Bryant.

29
30 **MR. SCOTT HICKMAN:** Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen of the
31 Gulf Council. I would like to very much thank you for passing
32 Amendment 40. I would like for the council to move forward with
33 a flexible, accountable management system for the fleet and I
34 would definitely like to see the council remove federally-
35 permitted charterboats from Amendment 39, once and for all.

36
37 Amendment 28, as a new shareholder in the red snapper fishery,
38 this system works. It's great and instead of punishing these
39 folks that have been doing it right and taking care of their
40 fishery and becoming accountable and a good sustainable system,
41 I think we should, instead of taking fish that are going to the
42 American consumer, fix the recreational system and this will not
43 fix the recreational system.

44
45 As far as amberjacks, a thirty-four-inch fork length makes a lot
46 of sense, especially with the amount of biomass that could be
47 increased over the years, and let those fish reach sexual
48 maturity so they can reproduce.

1
2 I definitely support a two-fish bag limit for red snapper for
3 the charter boat fleet. One fish is a hard trip to sell. I
4 would like to thank Harlon for all the hard work he has done
5 with the Data Collection Committee over the years and all the
6 hard work that GSI has done in moving forward to getting some
7 funding so we can get some electronic logbooks on these charter
8 boats.

9
10 Speaking of VMS, I have heard some people talking negatively
11 about VMS on some of these smaller boats. I've got a thirty-
12 six-foot center console T-top-style boat with three engines on
13 the back of it and I've got one of the new CLS America units
14 that's out and it's fabulous and it takes the abuse.

15
16 I could mount that unit on a small canoe if I wanted to. It's
17 very nonintrusive and the only thing I probably think has been
18 intrusive about it is my wife can now text me and email me when
19 I'm offshore and so she gets mad at me if I don't get back with
20 her in forty-five minutes or so and so when I get home, I catch
21 heck.

22
23 Other than that, I appreciate it and also, the Mexican fishing
24 deal, I have been coming to this podium for years and talking
25 about our guys in our association in south Texas saying how bad
26 it is and the Coast Guard is right on. It's a big problem and
27 so whatever the council can do to write a letter to the IUU or
28 somebody like that supporting maybe getting some more resources
29 put at that problem, that would be great. Thank you very much.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Scott. We have a question for you
32 from Dr. Dana.

33
34 **DR. DANA:** Thank you, Scott. Just a question. You just were
35 remarking on the VMS for the charter for-hire and are you still
36 seeing -- Are you seeing a lot of those folks that aren't
37 federally permitted crossing the line and going from state to
38 federal waters or I don't know and what's --

39
40 **MR. HICKMAN:** Where I'm at in Galveston, our state water guides
41 don't have federal permits and even the recreational fishermen
42 on my dock are not concerned about the nine-mile limit. As far
43 as law enforcement presence, there were a few tickets I think
44 written last year in south Texas on people that were caught
45 fishing in the EEZ for red snappers during the closed federal
46 season, but people fishing in the EEZ, where I'm at in
47 Galveston, if the weather is nice and it's a weekend, there is
48 lots and lots and lots of boats fishing in federal waters for

1 red snapper. It's just common practice in Texas.
2
3 We have a very limited state water fishery on the upper Texas
4 coast. You go on Facebook and see all these people posting all
5 these red snappers behind their boats and they're not catching
6 them in state waters on the upper Texas coast and the people are
7 pretty happy with the way things are. There is just not enough
8 law enforcement resources to go out there and catch these folks
9 and so the risk versus the reward is very, very low and so I
10 think they're pretty happy with the state water season in Texas.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Next we have Gary Bryant, followed by Tom
13 Steber.

14
15 **MR. GARY BRYANT:** Gary Bryant, owner and operator of Red Eye
16 Charters here in Fort Morgan, Alabama. I appreciate the
17 opportunity to speak on these issues. Amberjack, we want the
18 amberjack season to be as long as possible and if it's take a
19 thirty-four-inch or thirty-six-inch fish, we are just looking
20 for more days to target them.

21
22 Amendment 28, I don't think we should do any reallocation until
23 our other sectors get accountable. Amendment 39, I think it's a
24 great choice for the private recreational, but I wouldn't want
25 to see Amendment 39 without sector separation. I think the
26 charter for-hire needs to be ensured that we'll be our own
27 sector and not at the whims of state politics.

28
29 Amendment 40, in support of some of the things -- I was on the
30 ad hoc committee and I support the split season and the reason
31 we supported that is it was very important to us that we did not
32 go over our quota. We want to prove that we can manage this
33 fishery and be responsible stewards.

34
35 I also supported the one fish. For me, getting more days on the
36 water will work with my business. It's not an issue to stay at
37 two, but, given the opportunity, I would like to have more days.
38 Also, I would suggest you went ahead and you split out the
39 headboats. They have twenty years of data and let them use
40 their data to manage themselves.

41
42 My main concern is the timeline. It was pointed out to the ad
43 hoc committee that to get a fishery management plan in place
44 could take three years.

45
46 Roy elaborated yesterday in the round table that the fastest it
47 could happen was two and please start the process to give the
48 charter for-hire industry a fishery management plan. Our goal

1 is to get to a flexible system that allows flexibility and
2 accountability and that's our goal and we would appreciate you
3 all starting that process. Thank you.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Gary. Tom Steber, followed by Dale
6 Woodruff.

7
8 **MR. TOM STEBER:** I'm Tom Steber, representing the Alabama
9 Charter Fishing Association as its President. Our charter for-
10 hire industry across the Alabama Gulf Coast and its 200,000-plus
11 recreational anglers that we take fishing each year are so
12 thankful for the council's decision at the last meeting to push
13 forward with sector separation and hopefully we will get it
14 through the Department of Commerce and we can get on down the
15 road.

16
17 We support the charter for-hire twenty-day season and a two-fish
18 bag limit. We do have member in our organization that like one
19 and thirty-five days, but the vote was a twenty-day season and a
20 two-fish bag limit.

21
22 The main thing is we don't want to overfish and so if we come in
23 and we're underfished, then maybe we can have a few more days in
24 October. We support a thirty-four-inch fork limit on amberjack
25 and we definitely support the Headboat EFP and how it has
26 worked. You are going to hear over and over again how well it
27 has worked and let the headboats continue on and bring all the
28 headboats into their own sector.

29
30 We are against Amendment 28. I don't think it's fair to
31 penalize the industry that has taken care of itself and, most of
32 all, we support the Charter Fishing Association's industry
33 management plan that you all have. It's very simple and it's
34 very clean and we feel like it's easy to manage and it will get
35 us out of this derby fishing and let the charter for-hire manage
36 its own business. Thank you.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Tom. Dale Woodruff, followed by
39 Steve Tomeny.

40
41 **MR. DALE WOODRUFF:** I'm Dale Woodruff from the Charter Boat
42 Class Act in Orange Beach, Alabama. Thank you for passing
43 Amendment 40. The charter for-hire industry needs to be
44 completely separated from the true recreational fishermen and so
45 we need to move forward with that. It takes two -- Roy said
46 possibly two years and I heard three years on getting a fishery
47 management plan or something for the charter for-hire. We need
48 to start that process now and it doesn't need to be delayed. It

1 needs to be started now.
2
3 The charter for-hire management AP needs to meet before the AP
4 council and go ahead and let's bring that back up and let's have
5 some more discussions for the flexible and accountable charter
6 for-hire management plan. We really need this thing moving.
7
8 Amendment 28, Alternative 1, no action, or do away with
9 Amendment 28 and take it off the board and pile it up and throw
10 it in the garbage. All you're doing is you're penalizing
11 somebody that is taking care of the fishery and it's not going
12 to help. You get two days and we've heard our council members,
13 the ones with some commonsense, they know it's not going to work
14 and it's dumb to move fish when the fish are just going to be
15 used up and then they're right back to where they are.
16
17 Thirty-four-inch amberjack, that's fine with me. I heard the
18 guy say the other day on the radio, because I was listening to
19 it on my phone, that he really didn't know whether a thirty-six
20 or a thirty-four-inch amberjack or a thirty-inch amberjack right
21 now would give more days or not and so it sounds like the
22 science, which there is no science, but it sounds like he didn't
23 know and he needed more time, if I heard that correctly, but if
24 a thirty-four-inch amberjack will give us more days, then I'm
25 all for the thirty-four-inch amberjack.
26
27 As far as one fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish, I know some
28 people that need the two fish and either way. One fish, I can
29 live with that. Two fish would probably be better, but I just
30 don't want to go over, period. We can't go over.
31
32 The CFH, charter for-hire industry, has gotten together and they
33 said if anything happens, we do not want to go over, period. We
34 do not want to go over and do you all hear that, council? We do
35 not want to go over. Is this working? Hello? Okay. All
36 right.
37
38 Now, our Congress has jumped on the science and our Gulf Council
39 has jumped on the science, but I don't think our science is
40 hearing what they're having to say. If I had somebody doing a
41 job for me and I had to tell them that they needed to start
42 going a little faster and get to moving a little -- I would
43 either fire them and find somebody else to do that job and no
44 excuses. Not when you've got people's lives and families at
45 stake. Thank you.
46
47 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Dale. I have Steve Tomeny, followed
48 by James Bruce.

1
2 **MR. STEVE TOMENY:** How are you doing, council? I am Steve
3 Tomeny and I'm an owner and operator of two large charter
4 headboats in Port Fourchon, Louisiana. I am also a commercial
5 red snapper fisherman and IFQ shareholder.
6

7 Of course, I want to thank everybody for Amendment 40. We have
8 been asking for it for several years now and we've just go to
9 get some progress made. I want to continue with the progress
10 and get a framework action planned and moving down the pike. We
11 need to get it done and we understand things move at the pace of
12 the council and it's never fast, but we need to get it rolling
13 as quick as we can.
14

15 I never have liked the derby seasons and I've never been a big -
16 - It's just a hard way to run your business and so we feel like
17 we have some plans that have been presented that are fairly
18 simple and I think we've got good industry support and I see
19 that as just a huge hurdle, if we can get most of the charter
20 fleets to latch on to something that makes sense and is
21 something we can all get along with that you will see it
22 coalesce and come together real quick.
23

24 I would like to see also, with the headboat pilot, just move
25 right on into its own plan that will include all the headboats
26 that want to join. It's time. We've got one more year in the
27 pilot and so things have to start moving along to make that
28 continue.
29

30 On Amendment 28, no action is my preferred result. On Amendment
31 39, I just don't particularly see a place for my business in
32 that. I've fished in federal waters since the late 1980s or
33 even earlier than that.
34

35 I had charter boats and I never fished within three or nine
36 miles, but only in bad weather and just something where you're
37 kind of trying to kill a trip off at the end of the day or
38 something, but, for the most part, we don't fish in state waters
39 and we don't really need to be regulated by anybody but the
40 federal government that's regulating us now and so if they want
41 to do the private recs in Amendment 39, I have no problems with
42 that.
43

44 I also think eventually, with all the head-banging on the wall
45 and head-butting that you hear, I think you will end up with a
46 tag system and I want to keep throwing it out there. I think
47 you're going to have to look at it and understand it and it is a
48 way of constraining the large group that seems to be the numbers

1 of the private recreational anglers and our charter customers.

2
3 We have that problem, but we're regulated by the amount of boats
4 and the amount of folks that we can haul and so we want to keep
5 ourselves accountable, but I think a tag system will finally be
6 what you will see eventually in the private rec. Thank you.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thanks, Steve. We have a question for you from
9 Roy.

10
11 **MR. WILLIAMS:** You mentioned a tag system suitable for the
12 private rec. What about you guys?

13
14 **MR. TOMENY:** Our plan has a carcass in the tag in the charter
15 for-hire plan that's going around. We're not against it at all.
16 It can be done as an allocation. I have no problem with
17 clipping a tag onto a fish and so it gives us our little
18 universe of fish that's basically your quota on a plastic tag.

19
20 **MR. WILLIAMS:** So if we could set up a tagging system for you
21 guys, where you were distributed tags and then the states
22 managed red snapper harvest under Amendment 39, with or without
23 a tag, depending on how they wanted to do it, would you be all
24 right with that, Steve?

25
26 **MR. TOMENY:** Yes and I just have to keep throwing it out there.
27 I hadn't heard anybody come up with a really good way to get
28 this whether it's a half-million or a million people that are
29 going fishing and we don't know, but if it's 250,000 people that
30 make four trips a year, you are back up to this large number of
31 people who if they land a couple of red snapper can really --
32 You can blow that quota number up pretty quick.

33
34 If the quota is out on plastic and plastic has to be attached to
35 each fish, you're going to not overfish and I think there leaves
36 the room for some more growth in our overall TAC and we should
37 be able to get those TAC numbers up and start helping people
38 have a little more access.

39
40 We're not trying to suggest to anybody -- I was a private
41 recreational fisherman long before I got in the business and so
42 I have all the sympathies with it, but I still -- We have this
43 huge access of a large number of people that want to go and now
44 we have a fish that they can catch readily and they're big and
45 they're heavy and it adds up. You know the problem and so -- I
46 will go with the thirty-four on the amberjack for us. Thank
47 you.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Steve. James Bruce, followed by
2 Bill Staff.

3
4 **MR. JAMES BRUCE:** James Bruce from Cutoff, Louisiana. I'm a
5 third-generation commercial fisherman and Amendment 28 has been
6 around a while and I know it's been a while since I've come to a
7 meeting, but if you all passed 40 and you're working with 38,
8 what are we doing with 28? We never go over our quota and it's
9 not our fault and why should we get punished for somebody else's
10 no good? That's like sending me to jail for somebody else that
11 did something. It's not right.

12
13 If you all could tell me why you all should take my fish that we
14 got punished for for a long time and we rebuilt it and they're
15 there -- I don't understand. Give them a tag system, like Mr.
16 Steve said. It could be done. You all have just got to put you
17 all's heads together and get it done.

18
19 You all need to throw that away and that's five years that we've
20 been with 28. It's a long time and you all have passed stuff
21 quicker than that. You all did sector separation already and
22 you need to get rid of 28. Thank you.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Bruce. Bill Staff, followed by
25 Jack Wilhite.

26
27 **MR. BILL STAFF:** Bill Staff from the Charter Boat Sea Spray,
28 thirty-four years of fishing. Thanks for passing Amendment 40
29 or helping it get passed, we hope. The Secretary of Commerce
30 will do what they need to do and I would like to help support it
31 even further by putting a VMS on my boat or doing something like
32 the commercial people have done and take a percent of a pound
33 out of each or whatever I've got to do to pay for the program.

34
35 We have a little opposition and somebody didn't think we would
36 want to pay for it, but we're willing to do anything we can and
37 just like this week finding out that triggerfish is going to
38 close on February 7. This Amendment 40 is dire. I mean it's
39 dire.

40
41 I support one snapper and some people support two and it's
42 another reason to let's further this program, so maybe we can
43 get tags. If I want to catch one per day, great. If they want
44 to catch two per day, then great. Let's please keep this
45 progression going and have no delays. Just do not set a season
46 that will put us over quota, whatever it takes.

47
48 I would like to see the federal permit boats left out of

1 Amendment 39, until they get a foolproof plan. I am on the ad
2 hoc committee and I would like to ask the council for another
3 meeting before May and I would also like to maybe give you a
4 suggestion that next time you pick a committee, make it easier
5 for the charge and don't put battering rams up there on the
6 committee and try to do something that will further the charge,
7 please.

8
9 Amberjack, whatever size it takes to keep it open at least
10 through October, thirty-four or thirty-six and it doesn't
11 matter. I am for no reallocation at this point, not until every
12 group gets accountable. I would like to thank you all for the
13 time to speak.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Bill. Jack Wilhite, followed by Jim
16 Green.

17
18 **MR. JACK WILHITE:** Hi and I'm Captain Jack Wilhite. I fish out
19 of Orange Beach, Alabama and I've been doing that for some time
20 now. I have a six-passenger charter boat and I would like to
21 thank the council for their majority support in passing 40.
22 That has moved us forward in an industry that's long needed to
23 be moved somewhere. We've been hurting for some time.

24
25 As far as what I would like to see, we've done a lot of work
26 with the different people, different charter boats and different
27 organizations, up and down the coast and I would like you to
28 support our efforts. What we're trying to do is reach a
29 consensus, which is really hard to do, where everybody is
30 benefitted by what we come up with in our program.

31
32 Right now, for next year, or this year, all we can look at is
33 the two-thirds/one-third split and look at the two-thirds
34 season. If we're going over too much, don't open the second
35 part, because we do not want to run over.

36
37 As far as the electronic equipment, this last time I spent a
38 little over \$11,000 on my radar and my GPS unit and so if you're
39 looking at a \$1,000 or \$2,000 to put a system on the boat which
40 will let me fish more, I am in and I don't know who wouldn't be.

41
42 Amendment 28, I would really like to see you all hold off on
43 that until we are at a point where we understand where the
44 fishery is going and we have some kind of a control over it and
45 that's all I have to say and thank you.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Jack. Jim Green, followed by Chris
48 Niquet.

1
2 **MR. JIM GREEN:** Hello and good afternoon, Chairman Anson and
3 staff and committee members, and thank you for the chance to
4 speak today. My name is Captain Jim Green and I am here today
5 representing the DCBA.
6

7 With Amendment 40's passage and the restoration of hope given to
8 our industry, the DCBA wants to thank you. Whether you voted
9 for Amendment 40 or not, you were part of the process that has
10 given us this great opportunity.
11

12 We are confident that our industry can help develop a fisheries
13 management plan that will continue our trade to the next
14 generation and bring accountability to our newly-formed sector.
15 The DCBA's recommendation for the final framework is Action 1,
16 Alternative 1, and on Proposed Action 2, Alternative 2.
17

18 Some fishermen in our fleet feel strongly that two fish is
19 needed for their business. Those of us, like myself, that
20 believe one fish would work are not willing to break up the
21 unity of our sector over this change.
22

23 The DCBA is asking you to approve and adopt the recommendation
24 for a split season. As an association, we feel this self-
25 imposed buffer will not only protect our sector from creating
26 overages, but it also shows that we are willing to make
27 sacrifices to ensure accountability for our newly-formed
28 responsibility.
29

30 When it comes to Amendment 28, the DCBA feels that this piece of
31 regulatory pie is a measure for fine-tuning. We believe that it
32 should only be part of the discussion once accountability is
33 achieved. Allocation should be addressed, but if allocation was
34 the problem, then doubling the TAC for the 2014 season would
35 have been the silver bullet. It was not and started a fish race
36 to see who could get the most for each state.
37

38 As a for-hire fisherman, we understand the desperation for more
39 access, but as time has proved, accountability is the true and
40 consistent way to address an access problem. We believe that
41 this is not only the cart before the horse, but the load of hay
42 before the cart.
43

44 On amberjack, the DCBA believes that a thirty-four-inch size
45 limit and a one fish bag limit per person is an acceptable jump
46 to ensure the rebuilding of the stock.
47

48 I want to close my testimony on a personal note and I want to

1 get on the record about the headboat EFP and the future
2 management of headboats. I operate a headboat business that was
3 not in the EFP in Destin and I and the two headboat businesses I
4 personally represent fully support a Gulf-wide headboat
5 management plan that mirrors the current EFP.

6
7 I have seen the flexibility and accountability this management
8 style provides and I desperately want to be a part of it and so
9 please move forward on making this the Gulf headboat standard
10 for management.

11
12 As Chairman of the AP, I want to thank all of you for the
13 opportunity that was provided to our industry. Our meeting was
14 productive and everyone put away their agendas and focused on
15 what was best for our future. We urge you to push forward with
16 the recommendations from the AP. Amendment 40 was a contentious
17 topic and now that it's behind us, we are moving forward with
18 the development of a new management plan.

19
20 We as an industry will not let everyone's hard work go to waste.
21 We are prepared to do what's necessary to ensure accountability
22 and good stewardship of the resource. Thank you.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Jim. We have a couple of questions
25 here from Harlon.

26
27 **MR. PEARCE:** I just want to say thanks for your leadership on
28 the AP. You all did a great job and came up with some really
29 great ideas and they were forward thinking and that's what we
30 need. Thank you.

31
32 **MR. GREEN:** I appreciate it, Mr. Harlon, and, also, I heard you
33 talking about VMS earlier and the DCBA's stand is we want VMS
34 and we want electronic logbooks and if we have to pay for them,
35 we are onboard with that.

36
37 **MS. BADEMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Jim, did the DCBA --
38 When you all were talking about amberjack, did you discuss any
39 changes to the season or are you happy with what you have?

40
41 **MR. GREEN:** The seasons -- Of course, we would like to have
42 access when more people are fishing for it, but if closing in
43 June and July and raising the limit is what gives us a
44 stability, to where we can tell our customers everything but
45 June and July, then we're onboard with that. Thank you all very
46 much.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Jim. Chris Niquet, followed by Bart

1 Niquet.

2
3 **MR. CHRIS NIQUET:** Chris Niquet from Panama City, Florida. I am
4 against Amendment 28. They're going to have it as no action and
5 I would like to speak about the reallocation. One of the
6 problems with the true recreational sector is, if I'm reading
7 this right, you have approximately three-million license
8 holders, private license holders, and I don't think anybody on
9 this council or any statistician here can tell me how many of
10 those three-million license holders goes fishing for red
11 snapper.

12
13 There is not a tag and there's not a permit and there is no
14 little box you check. Roy alluded to it at the round table.
15 There is no way to keep track.

16
17 What I'm suggesting is you give them the option and make them
18 pay a three-dollar or two-dollar or five-dollar fee. That way,
19 if they want to go catch them, you've got a number of people who
20 are eligible to catch red snapper.

21
22 You can divide that number into the quota, the TAC, and see how
23 many of these people or how many of these fish that each person
24 can catch. If they can catch one fish, you send them a tag for
25 one fish and when they've caught that fish, it's over. Your
26 season has been through, like they do with turkey and deer and
27 several other species of game in the United States.

28
29 Now, the comment has been made by members of this council, and I
30 think Dr. Crabtree made it and I think Mr. Harlon Pearce made
31 it, that the true recreational sector, it doesn't look like how
32 many fish you give them, they go over and I think the reason is
33 because we don't have a real good accounting system to keep
34 account of it and it just seems completely absurd with all the
35 letters behind all of these names here. You've got doctors and
36 lawyers and people in enforcement, but you can't come up with
37 some way to keep account of the people who are after this
38 species and figure out a tagging system or permit system or some
39 way.

40
41 I think the people in the charter for-hire sector should be
42 given their own amount of fish to fish with them as they please,
43 under certain guidelines, without this derby fishing. Thank you
44 very much for your time.

45
46 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Chris. Mr. Bart Niquet, followed by
47 Billy Archer.

48

1 **MR. BART NIQUET:** Thank you. I'm Bart Niquet and I've been
2 fishing since 1950 as a licensed operator, which is before some
3 of you were born. I like the concept of this scoping hearing
4 involving more than one fishery at a time. However, the
5 personnel holding these meetings should record more than the
6 number of people attending. Otherwise, you're simply wasting
7 time and money.

8
9 I am in favor of the for-hire and rec fisheries being separated.
10 It sounds like you already have decided on the numbers that
11 you're going to use.

12
13 I am against five regional management areas. We already have
14 enough confusion and manipulating of figures. If a state is
15 found to be falsely reporting their statistics, that state
16 should have no allocation for the next year or no voting
17 privileges. I don't believe the council should pass any
18 amendments or bills without a comprehensive study. We don't
19 want to be compared to Nancy Pelosi.

20
21 Ten years ago, the council management plans were held up as an
22 example nationwide as how to not manage a fishery and now the
23 commercial plan is allowed as one of the best in the world and
24 surely we are able to do something similar for the recreational
25 fishery. Until you limit participation in the recreational red
26 snapper fishery, your problems will only get worse.

27
28 I think Amendment 28 should be buried. It's dead and we
29 shouldn't have to manage that part of it by a judge, which it
30 looks like we're going to have to do.

31
32 Incidentally, the hypoxic area, or what is commonly called the
33 Dead Zone, produces over 70 percent of the red snapper and has
34 done so for over forty years. Maybe it's not so dead and I
35 think that's all I have and thank you.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Niquet. We have a question for
38 you from Robin.

39
40 **MR. RIECHERS:** Thank you, Mr. Niquet. I didn't quite catch --
41 What were you saying? It was right at the beginning of your
42 statements regarding scoping meetings and I just missed that.

43
44 **MR. B. NIQUET:** You brought up here the fact that you're going
45 to handle more than one fishery at a scoping meeting or talking
46 about doing it and I am in favor of that. I think that it would
47 save a lot of time and money.

1 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** One more question, Mr. Niquet, from Mr. Boyd.
2

3 **MR. BOYD:** You said, or I think you said, that in public
4 hearings you would like to record more than just the numbers of
5 persons attending and could you elaborate on that and what would
6 you recommend?
7

8 **MR. B. NIQUET:** We had some meetings and I know of them was a
9 scoping meeting in Panama City that was pretty involved and the
10 only thing that was reported was the number of people attended
11 and the one in Panama City and the one in Mississippi. It was
12 just simply the number of people attended and it didn't say
13 whether they were for or against the proposal or anything else.
14

15 I think if you're going to have a scoping meeting and you've got
16 some questions you need answered or questions you posed to the
17 public, you should have some idea of how they were voted, for or
18 against them.
19

20 **DR. DANA:** Not a question, but a comment. I appreciate you
21 bringing that up. We, as a council, also brought that up, that
22 we wanted a little bit more information coming out of scoping
23 meetings since you, the fishermen, have taken your time to come
24 there and comment and I think the staff took that to heart and
25 we've been getting a more robust follow-up from that.
26

27 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Billy Archer, followed by Mr. Wayne Werner.
28

29 **MR. BILLY ARCHER:** Good afternoon, council and Mr. Chairman.
30 First, let me start by thanking everybody for their work on
31 Amendment 40. It really has brought hope to our industry. We
32 worked hard at it and you all were very kind to pass it and I
33 have just a few comments.
34

35 I'm going to echo a lot of what you all have heard, but, first,
36 please move forward with a flexible and accountable charter for-
37 hire management plan directing the Charter For-Hire Management
38 AP to reconvene before the April council meeting, so that
39 recommendations can be considered by the council.
40

41 Also, if the Gulf Council feels that they need to move forward
42 with Amendment 39, I encourage you to do so, but I encourage you
43 to remove the charter for-hire sector out of that amendment.
44

45 On Amendment 28, I support Alternative 1, no action. I want to
46 thank all the commercial fishermen in this room here for their
47 continued support on Amendment 40. The amberjack would be
48 great, a thirty-four-inch fork length and we support that.

1 Lastly, please support a two fish bag limit with a split season,
2 to avoid us going over our quota, and then also I want to thank
3 Harlon and Johnny for you all's help in the collection of data.
4 We need that and you know we need it and it's going to be our
5 life-saving grace. Thank you very much.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Billy. Wayne Werner, followed by
8 Troy Frady.

9
10 **MR. WAYNE WERNER:** My name is Wayne Werner, owner and operator
11 of the Fishing Vessel Sea Quest. This is probably my seventy-
12 fifth time addressing this council and I don't know why. I've
13 got a lot better things to do, as Corky has been telling me all
14 week.

15
16 As far as Amendment 28, this has gone on long enough and let's
17 get to a point and let's see what happens. Vote it up or vote
18 it down or pass it on and do what you've got to do. There has
19 been no rationale and there has been no reason. If you want to
20 call it exclusive affirmative action, you won't need any
21 justification and then pass it and let us deal with it from
22 there. This has just gone on way too long.

23
24 As far as Number 36 here, now we're looking at a nine-year
25 review and so let's get on with that, so we can figure out where
26 we're going to go from there. If we have any adjustments we're
27 going to make to this IFQ system, let's get moving that way.

28
29 I don't understand this dragging on and on. It was a five-year
30 review and they called it an eight-year review last year and
31 this year it's a nine-year review and let's get moving. Let's
32 get headed in the right direction, a positive direction.

33
34 I would like to make a comment about these Mexican fish. This
35 is something that is really kind of a situation that needs to be
36 addressed and we're going to try to support you guys to try to
37 get harsher laws about it. We will go to Washington and I know
38 a bunch of people in this audience that will go to Washington
39 and lobby for it. We would like to see you all put a letter in
40 there to help back it up. I mean it's time to get moving with
41 progress here. Thank you.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Wayne. Troy Frady, followed by Gary
44 Jarvis.

45
46 **MR. TROY FRADY:** Hi. I'm Troy Frady, a charter boat captain out
47 of Orange Beach, Alabama. I would like to make a few comments.
48 First of all, thank you for passing Amendment 40. It means a

1 lot to the charter fishing industry to see this council take the
2 next step in moving into a twenty-first century management
3 system.

4
5 I would like to recommend that the council develop a charter
6 for-hire management plan and continue moving forward with that.
7 I would like to support the use of electronic logbooks or VMS or
8 whatever other validation tools you see fit for our industry.

9
10 I would like to also see the council adopt a one fish bag limit.
11 Now, I've heard a lot of comments about which association
12 supports two overwhelmingly, but you know I sit on the AP for
13 the charter for-hire and it passed fifteen to five. There was
14 two dissenting states, which was Louisiana and Texas, who have a
15 different type of fishery than we have in Alabama.

16
17 Last year, I'm going to take you back a little bit, to where
18 right before or during our April meeting I asked for a one fish
19 bag limit. Because of the politics that was involved in the
20 fishery, you all kept trying to pass a buffer, a high enough
21 buffer, and you even got it up to -- One of the motions was a 30
22 percent buffer.

23
24 At the result of it, at a two fish bag limit, you all put us
25 down to nine days and if you had gone to one fish, I would have
26 had more days to fish and so you all created that hardship and
27 the only reason I'm asking for one fish is because, first, to
28 me, I am a little scared of what this council can do to
29 negatively change the outcome of this year, based upon state
30 noncompliance.

31
32 You know I'm trying to be as tender as I can be right there, but
33 this is serious. I mean I make my living taking customers
34 fishing and now, not all customers are the same. Everybody
35 talks about the number of fish and it's just not worth my while
36 to go out there for just two fish and, well, I assure you that I
37 run 85 percent of my charters where we come in with one fish or
38 less or two fish.

39
40 The tourist industry does not have to have all these fish and so
41 please recognize that there are more people out there who don't
42 need fish that come to our coastal communities, but also
43 recognize the fact that there are those people who need those
44 fish in other areas.

45
46 I want to see amberjacks left at thirty-four inches and whether
47 it's one or two fish, set the charter for-hire season at 66
48 percent of the days that you have chosen. That way, we make

1 sure we come up under our quota. Thank you.

2
3 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Troy. Gary Jarvis, followed by Bob
4 Zales.

5
6 **MR. GARY JARVIS:** Captain Gary Jarvis and you all know me and I
7 don't have to explain who I am. Add to my little feather in my
8 cap and now I'm a part owner in three seafood restaurants to go
9 along with the fact that I fish for a living in both the
10 commercial and the charter for-hire fishery.

11
12 After seven years of hard work by committed charter for-hire
13 fishermen, I want to thank you guys for passing Amendment 40.
14 Now our industry looks forward to working with all of you to
15 finish the framework action on Amendment 40 by supporting and
16 instituting these recommendations.

17
18 Number one, we want to propose a conservative buffer for the
19 2015 season by a split season of twenty-one days starting June
20 1. Then after landing analyses and harvest rate estimates are
21 established, have National Marine Fisheries set a fall season to
22 fish any remaining allocation starting October 1.

23
24 I would like to institute a two fish bag limit and take action
25 on the motions made by the Data Collection Charter For-Hire
26 Fleet in June of 2014 and April of 2010 and institute the
27 mandatory electronic logbooks by June 1. For speed of
28 implementation, I recommend using the data collection system
29 being used in the headboat EFP.

30
31 I hope this council will help our industry as we finish this
32 framework action by making a motion and carrying it to start a
33 scoping document to develop an actual charter for-hire FMP that
34 will take into account some of the recommendations made by the
35 charter for-hire ad hoc.

36
37 I ask that you reconvene that AP before April, again to focus
38 specifically on alternative management ideas that will help the
39 industry and the saltwater anglers who access the red snapper
40 fishery to evaluate and recommend forms of management that will
41 address regional, seasonal, and business differences amongst our
42 industry that will improve and expand red snapper access to a
43 broader demographic of public saltwater anglers.

44
45 I recommend the development of a subsector in the charter for-
46 hire sector established for the headboat industry and to
47 facilitate the development of an FMP for that portion of the
48 charter for-hire sector. They have explored an alternative form

1 of management with the headboat EFP pilot program and many in
2 that industry want to move towards an FMP using some, if not
3 all, of the tenets of this pilot. It's time to start to develop
4 a scoping document towards this end.

5
6 Our fleet supports a thirty-four-inch fork limit, as recommended
7 by the Reef Fish AP, to improve amberjack rebuilding timelines
8 and increase the stocks and to keep the fishing season open for
9 a longer timeline.

10
11 As a dual-permitted charter and commercial fisherman and part
12 owner of three restaurants, I am against Amendment 28 and the
13 stealing of my customers' access to Gulf red snapper based on a
14 disingenuous attempt to stabilize the recreational fishery.
15 It's a mere Band-Aid on a leaking dam that is about to break and
16 an absurd action to placate a political agenda that has zero net
17 benefits to the management of the red snapper species. Thank
18 you.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Gary, we have a couple of questions.

21
22 **MR. GREENE:** Thank you, Gary. I know that where you fish a lot
23 that groupers are a pretty predominant fishery over that way and
24 what are your thoughts about the groupers and the status of
25 that? We've seen a little bit of information and the stock
26 doesn't seem to be working out so well and could you give me a
27 very brief synopsis of what you're seeing?

28
29 **MR. JARVIS:** I'm a member of the Reef Fish AP and we were
30 subject to the information that the gag grouper had been rebuilt
31 and that scientific morsel is not being made manifest in what
32 we're seeing in the Gulf of Mexico.

33
34 I have a hard time believing that the resource is rebuilt by
35 what we see and what we catch. We had the concern of that huge
36 red tide all last summer, virtually seven months of it, and so
37 that's why some of the recommendations that came out of the AP
38 on red and gag grouper were so conservative, because of the
39 unknown factor of what the red tide was going to do to the stock
40 and what we were seeing.

41
42 Now, I've got friends and we have members that I talked to in
43 Clearwater and they had a really, really good red grouper season
44 this past summer and on into this winter and, in fact, all
45 you've got to do is go on Facebook and see Captain Eric Mahoney
46 and he is single-handedly trying to eradicate the allocation all
47 by himself. He's having a really good year, but they're having
48 a -- In places, they're seeing some increase in the grouper

1 fishery, but in the northern Gulf, if the grouper is supposed to
2 be rebuilt, you would assume that there would be some new
3 improved range in their area and we are not seeing that. Thank
4 you for your time.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Gary. We have Bob Zales, followed
7 by the infamous Eric Mahoney.

8
9 **MR. BOB ZALES, II:** Bob Zales, II, Panama City, Florida. I am
10 also on that ad hoc snapper AP and clearly you are seeing -- I
11 mean because the AP was, what, fifteen to five for one fish, but
12 you have heard some of the members say that they're at two fish
13 now.

14
15 I voted for the one fish and some of the others that are on that
16 panel voted for the one fish, but I can tell you that apparently
17 some of them have changed their minds and so you're hearing a
18 lot for two fish and so I don't know where to go with this. I
19 mean because one fish clearly gives you a few more days and two
20 fish, you get less days. Depending on what the states are going
21 to do, you're going to end up with even less days.

22
23 From our experience last year in Panama City, I can tell you
24 that the nine-day season -- You heard complaints that I've got
25 to have red snapper. It affected a small number of people, but
26 the vast majority of them pretty much fished any time they
27 wanted to last year and not having snapper didn't affect them.

28
29 I have said this in the past and especially with king mackerel.
30 I have told you that if we didn't have two fish or one fish or
31 no fish that it was going to put us out of business and that was
32 back in the late 1980s or early 1990s and I'm still here and it
33 hasn't put me out yet and so whatever you do with snapper
34 eventually is not going to put me out either. I am going to
35 keep fishing for something.

36
37 The split season, I keep hearing this stuff about accountability
38 and my support and suggestion to look at, and not to do, but to
39 look at a split season was to see if you could extend the
40 fishery into some other months.

41
42 We also asked Andy, because of the floppy disk program that Mike
43 Schirripa created many years ago, Andy played with some stuff
44 with an Excel sheet recently and we asked him to look at what
45 another split season to say move red snapper -- Because if red
46 snapper is king, you've got to have red snapper to stay in
47 business, then look at moving the snapper to like May and June
48 and September or April and May and September and October,

1 because people are on vacation in the summer and they're going
2 to come down and they're going to go fishing.

3
4 Andy is supposedly looking at this, to see what that would do,
5 and so that's kind of where all that went and clearly if you
6 divide the season up into two-thirds versus one-third, you will
7 get to see whether or not you're going to meet your quota, but
8 with the current buffer -- As far as I know, the data is not in,
9 but from what I hear, we are going to be probably a good bit
10 under quota for this year, because of the buffer that was there
11 last year, regardless of the nine-day season or anything else.
12 That's kind of where that is.

13
14 The issue about the Mexican problem, and I've told some of you
15 all this. Apparently there is 1,100 trips or so that the Coast
16 Guard is recording on this and probably more. The boats are
17 coming in with 1,500 to 2,000 pounds a trip and you've got 1,300
18 permitted charterboats and probably 1,100 of them are actually
19 fishing and you take what those Mexicans are catching and you
20 give me the one slide that showed 2,500 fish -- If you give me
21 2,500 red snapper, you won't see me again. Any questions?

22
23 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Bob. We have a couple of questions
24 from Harlon and Roy.

25
26 **MR. PEARCE:** Thanks, Bob, for your comments. Do you still have
27 a federal permit? Are you still fishing under federal laws or
28 what is going on?

29
30 **MR. ZALES:** Yes, I do. I've got two of them.

31
32 **MR. PEARCE:** Thank you for clearing that up. Thank you.

33
34 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Bob, I apologize, but I was talking when you were
35 talking about the split season and were you favoring the split
36 season?

37
38 **MR. ZALES:** I favored looking to see what it would do and where
39 we would go with that and there are two scenarios. A lot of
40 what we did at the AP was done with the knowledge of what you
41 could implement this year.

42
43 I mean there's a lot of things that we could have come up with
44 that you can look at down the road, but there was an effort to
45 try to see what we could suggest that might change things for
46 this year. That has had a lot to do with the one fish
47 suggestion, because it gives you a few more days, and it had to
48 do with the split season and that possibly it might do the same

1 thing.

2
3 You might be able to fish some days in June and then once the
4 information is in by August, you may be able to have a September
5 or part of October fishery.

6
7 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Do you have any concern about, if you have a fall
8 season, about Florida reopening your waters and the private boat
9 fishery joining you out there?

10
11 **MR. ZALES:** I don't. I suspect others do, but no, it doesn't
12 bother me.

13
14 **MR. RIECHERS:** Bob, thank you. When you're saying you wanted to
15 explore -- Are you suggesting -- Because if I am remembering the
16 data correctly, both the catch rates earlier in the spring and
17 certainly the catch rates in the fall are less than they are in
18 that summer period and so, conceivably, you extend and you get
19 more days by going in either direction, as opposed to starting
20 on June 1. When you saying you wanted to explore that, to
21 really look at those days, is that what you're getting at?

22
23 **MR. ZALES:** I think that it would be that way, but clearly the
24 data is not there, because we haven't fished snapper in April
25 and May. We have done September and October once or twice and
26 so Andy really doesn't have a lot to pick from, to see really
27 where that is, and so he has to make a lot of assumptions.

28
29 When I talked to him privately about it, I am saying a ballpark
30 number and you could probably use the headboat thing from last
31 year and that would give you a gauge for those months for those
32 type of boats that you maybe could apply that there.

33
34 What I'm looking to try to do is to extend a fishing season
35 close to where we were to having the six-month season. I don't
36 necessarily think I have to have red snapper to get a full six-
37 month season to have people come fish.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Bob. Eric Mahoney, followed by
40 Carolyn Wood.

41
42 **MR. ERIC MAHONEY:** Thank you, Chairman and council members and
43 staff. My name is Eric Mahoney, owner and operator of the
44 Charter Boat Daisy May in Clearwater Beach, Florida. First, I
45 would like to thank the council for voting for Amendment 40 at
46 the last council meeting.

47
48 It's very important for our industry to keep moving forward with

1 it and data collection is a big part of that. The council has
2 voted, as early as 2010, to have data collection a priority for
3 the for-hire industry and still we have seen nothing.

4
5 Five years is way too long to wait for something our industry
6 has asked for and needs. With the sunset clause in Amendment
7 40, this kick-the-can-down-the-road management has to stop and
8 every council member has received a copy of the CFA's red
9 snapper management plan.

10
11 This plan is fair and simple and has unprecedented support
12 within our industry. I hope the council looks for ways to get
13 this plan through in a timely manner.

14
15 As far as regional management goes, I am against states having
16 any say in how the federally-permitted for-hire boats are
17 managed. Our industry's management should always remain at the
18 council level. In my home state of Florida, its commission
19 hasn't shown me any sign that the federally-permitted charter
20 industry is a priority and, in fact, it has shown just the
21 opposite.

22
23 With Amendment 28, reallocation, I honestly can't believe this
24 is still on the table. Reallocation is a Band-Aid put on a much
25 bigger problem. The recreational fishery in the Gulf has
26 serious management issues and taking fish from the one sector
27 that's accountable doesn't send a very good message. We need
28 long-term management plans and ideas for our sector and not
29 reallocation that has very little upside.

30
31 As far as the red snapper bag limit, I am fine with the status
32 quo of two fish per person. We have some fishermen in the
33 industry that need the two snappers to get trips and so I have
34 no problem with keeping the status quo and the split season to
35 avoid any overages.

36
37 Instead of fighting over one or two fish, I would rather focus
38 on getting the CFA snapper plan through and that would solve
39 this problem and many others. Thank you.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Eric. Carolyn Wood, followed by
42 Russell Underwood.

43
44 **MS. CAROLYN WOOD:** I am Carolyn Wood and I'm an IFQ shareholder
45 and fortunately for everybody in the room, most everything I've
46 had to say has been said and so I won't take long. I am here
47 and I am not in support of Amendment 28. Other than Alternative
48 1, all of the alternatives presented reduce the commercial

1 allocation substantially, in some cases over 1.1 million pounds,
2 and it does not help stabilize the recreational fishery
3 whatsoever.

4
5 Under the best case scenario presented with Amendment 28, which
6 is Alternative 1, and other than that one, the commercial sector
7 will be forced to cut back by a minimum of a quarter of a
8 million pounds and take a loss of \$0.7 million and how is this
9 fair? How can you ask individuals, many of whom have worked in
10 this industry before the inception of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery
11 Management Council, to bear the burden of this change?

12
13 This is unnecessary and unfair, to the point of being arbitrary
14 and capricious. Based on the fishery allocation policy,
15 allocation shall be fair and equitable to fishing sectors and
16 any harvest restrictions or recovery benefits be allocated
17 fairly and equitably among sectors. I just do not see how
18 Amendment 28 fits this policy. I would ask that if you must
19 push Amendment 28 through to please choose Alternative 1. Thank
20 you.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. We have Russell Underwood, followed
23 by Bubba Cochrane.

24
25 **MR. RUSSELL UNDERWOOD:** I am Russell Underwood from Panama City,
26 Florida. I have been fishing for about forty-five years, ten
27 years in the charter boat industry, the headboat industry. The
28 first thing is I would like to thank you all for letting me
29 speak today. I have always been real concerned about the
30 fishery and the commercial fishing and the recreational
31 industry.

32
33 I think you all have got some compliments coming towards you
34 all. I see a great movement moving forward in this Amendment
35 40. I commend these other fishermen in the audience, like Gary
36 Jarvis and these other fellas that has fought hard, Billy
37 Archer.

38
39 I was in their position about seven or eight or ten years ago
40 when I fought hard for the IFQ and they have taken a lot of
41 slack, but I think the majority of these people want this
42 Amendment 40 and there is a thank-you coming from the people
43 from Bay County, Florida. I am from Panama City, which is part
44 of Bay County. They have been wanting something for a long time
45 and I see the council is finally moving forward and that's a
46 good thing and so you all need to kind of pat yourselves on the
47 back. I see a lot of good stuff moving forward.

48

1 I sincerely appreciate the IFQ program. It is a good program.
2 It's the best program that I've ever seen. I've been coming to
3 these meetings for a long time and Doug Gregory knows this and
4 I've educated Doug a lot on the fishery problems in the Gulf and
5 I've been part of this process and so I'm proud of that.

6
7 On Amendment 28, I still believe that Amendment 28 is wrong
8 morally and it's wrong biologically and it's just not a good
9 thing. There have been a lot of people speaking ahead of me
10 today and I have seen one person, one person, ask in favor of
11 Amendment 28 and so that means a lot. You've got to look back
12 and see and count the people that has begged and trying to steal
13 a few amount of fish that ain't going to solve no problems and
14 so I'm certainly against that. Amendment 28 needs to be
15 abolished and move on, move forward.

16
17 Another thing about the gag grouper. As a fisherman off of
18 Florida for a long time, and I know everybody in the Gulf, this
19 gag grouper situation is crazy.

20
21 I had four boats go out the other day and they caught one gag
22 grouper in the western Gulf where I fish. I hear the same
23 problem off of Panama City. If the stock is in such good shape,
24 where are the gag grouper?

25
26 Me as a fisherman fishing for red snapper, I can catch 10,000
27 pounds a day if you've got the quota. I can do it. Well, I
28 don't think the resource is there for the gag grouper. You
29 would be lucky if you catch 200 pounds a day, if you're lucky,
30 off of Florida.

31
32 Anyway, there is something really wrong about the situation, but
33 I do want to thank you all for giving these charter boats a
34 chance to make a better living and maybe have a better season
35 and it's going to be a great improvement for all involved to get
36 everybody accountable and you all can pat yourselves on the back
37 a little bit about what you all have done and I sincerely
38 appreciate that and I've been glad to be part of this process,
39 but we need to continue to move on and make positive decisions.
40 Thank you.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. We have one question over here from
43 Martha.

44
45 **MS. BADEMAN:** Thanks, Russell. One quick question. You fish
46 amberjack, right?

47
48 **MR. UNDERWOOD:** Yes.

1
2 **MS. BADEMAN:** Do you have a recommendation for the trip limit?
3
4 **MR. UNDERWOOD:** The trip limit? 2,000 pounds.
5
6 **MR. PEARCE:** We had some conversation about gutted weight versus
7 not gutted weight on amberjack and do you have any druthers?
8
9 **MR. UNDERWOOD:** It should be always gutted weight. I believe
10 gutted weight.
11
12 **MR. PEARCE:** Because right now, you have to kind of take
13 advantage of it with a lower poundage, right, like 1,920?
14
15 **MR. UNDERWOOD:** Yes, that's right. Thank you.
16
17 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Bubba Cochran, followed by Mike
18 Eller.
19
20 **MR. BUBBA COCHRANE:** Bubba Cochran and I own and operate a
21 commercial fishing boat and a charter fishing boat out of
22 Galveston, Texas. I am also the President of the Gulf of Mexico
23 Reef Fish Shareholder's Alliance.
24
25 I don't feel like Amendment 28 has anything to do with fishery
26 management. Taking fish away from one sector and giving it to
27 another sector is not going to give the recreational fishermen
28 what they need. A few more fishing days is not going to solve
29 anything and so, as usual, I am against Amendment 28 and would
30 recommend no action, status quo.
31
32 I am glad to see the council moving forward with sector
33 separation for the for-hire sector. This is truly a management
34 plan that can give recreational fishermen a plan that they need
35 for more fishing time and accountability and the access they
36 need to red snapper.
37
38 I am not sure how regional management would work with the for-
39 hire. I think regional management is more specific to the truly
40 recreational fishermen and not the for-hire or the commercial.
41 I think regional management can work. There are a lot of
42 details to work out and all of the regions will have to agree to
43 play by the same rules. This is something that we can't even
44 accomplish right now, in Texas in particular.
45
46 Also, I don't see, from what I've been hearing about regional
47 management, how that would stop the overharvest of the quota. I
48 understand now we're using buffers and that's working as a

1 temporary solution, but I think the management plan for the
2 regional needs to address the overharvest more than anything and
3 not about who is going to get what and how they are going to
4 decide that, but how we're going to keep from going over.

5
6 As far as the IFQ, the IFQ is working really well right now.
7 There are some changes that can be made, but I don't think any
8 major changes need to be made right now and it's working really
9 well. That's it. Thank you.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Bubba. Mike Eller, followed by Bill
12 Tucker.

13
14 **MR. MIKE ELLER:** Mike Eller, hailing from the world's luckiest
15 fishing village of Destin, Florida. This is my thirty-third
16 consecutive year. As far as Amendment 28 goes, I also would say
17 no action.

18
19 You know for us to look at reallocation and to look at the way
20 the demographics have changed and maybe look and ask questions
21 about that, it's a fair question, but to look at reallocation
22 without having our ducks in a row is really just irresponsible
23 and so it's just a non-starter.

24
25 We get our ducks in a row and everybody has got a tag and
26 everybody counts their fish and then we want to look at maybe
27 something to the question of fairness or maybe the question of
28 demographics have changed a little bit, that's a legitimate
29 thing to ask and to look at, but until we get our ducks in a
30 row, it's really just a nonstarter.

31
32 Amendment 40 was a hard-fought battle, especially in our
33 industry. We appreciate it and we need to move forward. We
34 need to challenge and push our data collectors and we only need
35 to count one species. There is only 1,200 or 1,300 boats in the
36 fishery and they're not all going to catch red snappers.

37
38 If we can't do that -- They did parachute an electric car onto
39 the surface of Mars and so we can do it. I mean give us the
40 opportunity and I am going to count my fish no matter what and
41 if nobody gives me a data collection system this year, we are
42 still going to count our fish.

43
44 We finally are going to move to the point that we can actually
45 count these stupid red snapper and then, when we've got three
46 years -- As the truck-driver poet, Jerry Reed, said, we've got a
47 long way to go and a short time to get there we're going to do
48 something they say can't be done.

1
2 We're going to do it. We are going to count our fish and we're
3 going to move forward and then when we get done and we get this
4 thing working, then we're going to reach out to that private
5 boat sector and we're going to help them get their act together.
6 We are going to help them get their tag system going.

7
8 In Destin, Florida, we did a tag system under the exempted
9 fishing permit and we worked very closely with the State of
10 Florida. Those private boat guys were very happy to get their
11 tags and they were very happy and when I hear them over and over
12 again nowadays, they are ready to go to a tag system.

13
14 You might hear the management of the CCA talk about it, but
15 that's not the person that's down there on the water. Those
16 guys on the water, they want a system, because when they look at
17 the commercial fishermen and they see us getting our act
18 together, they will get as frustrated as we used to get.

19
20 They want a system too and so we're going to be the microcosm
21 and we're going to get our system down pat and then we're going
22 to help them get their system down pat and we're going to
23 finally get rid of all this we don't really know how many people
24 are catching them and all that.

25
26 We can do it and we're going to do it. For you all that wrote
27 the minority report and sent it in, it's time to put that behind
28 that behind you and it's time to move forward. If you want to
29 keep rehashing what we've been rehashing for ten years, that's
30 your loss and we need to move forward.

31
32 A thirty-four-inch amberjack and a 1,000-pound trip limit, as
33 far as I'm concerned, and a two fish bag limit. We personally,
34 on my vessel, we could go with a one fish bag limit. My
35 brothers and sisters in arms in Texas don't want it and --

36
37 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Mike, if you could wrap it up.

38
39 **MR. M. ELLER:** If once we go to a tag system, it won't matter
40 two fish or one fish, because everybody can fish their fish
41 however they want. Thank you very much.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mike. We have Bill Tucker, followed
44 by George Eller.

45
46 **MR. BILL TUCKER:** How are you? I'm Bill Tucker and I'm a
47 commercial fisherman out of Dunedin, Florida. I would like to
48 cover a couple of things: Amendment 40, the IUU fishing, and

1 Amendment 28.

2
3 Thank you for finally moving forward on sector separation. This
4 will provide the charter for-hire sector the lifeline they need
5 to properly run their businesses and the flexibility they need
6 to develop plans that increase recreational fishing
7 opportunities and increase accountability in the recreational
8 sector. We need that.

9
10 I encourage you to take a hard stance against the foreign
11 poaching that takes place in our waters. I mean if we can lock
12 these guys up and let them make fish tags for the recreational
13 sector, that might be a good step. If we could take some of
14 those fish and give them to Bob Zales, II, as his introduction
15 into catch share management, that would be awesome.

16
17 As far as Amendment 28 and reallocation, under the current
18 recreational management system, I don't support reallocation and
19 reallocating more red snappers to the recreational sector. It's
20 not going to promote conservation and it only sends the wrong
21 message by rewarding a failed management system of fish
22 expropriated from a commercial management system that works.

23
24 If you desire to increase stability in the recreational sector,
25 then develop a system that expands fishing opportunities for
26 recreational fishermen. For example, explore a tag system that
27 personalizes opportunities for individual fishermen according to
28 their individual needs or emulate the innovative spirit that the
29 charter for-hire and the commercial sectors have embraced.

30
31 By taking fish off the plates of the fishing public and out of
32 the coolers of the cafes and restaurants, that only adds
33 instability to our sector. These costs of reallocation exceed
34 any purported benefits. Throwing more fish at an ineffective
35 management system is just folly and so please support
36 Alternative 1, no action, on Amendment 28. Thank you.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Bill. I have George Eller, followed
39 by Eric Brazier.

40
41 **MR. GEORGE ELLER:** Mr. Chairman and members of the council,
42 thank you so much for all of your hard work on Amendment 40.
43 Dr. Crabtree, thank you for your professional leadership in this
44 whole matter.

45
46 Amendment 28 has no -- The charter boat industry has no place in
47 that. It sounds to me like the Robin Hood of the red snapper
48 industry, take from the rich and give to the poor, but that

1 won't work.

2
3 In my opinion, there are three basic things, three very, very
4 important things, that has to go along with Amendment 40:
5 accountability, accountability, and accountability.
6

7 Therefore, I support the idea of a split season, but moreover
8 than that, I support data collection, real-time data collection.
9 I don't need anybody to buy me a VMS. I will buy one for each
10 of my boats and I feel that way because real-time catch data
11 eliminates the guesswork, just like the fish tags.
12

13 When you issue fish tags and you issue X number of fish tags,
14 you know how many red snapper is going to get caught before the
15 year is out. You already know and there won't be no more red
16 snappers caught by the for-hire industry than what you've issued
17 fish tags for.
18

19 Amendment 39, I think you should just trash that. A thirty-
20 four-inch amberjack is fine with me. I don't commercial fish
21 them and so I have no say-so on trip limits, but, again, we've
22 got this Amendment 40 thing going down the road and for goodness
23 sake, let's do not get ourselves mired down in the mud and drag
24 this thing out towards a sunset. Give us some form of real-time
25 catch data and it will pay dividends. Thank you.
26

27 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you and you have a question from Harlon.
28

29 **MR. PEARCE:** Mr. Eller, thanks for your presentation and did I
30 hear you say that you support accountability?
31

32 **MR. G. ELLER:** Absolutely. Accountability is the watch word and
33 this is why we're looking at the split season, because the last
34 thing that we don't want to do is overfish. We will do whatever
35 it takes not to overfish.
36

37 **MR. PEARCE:** Thanks for your comments.
38

39 **MR. G. ELLER:** Yes, accountability.
40

41 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Eller. Eric Brazer, followed by
42 Larry Huntley.
43

44 **MR. ERIC BRAZER:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. My name is
45 Eric Brazer and I'm the Deputy Director of the Gulf of Mexico
46 Reef Fish Shareholder's Alliance. For those of you who don't
47 know, I actually live up on Cape Cod and so I am very happy to
48 be here this week.

1
2 For Amendment 28, a lot of what I'm about to say is what I've
3 said before. We still don't believe it promotes conservation
4 and it does not stop recreational harvesting and it's not
5 economically justified.

6
7 We have heard a little bit this week about the MRIP calibration
8 results and how they may impact this discussion. There have
9 been some concerns voiced about fairness and what I see when I
10 look at the MRIP calibration results is that it actually shows
11 that the violations that were the foundation of the lawsuit are
12 even more egregious than we thought they were before and that's
13 unfair.

14
15 It shows that we could be looking at a much higher quota now
16 than the thirteen-plus that we're talking about, which would be
17 better for all. It shows that the recreational sector actually
18 exceeded their allocation, through no fault of their own, by
19 eighteen-million pounds over time and that the commercial
20 fishery was denied access to 51 percent of eighteen-million
21 pounds, or just over nine-million pounds of allocation. It's
22 about \$35 million. I would say that's unfair.

23
24 I would point to page 20 of the calibration report, where it
25 says that we recommend that the investigation continue on the
26 remaining two methods and it's possible that one of them will be
27 determined to be better in the future and I would say that it's
28 not fair to make major, sweeping, policy changes with this much
29 uncertainty.

30
31 By choosing any of the options but status quo, you are rewarding
32 overharvesting and we've heard this all week. That's unfair.
33 The more time we spend talking about Amendment 28, the longer it
34 takes to get a recreational private angler plan in place and the
35 longer that the private anglers are subject to a plan that
36 doesn't work for them and that's not fair and so we urge you to
37 change the preferred alternative tomorrow to status quo and
38 finish Amendment 28 and start working on a plan that works for
39 the private anglers.

40
41 You are working on one for the charter fleet and that's great
42 and so we hope you listen to your AP and keep moving that
43 forward. Let's do the same thing for the private anglers.

44
45 In terms of red snapper ABC, we are encouraged to see it
46 rebuilding, but we're a little discouraged to see that it might
47 drop off in the future. We urge the council to consider some
48 conservative ABC options tomorrow that provide stable or

1 measured continual increases and we want to try to avoid
2 declines in future yield, to the extent we can.

3
4 Gag, you're hearing a lot of fishermen talk about how they're
5 not seeing them and they're not out there. We think the
6 assessment is overly optimistic and we urge you to have
7 conservative options included in the April discussion and if I
8 may have ten more seconds, I would like to end on a positive
9 note.

10
11 The Coast Guard presentation that we saw yesterday was eye-
12 opening and we want to thank the Coast Guard for their hard
13 work. This impacts everybody in this room, whether you're
14 commercial, charter, private, or a seafood consumer, and we
15 strongly recommend that the council take a strong position on
16 this tomorrow and send a letter to Congress saying this is wrong
17 and this needs to be stopped and to increase their support of
18 the Coast Guard to let them do their job. Thank you very much
19 for the extra time.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Next we have Larry Huntley,
22 followed by Bill Kelly.

23
24 **MR. LARRY HUNTLEY:** Good afternoon. I am Larry Huntley from
25 Pensacola. I have been fishing in Florida's Atlantic and Gulf
26 waters since the 1950s and became interested in the science of
27 fisheries management during the last ten or so years.

28
29 I took a fisheries management class from Dr. Patterson six or
30 eight years ago and one of the first publications he recommended
31 was *Understanding Fisheries Management*. The first topic in the
32 introduction was titled "Whose Fish are They Anyway?"

33
34 Several statements from the paragraph have stayed with me. Fish
35 living in public waters are a common property resource. The
36 government has the responsibility of managing the fish for the
37 benefit of all citizens, even those who do not fish and so who
38 owns the fish? You do, along with 316 million citizens of the
39 United States.

40
41 A few years ago, I did a little informal research to determine
42 how many Floridians had saltwater fishing licenses and were
43 capable of catching their own red snapper. I came up with
44 approximately 17 percent. 83 percent depended on commercial
45 fishermen. The data used was before the most recent saltwater
46 licensing requirement.

47
48 I have a very small commercial red snapper quota and sell to

1 Maria's in Pensacola, a relatively small fish market, but when I
2 provide them with red snapper, they are sold in short order and
3 they commonly call me to ask when I'm going out again and their
4 clientele are generally average wage earners and they want
5 access to fresh, Gulf-caught red snapper. The large snapper are
6 sold to local restaurants and marketed as fresh catch of the
7 day.

8
9 Amendment 28, Preferred Alternative 5, would transfer some of
10 the commercial quota to the recreational sector. In fact, it
11 would reduce my quota by approximately 9 percent. The non-
12 fishing public would have access to nine fish instead of the
13 present ten.

14
15 I guess my concerns are who is looking out for the vast majority
16 of the Americans who do not fish, but enjoy access to those
17 fresh-caught red snapper and why can't the recreational sector
18 develop an effective management plan? In the last several days,
19 I have heard that the current allocation is not economically
20 efficient and a shift would increase the stability of the
21 recreational sector, but let's look briefly at the current
22 management plan.

23
24 The recreational sector's 2014 ACL was 5,390,000 pounds. A
25 buffer of 20 percent was applied to ensure no overfishing and
26 the ACT was 4,320,000 pounds. Recreational caught was 3,660,227
27 pounds, or 32 percent less than their ACL.

28
29 Under the current allocation, or Alternative 1, the recreational
30 could have increased their catch by 32 percent, 1,722,733
31 pounds, if they had a more efficient and effective fishery
32 management plan.

33
34 I have three recommendations. Please take into account the vast
35 number of Americans who do not fish, but enjoy fresh-caught red
36 snapper, work with the recreational sector to develop a plan
37 that allows them to catch the current 49 percent of their ACL,
38 and support Alternative 1 to Amendment 28. Thank you.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Huntley. Bill Kelly, followed
41 by Chad Wilbanks.

42
43 **MR. BILL KELLY:** Bill Kelly, Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's
44 Association. Mr. Chairman and members of the council, I just
45 want to thank you very much for your prompt response to our
46 request to address issues in the king mackerel gillnet fishery,
47 including a workshop and the opportunity for me to join in the
48 discussion this morning. I appreciate that, Dr. Dana.

1
2 We've made some substantial strides here in just a very short
3 period of time. Over the past couple of years, we have managed
4 to get 20B passed with that transit provision that increases the
5 efficiency of the operations and it also improves the quality of
6 the product that we harvest and so the lines of communication
7 have opened greatly with National Marine Fisheries Service and
8 with Dr. Branstetter and Sue Gerhart. We are most appreciative
9 of that. We have new actions in play for the upcoming season,
10 which is going to start in just about seven days here. Again,
11 thank you very much on that.

12
13 I want to give you an indication of some problems though, just
14 to put things in context for you. Just recently, one of our
15 stakeholders was fined. He returned to the dock with his
16 25,000-pound trip limit and he was 2,200 pounds over. He was
17 fined \$6,750 for that overage and it's the first resource
18 violation that he's had and he's been fishing for over thirty-
19 five years and he hasn't had one since.

20
21 We had another stakeholder that was over and rather than leave
22 fish out there, he called the legal department that he was
23 advised to contact regarding his overage and so forth and he
24 said, what do I do? Am I going to cut my net and leave it out
25 there? I can't do that and it would be the end of the fishery.

26
27 If I throw them over, that's against the law and what if I am
28 throwing them over and a law enforcement boat comes up? He was
29 told by that particular advisor -- He says, you don't have too
30 many choices. He said you've got to get rid of the fish or
31 you're going to get fined and he said just to try not to get
32 caught. That's not appropriate.

33
34 Anyway, that kind of puts things in context. We are really
35 appreciative though of the response that you've given us and
36 because it's Super Bowl weekend, I want to talk football with
37 you real quick and that is considering the size of these meeting
38 stadiums that we have now, can we get one of those wide screens
39 down on the fifty-yard line so that the cheap seats can read
40 what's going on? That would help and, also, Mr. Bowen, thank
41 you for being here from the South Atlantic Council.

42
43 You can see how effective and utilized this system is and if we
44 take this back to the South Atlantic Council, the power strips
45 and so forth really reduce the need and burden of carrying so
46 much paper product and stuff like that and we would surely like
47 to see that over on the east coast.

48

1 **MR. BOWEN:** Thank you, Bill, for your comment and I'm going to
2 take more than that back to the South Atlantic Council.

3
4 **MR. KELLY:** I bet you will. Unfortunately, I won't be here
5 tomorrow and if anyone has any last-minute questions regarding
6 our gillnet issues, I would be happy to answer them and if not,
7 thank you so very much.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Bill. Chad Wilbanks, followed by
10 Shane Cantrell.

11
12 **MR. CHAD WILBANKS:** Thank you. I am Chad Wilbanks and I'm with
13 the Gulf Coast Leadership Conference based in Austin, Texas and
14 I wanted to address you all a little bit about the severity of
15 illegal fishing by foreign fishermen.

16
17 Before I go much further, Lieutenant Commander Brand, your team
18 has done an outstanding job of bringing this issue to the
19 forefront and I think we ought to really congratulate the Coast
20 Guard, who are, in many ways, endangering their lives protecting
21 our sovereign waters out there, but let's take it into a little
22 bit of perspective.

23
24 We started this conference a little over a year ago to address
25 specifically illegal fishing by foreign vessels. In August, we
26 had a conference in Galveston and Harlon Pearce spoke at it and
27 Buddy Guindon was also there and Will Ward was one of our
28 presenters, as well as Captain Scott Hickman.

29
30 We had Chamber executives from Florida through Texas and we had
31 law enforcement from Florida through Texas and what we have and
32 what we're seeing is there is two main problems with illegal
33 fishing by foreign vessels. Number one, it damages our natural
34 resources.

35
36 Number two, it damages our economy and so the five Gulf Coast
37 States represents about \$13.7 billion that the fisheries
38 provide. It supports 168,000 jobs and so what we have now is
39 we're playing by the rules and they're not.

40
41 Congressman Randy Weber spoke at our conference and he said
42 this: We've got to level the playing field. They are taking
43 advantage of our waters and they're taking advantage of our
44 resources and the only way that we are going to win is to shut
45 them down.

46
47 The council asked yesterday, specifically to the Lieutenant
48 Commander, what is it that we can do and I don't think

1 resources, throwing money, will solve the problem. They would
2 like to have more resources, but what we need to have is
3 stronger legislation. We need to have new legislation in
4 Congress.

5
6 I would encourage the council, if you want a plan of action, is
7 to direct staff to come up with a resolution calling on tougher
8 laws. Otherwise, we're going to have the same problem that
9 we're seeing now. They are going to come across our border, our
10 coastal borders, and they're going to fish our fish and we're
11 going to slap them on the wrist and we're going to feed them and
12 we're going to house them and we're going to put them in a nice
13 car and take them across the border and we're going to do it
14 again and again and again.

15
16 With that being said, I want to thank you all for your time and
17 I thank you for the opportunity to be here and I am happy to
18 take any questions in the last thirty seconds that I have.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Chad. We do have some questions.

21
22 **MR. PEARCE:** Thanks for your comments and just in sort of answer
23 to your questions, I met with Tracy from National Marine
24 Fisheries Service yesterday and they're going to meet with the
25 enforcement people with the Coast Guard and come back to this
26 council at the next meeting of what we as a council can do to
27 help solve those problems with the fish that's being thrown away
28 and with the gear that's being destroyed and hopefully a way to
29 prosecute with U.S. law the fishermen that we catch in U.S.
30 waters and so we're already beginning to work that process and
31 hopefully they will come back to us at the next meeting and
32 Tracy will let us know what we can or can't do as a council.

33
34 **MR. WILBANKS:** Mr. Pearce, I appreciate those comments. Thank
35 you. Thanks, council members.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Chad. Shane Cantrell, followed by
38 Chad Hanson.

39
40 **MR. SHANE CANTRELL:** Good afternoon. I am Shane Cantrell, the
41 Executive Director of the Charter Fishermen's Association. I
42 want to echo what Mr. Wilbanks just said. This illegal fishing
43 is a serious problem, especially off of Texas.

44
45 A lot of our members have been discussing this and bringing it
46 to our attention and we've brought it to the council a few times
47 and I'm glad to see that the Coast Guard is taking action on
48 this and we've got some traction.

1
2 Just like Chad said, it's an issue that needs to be handled in
3 Congress and with the support of the council, this is something
4 that everybody can get behind. There's not a lot of arguments
5 that this is a serious problem and so I would like to see you
6 all put some language together and get that moving up the chain
7 so we can get that enforcement. Like he said, resources will be
8 helpful, but the most important part is the legislation.

9
10 I thank the council for moving forward with Amendment 40. It's
11 taken us a long time to get there and we've got a comment period
12 open now and I'm looking forward to ending that and getting on
13 to the next step, which would be moving forward with the charter
14 for-hire management plan.

15
16 I am a member of the charter for-hire management AP. It's a
17 very vast group of stakeholders there from the charter boat
18 industry. I am rather impressed that we were able to agree on
19 as many things as we did. It's a very, very diverse group and I
20 was impressed with the motions that came out of it and the ideas
21 that we did agree on and decided to move forward with. I would
22 like to see the council reconvene that AP as soon as possible
23 and move forward with recommendations from that AP, specifically
24 developing a charter for-hire management plan with the options
25 agreed upon by that AP.

26
27 I would like to see the federally-permitted charter boats
28 removed completely from Amendment 39. This seems like a dead
29 end, especially for the charter boats. I don't see how the
30 charter boats fit into this anymore. This has become a real
31 issue in the state water fisheries and each independent state
32 really places a burden on our industry with 30B in place.

33
34 We have federal permits and we need to continue under federal
35 management. The private anglers seem well suited for regional
36 management and the states are best equipped to deal with their
37 private anglers.

38
39 For Amendment 28, I support Alternative 1, no action. We have
40 revisited this allocation issue and it's time to put it to rest
41 and move forward with some real-time data collection and real
42 solutions for the charter boat industry.

43
44 I prefer a thirty-four-inch fork length for greater amberjack
45 and getting the ball rolling in this charter for-hire management
46 plan. We've got to get it done now. We are facing a sunset and
47 this is the time to act.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Shane. Shane, we have one question
2 for you from Mr. Boyd.
3

4 **MR. BOYD:** Shane, I don't think I can quote you, but I think you
5 said something like the states should not have any jurisdiction
6 over the charter for-hire fleet and take it out of Amendment 39?
7

8 **MR. CANTRELL:** I would like to see the federally-permitted
9 charter vessels removed from Amendment 39. I feel like where we
10 are federally-permitted vessels that we should be dealing with
11 the federally-managed system.
12

13 The private anglers, there is a vast number of them and they
14 could be handled in many different ways. I think it's something
15 -- Some data collection system, similar to iSnapper, from Dr.
16 Stunz, would be excellent to equip them.
17

18 **MR. BOYD:** I have a question for you. The private recreational
19 fisherman buys a license in a state to go fishing and your boat
20 is registered in the state. All of them are. You are moored in
21 the state.
22

23 **MR. CANTRELL:** Yes, sir.
24

25 **MR. BOYD:** They climb on your boat in a state.
26

27 **MR. CANTRELL:** Yes, sir.
28

29 **MR. BOYD:** You traverse out to federal waters and then you come
30 back and you land in a state.
31

32 **MR. CANTRELL:** Yes, sir.
33

34 **MR. BOYD:** You moor in a state that night and you go home in a
35 state that night and why wouldn't the state have some reason to
36 think that they have influence over your business in some way?
37

38 **MR. CANTRELL:** Because I am addressing five states that have
39 time and again taken action against the charter boat industry.
40 Every time you open a state water season, it pulls fish away
41 from the charter boat industry.
42

43 We've got a great example with the triggerfish and we can talk
44 about something other than red snapper for a change.
45 Triggerfish season, the State of Florida is open 365 days a year
46 and we're shutting it down on February 7, if I'm not mistaken.
47 That causes a lot of outcry and it just becomes an issue here.
48

1 When we go to a state water season in the State of Texas, it
2 doesn't cost a lot of days, but it costs days and those are days
3 that just go to the private anglers. We are playing favorites
4 here in our management that we're doing a state water execution
5 of our fisheries and blaming the federal government for it and
6 that's no way to be addressing our fisheries.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have Chad Hanson, followed by Bobby Kelly.

9
10 **MR. CHAD HANSON:** Good afternoon, council members and Chairman
11 Anson. My name is Chad Hanson with the Pew Charitable Trust and
12 thanks for the opportunity today to speak to you about gag and
13 red snapper.

14
15 Thanks to the hard work of many in this room, the red snapper
16 population continues to recover, as evidenced by the most recent
17 stock assessment. However, recreational management strategies
18 need to better match effort and participation to the
19 availability of a growing red snapper stock.

20
21 We support the efforts to improve tracking and accountability of
22 each component of this fishery while staying the course to fully
23 rebuild the species and to ensure its long-term sustainability.
24 To that end, we encourage the council to keep these goals front
25 and center as you continue to explore regional management of the
26 private recreational component through Amendment 39.

27
28 New data programs run by the states and through MRIP aim to
29 improve red snapper catch and effort estimates and though we
30 would like to see more uniformity in these programs, they have
31 the potential to provide useful information to facilitate
32 private recreational and regional management of red snapper with
33 stronger monitoring and accountability.

34
35 We also support initiation of a plan amendment to develop
36 management strategies in line with the recommendations of the Ad
37 Hoc Red Snapper Advisory Panel established at your October
38 meeting. This AP also recommended moving forward with an
39 electronic monitoring and reporting program for the charter for-
40 hire fishermen.

41
42 Similarly, we support the development of an amendment that would
43 require electronic logbooks for the charter for-hire vessels and
44 this amendment should incorporate the recommendations made by
45 the joint technical committee in their recently released report.

46
47 However, we have serious concerns with the proposal to change
48 the rebuilding goal for the red snapper population. If you are

1 going to move the goal post, if you will, for what it means to
2 restore a species that has suffered from decades of overfishing,
3 it is imperative that it's based upon solid scientific
4 rationale.

5
6 Twice you have requested the SSC weigh in on this idea and both
7 times they have clearly recommended that you maintain the
8 rebuilding goal you have. If changes are to be made, the SSC
9 suggested you also consider increasing the spawning potential
10 ratio and manage red snapper more conservatively, as is done for
11 many other long-lived species in the region.

12
13 Not only is this in line with the recommendations made by your
14 science advisors, it is also required in order to comply with
15 federal law, by analyzing a full range of options.

16
17 We would also like to discuss gag management for a second. The
18 recent stock assessment had a great deal of uncertainty and
19 showed the population was only just above a threshold at which
20 it would be deemed overfished.

21
22 The percentage of males in the population remains at a
23 historically low level, which likely limits gag's reproductive
24 capacity. In addition, the recruitment of juvenile gag was at
25 record lows in recent years and for all these reasons, we urge
26 the council to set catch limits close to or at the current
27 level, to ensure this population can weather all these threats
28 and maintain a sustainable fishery for the years to come.

29
30 I also want to point out we are encouraged that an ecosystem
31 model developed by scientists at FWRI was used to reexamine the
32 impact of red tide on the gag population and resulted in a more
33 informed SSC decision on ABC recommendations.

34
35 In this case, factoring in the ecosystem considerations could
36 allow for increased fishing opportunities. We recommend the
37 council to continue pursuing the use of these types of tools to
38 build towards an ecosystem approach to fisheries management and
39 one way to continue moving in this direction is to reconvene the
40 SSC working group that was established at the August meeting, to
41 finalize their work on goals and objectives that can guide the
42 council progress towards this end. Thank you very much for the
43 opportunity.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Chad. Next up, we have Bobby Kelly,
46 followed by Skipper Thierry.

47
48 **MR. BOBBY KELLY:** My name is Bobby Kelly and I own and operate

1 two charter boats out of Orange Beach, Alabama. I want to thank
2 the ladies and gentlemen of the Gulf Council for allowing me
3 this opportunity to address you once again.

4
5 First off, I would like to thank you for passing Amendment 40,
6 or at least ten of you anyway. This was not an easy task and
7 myself and others realize the hard work that went into its
8 passing and with that being said, there's been a lot of talk
9 about implementing the FMP and two to three years is not an
10 acceptable timeline to implement an FMP for the charter for-hire
11 fleet.

12
13 The CFA management plan that you have before you outlines our
14 needs and I urge you to approve it. Our hardworking men on the
15 Advisory Panel for Red Snapper are more than willing to put in
16 the hard work into the process and have already shown their
17 forward-thinking and I ask you to give these fishermen a chance
18 to reconvene sooner rather than later.

19
20 I am in no way in favor of Amendment 28 and I feel that the
21 council should not waste any more of their precious time in
22 discussing this. You will be wasting these fish by taking them
23 from an accountable fishery and throwing them into a bottomless
24 pit.

25
26 I feel that the amberjack size limit should not be anything more
27 than thirty-four inches and even this increase is detrimental to
28 our inshore fishery, but we realize it's a change that must be
29 made.

30
31 I encourage the council in making progress on Amendment 39.
32 However, I do not believe that the charter for-hire fleet is --
33 I do believe that the charter for-hire fleet is already well
34 ahead on implementing the FMP and, therefore, I feel like they
35 should be left out of any state management plan.

36
37 I want to apologize to the Gulf Council wholeheartedly. I had a
38 charter on January 6 and I had nine people onboard my vessel and
39 we caught eighteen triggerfish and apparently we caught the
40 entire TAC. Thanks, guys.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Bobby. Skipper Thierry, followed by
43 Mike Thierry.

44
45 **MR. SKIPPER THIERRY:** Good afternoon. I am Skipper Thierry and
46 I have a headboat out of Dauphin Island, Alabama. I've been
47 there for about ten years with The Escape and I would like to
48 thank you all for the passage of Amendment 40. It was a huge

1 step for us and it's given us hope and we just look forward to
2 moving ahead in our industry.

3
4 I was in the Headboat Collaborative last year and I'm excited to
5 be in it again in 2015. The main problem with the Collaborative
6 is that the EFP expires at the end of this year. To my
7 knowledge, all the Collaborative has met and exceeded all
8 expectations.

9
10 Our reporting was timely and accurate and we stayed within our
11 quota and we were able to maximize our days at sea. I myself, I
12 imposed a one fish bag limit on my boat, to stretch my fish out
13 to make them last longer. Some operators did not. That was
14 their choice and we were each able to tailor the trips to meet
15 our individual needs.

16
17 Again, if there has been a down side to the Collaborative, I'm
18 not aware of it. The system works for the headboats and I would
19 ask this council to begin the process of making this a fisheries
20 management plan instead of just an EFP.

21
22 Why reinvent the wheel when this is proven? Moving ahead with
23 this plan can make our industry stable and scrapping it will
24 leave us floundering for several more years, unable to make
25 business plans or investments in our boats or equipment.

26
27 Also, please move forward with a charter for-hire management
28 plan, a fair and equitable plan among all permit holders. There
29 should be no fish lords under the plan. Fleet reduction
30 shouldn't occur, but I really believe that derby fishing could
31 end. Charter for-hire could be 100 percent accountable. The
32 CFA plan I'm sure is not perfect, but it seems like something we
33 could really build on and move forward with.

34
35 The time is now. Everybody has talked about the timeline of two
36 to three years and we don't have time. Let's not make this
37 politics and let's do what's best for the fish and for the guys
38 that count on them year in and year out.

39
40 I am against any reallocation from a sector that's accountable
41 and stable to a sector whose future is so uncertain. Also, I am
42 for a thirty-four-inch size limit, if that maximizes our season
43 and is the best thing for the fish, to let them spawn a few
44 times. I would like to see the council create an advisory panel
45 of headboat operators to assist in moving forward with a
46 headboat management plan. Thanks for your time.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Skipper. Mike Thierry, followed by

1 Jason Delacruz.

2
3 **MR. MIKE THIERRY:** Thank you, all. I am Captain Mike Thierry
4 from Dauphin Island, Alabama. I've been charter fishing for
5 over forty-five years from that port and I would like to thank
6 the council for passing Amendment 40.

7
8 I feel very strongly that Amendment 40 is a step in the right
9 direction for the charter industry and the red snapper fishery
10 as a whole. For the first time in a long time, I feel positive
11 about our industry and I feel like we're finally going
12 somewhere, instead of backing up, like we've done for so many
13 years.

14
15 This amendment will ensure our industry and the many
16 recreational fishermen who fish on our boats continued access to
17 this fishery and also it will allow for much needed stability
18 and accountability for charter boats. Again, thank you for
19 this.

20
21 Yesterday and today, there was discussion on bag limits and
22 seasons and this state wanted that and is this good for you and
23 is this good for you and you know different limits and seasons -
24 - You know, one size does not fit all and that's one thing why
25 the Headboat Collaborative has been so good.

26
27 Each individual in there has been able to do what they feel is
28 best for their business with these fish and I would like to see
29 a plan like this in the charter industry. It works and it's
30 proven to work and we much need it.

31
32 You know I would like to see the thirty-four inches on amberjack
33 and I'm fine with those. That's going to cut back on some
34 catch, but we understand that that's what it's going to take
35 hopefully to rebuild this fishery and I believe that's all I
36 have to say and thank you.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right, Mike, and thank you. Jason
39 Delacruz, followed by Tracy Redding.

40
41 **MR. JASON DELACRUZ:** How are you doing and thank you very much.
42 I'm Jason Delacruz and I'm Vice President of the Reef Fish
43 Shareholder's Alliance and owner of a couple of companies and
44 actually both count on both sectors here.

45
46 I will go through the laundry list of things. As far as
47 amberjack, my commercial fishermen that are amberjack fishermen
48 want to see a thousand-pound trip limit. If we're going to keep

1 managing it in an inferior way, then at least let's try to
2 stretch it out so the fish can have a steadier pace.

3
4 Some of the charter boat guys that fish at my dock, they said
5 they're okay with the thirty-four inches as long as we can keep
6 the closed season where it is right now and so they're content
7 with that.

8
9 As far as Amendment 28, everybody clearly knows our opinions on
10 that and it just doesn't make any sense to do this reallocation
11 and put it in a system that's just not going to solve any
12 problems.

13
14 I think I'm going to take a chance here and stand up on my
15 soapbox and say that I think it's really -- I am really getting
16 agitated with the fact that we have people that come to the
17 podium and say that they're looking for you guys to come up with
18 a solution to the recreational challenges. It's their fault.

19
20 They are the advocates for the recreational fishermen and if
21 they're going to advocate, they need to come up with solutions
22 and help convince the people that these are the best choices
23 they have and then bring them back to you so that you guys can
24 put them in a rule process. People come to this podium and sit
25 here and say it's your fault and it's your fault and it's not
26 your fault.

27
28 We solved our problems in the commercial fishery by coming up
29 with solutions that we thought were best and we brought it and
30 worked through the process. It's time for them to do it and
31 this idea that somebody is -- That it's not their responsibility
32 is grossly inaccurate.

33
34 Unfortunately, in their positions, it does them no good to solve
35 their problem, because then they don't have an advocacy point.
36 If they solve the problem, then it gets a little less
37 complicated for them, I guess, and maybe that's no good for
38 business and I don't know, but I am really tired of hearing
39 people come to this podium and say you guys fix our problem.
40 No, it's everybody's responsibility to fix their own problems.

41
42 They need to come up with a plan, a tag system or something,
43 that everybody kind of agrees on and work with their memberships
44 and come back to this organization and say this is what we like
45 and work through the process. Thank you.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Jason. Tracy Redding, followed by
48 another attempt to see if John Braswell is here.

1
2 **MS. TRACY REDDING:** Thank you and my name is Tracy Redding and I
3 own and operate AAA Charters for Alabama Gulf Coast charter
4 boats. First of all, I would like to thank the council for the
5 improvements that you've made in the technology over the last
6 few years and being able to listen to this council meeting at
7 any time through the internet or even through the telephone is
8 huge.

9
10 As a small business owner, I was crushed by the oil spill and
11 I've spent almost four years working on those claims and
12 financially it hasn't been possible to travel across the coast
13 the way I used to and so thank you for that and thank you for
14 putting the advisory panels and that on the web as well. It's
15 really, really useful.

16
17 First of all, Amendment 28, please, as people who try to
18 conserve our resources, let's not kill even one more tree
19 printing that again. The fact that it's Amendment 28 and we're
20 on Amendment 40 should say something. Taking any fish from a
21 sector that has been accountable and has stayed under the quota
22 and switching it to the other sector is absurd. I would like to
23 see you take no action and put it to bed, at rest.

24
25 On Amendment 40, thank you. Sector separation is something that
26 I was taking about since 2007 and there have not been very many
27 steps and actual movement. That's one of the few and so to be
28 able to come back and say thank you for passing that and I'm
29 really waiting for the Secretary of Commerce to go ahead and put
30 that in place, which brings me to one fish, two fish.

31
32 Personally, one fish. I heard several people complain that they
33 couldn't take out church groups or other groups if they only
34 could catch one fish and, well, I'm going to agree with Bob
35 Zales for maybe the first time ever. I can sell one fish. It's
36 a lot harder to sell no fish.

37
38 I think what that could do in the charter industry is very, very
39 important and I believe at least our local Headboat
40 Collaborative would probably adjust to one fish as well,
41 considering that their quota has probably shrunk from how many
42 fish they can land. That would help everybody.

43
44 The other items that I was giving public testimony about back in
45 2006 and 2007 are the same, real-time electronic logbooks. To
46 not have that in place at this time is absurd to me and VMS on
47 the charter boats. That technology is there and you have
48 captains that have been begging for it for years.

1
2 I would also like to commend the State of Alabama for putting in
3 an electronic logbook program in a lot less time since 2007,
4 since we've been talking about it. They got it up and running
5 and, from my understanding, got about 85 percent compliance from
6 the charter boat fleet in the first year. That's impressive.

7
8 I will go with whichever and if it be all the charter boats
9 throughout the Gulf can come together with a plan, using
10 electronic logbooks and real-time data and VMS, great. If they
11 are going to fight and if the State of Alabama can come up with
12 a plan for our charter boats quicker, I will go that route.
13 Thank you for your time.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Tracy. Last call again for John
16 Braswell. That concludes our public testimony for this evening
17 and we will recess until 8:30 tomorrow morning. Thank you.

18
19 (Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 5:30 p.m., January 28,
20 2015.)

21
22 - - -

23
24 January 29, 2015

25
26 THURSDAY MORNING SESSION

27
28 - - -

29
30 The Full Council of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management
31 Council reconvened at the Grand Hotel Marriott, Point Clear,
32 Alabama, Thursday morning, January 29, 2015, and was called to
33 order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairman Kevin Anson.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** That will take us to Committee Reports and, Mr.
36 Gregory, you had a couple of comments?

37
38 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For those
39 of you that are not committee chairs, you may not be aware that
40 we are doing what we can to shorten the committee reports, to
41 give you all more time for discussion.

42
43 We have verbatim minutes of all the committees that will come
44 out and, at the request of Mr. Diaz, we are starting to mail
45 those to the council as we get them, to give you sufficient time
46 to read them before the meeting, instead of hitting you with
47 them all at once two weeks before the meeting.

48

1 The committee reports you will get today are abbreviated and let
2 me know if there's any problems with that approach. We're
3 trying to get these to our committee chairs as quick as
4 possible. Thank you very much.

5
6 One other thing I was talking with Chairman Anson about is you
7 might recall in the AP and SSC Selection document, when we got
8 to the point in the document where staff thought there was a
9 need for a committee decision or a council decision, we put in
10 there "draft motion" and that was not an attempt to put words in
11 your mouth, but rather to highlight that a decision needed to be
12 made.

13
14 If in doing documents that are unlike plan amendments, where
15 there is no clear alternative to select, if you elect staff to
16 be a little more proactive to put a highlight that says a
17 decision needs to be made here or even to draft some motion
18 language, like I did in that report, just let us know. We can
19 do that and be a little more proactive that way.

20
21 The other thing is if we don't do something like that, if you
22 have motions you want to make, I encourage you to get with the
23 staff ahead of time and let them help you write it and we can
24 get it to the administrative staff and they can display it on
25 the screen right away and we might save some time in discussion,
26 so we don't have to craft a motion and wordsmith it so much.
27 Thank you very much.

28
29 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think those are good points, Mr. Gregory, and I
30 think anything staff can do to help structure the decision
31 making process and help us get to decisions and thought-out,
32 coherent motions, rather than us struggling here to make them on
33 the fly, is a positive thing, because we are -- I think all of
34 us agree that we're sometimes struggling to make decisions and I
35 think the more we can structure it so there's a logical thought
36 process that gets you to a decision point, I think that's a good
37 thing for the council.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I would just add that there would be some
40 constraint, if you want to call it that, as far as making
41 preferreds, obviously. I think you would leave that up to the
42 council, but as the example that you just mentioned regarding
43 the SSC selection and appointments and how it's structured
44 there, particularly in that document. I mean they're not very
45 contentious decisions that could be made in that document, but
46 certainly I think, as Dr. Crabtree stated, it would be very
47 helpful in being more efficient, I think, during our
48 deliberations to have those in there. I don't see anybody

1 waving their hand or shaking their head that that would be
2 inappropriate and so I think you and staff have direction to go
3 ahead and do that for future documents.

4
5 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Thank you.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Again, moving into Committee
8 Reports, we have Data Collection, Tab E, and Mr. Pearce.

9
10 **MR. PEARCE:** Excuse me, Mr. Chairman. I thought we were going
11 to go to Reef Fish, but I'm ready and it's not a problem.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Excuse me. I apologize. I did skip that.
14 Sorry. Thank you. It seems like Reef Fish is always last or
15 something in my mind and so, Mr. Greene, are you ready?

16
17 **COMMITTEE REPORTS**
18 **REEF FISH MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

19
20 **MR. GREENE:** Yes, sir. I am ready. Red Snapper Update
21 Assessment, Shannon Calay reviewed the red snapper update
22 assessment and Will Patterson summarized the SSC recommendations
23 for OFL and ABC, Tab B, Number 4.

24
25 Steven Atran reported the results of the ACL/ACT control rule,
26 which recommend an ACT buffer of 19 percent for the recreational
27 sector and zero percent for the commercial sector, Tab B, Number
28 5(a) and 5(b). Dr. Calay's presentation included a
29 recalculation of ABCs using the SSC's input parameters and
30 provisional 2014 recreational landings.

31
32 Mara Levy advised that the SSC would need to review and approve
33 the recalculated ABCs with the provisional landings before the
34 council could establish ACLs and ACTs based on them. In order
35 to have the new ACLs and ACTs implemented by June 1, the SSC
36 would need to meet in February and a special council meeting via
37 conference call or webinar to take final action would be needed
38 by March 1.

39
40 **By a vote of seven to zero, the committee recommends, and I so**
41 **move, to ask staff to prepare a framework action to increase the**
42 **ACL for red snapper based on the ABC recommendations by the SSC,**
43 **using the provisional 2014 estimates.**

44
45 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a committee motion and can we have that
46 up on the screen, please, the center screen? Again, the motion
47 is to ask staff to prepare a framework action to increase the
48 ACL for red snapper based on the ABC recommendations by the SSC,

1 using the provisional 2014 estimates. Any discussion on the
2 motion? **All those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye;**
3 **all opposed like sign. The motion carries.**

4
5 **MR. GREENE:** Committee members indicated that if the SSC does
6 not approve the provisional ABCs, staff should proceed with
7 developing the framework action using the SSC-approved ABCs.

8
9 Reevaluation of Gag OFL and ABC for 2015 and 2016, Will
10 Patterson reviewed an analysis by David Chagaris of Florida FWC
11 which indicated that the 2014 red tide event only had 4 to 7
12 percent of the mortality relative to the 2005 event.

13
14 Consequently, the SSC revised its OFL and ABC projections, which
15 earlier had assumed that the 2014 event equaled the impact of
16 the 2005 event. Committee members observed that if the ACL and
17 ACT are increased, the recreational sector might not be able to
18 catch their allocation unless the July 1 season opening date is
19 moved to earlier in the year.

20
21 **By a vote of seven to zero, the committee recommends, and I so**
22 **move, to direct staff to begin a framework amendment to adjust**
23 **ACL/ACT and the season options for gag.**

24
25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's a committee motion and it's up on the
26 screen to direct staff to begin a framework amendment to address
27 ACL/ACT and the season options for gag. Is there any discussion
28 on the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? The motion**
29 **carries.**

30
31 **MR. GREENE:** Draft Framework Action for Greater Amberjack, Will
32 Patterson reviewed the analysis by Nancie Cummings on the
33 projected rebuilding times under the ACL options in the draft
34 greater amberjack framework action.

35
36 He noted that the SSC deemed the analysis sufficient to inform
37 management actions by the Gulf Council. John Froeschke then
38 reviewed the actions and options in the options paper for the
39 greater amberjack framework action, Tab B, Number 7.

40
41 Action 1, Modifications to the Greater Amberjack Annual Catch
42 Limits and Annual Catch Targets, committee members noted that
43 suboptions Options 2a and 3a that would not use an ACT buffer
44 would not be considered by the council. **Without opposition, the**
45 **committee recommends, and I so move, in Action 1 to remove**
46 **suboptions 2(a) and 3(a) to considered but rejected. Suboption**
47 **a is no ACT buffer, i.e., ABC equals ACL equals ACT; note this**
48 **option would require modification of the accountability**

1 **measures.**

2
3 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a committee motion and is there any
4 discussion on the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? The**
5 **motion carries.**

6
7 **MR. GREENE:** The committee made no motions regarding Action 2.1,
8 Modify the Recreational Minimum Size Limit for Greater
9 Amberjack, or Action 2.2, Modify the Recreational Closed Seasons
10 for Greater Amberjack.

11
12 **DR. CRABTREE:** I guess we heard a lot of discussion about the
13 minimum size limit and it seemed to me there was close to a
14 consensus about thirty-four inches. I know this is just an
15 options paper and so I don't know if we wanted to choose a
16 preferred now or come back in. I guess they will bring a public
17 hearing draft to us at the next council meeting would be the
18 plan and we could do that then.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes, it sounds like that staff will be doing
21 that for the next meeting.

22
23 **DR. JOHN FROESCHKE:** We plan to bring a completed draft. It's a
24 framework action though and so I don't think we had planned to
25 go to public hearing, unless you have a different plan.

26
27 **DR. CRABTREE:** So you would bring a completed document back to
28 us at the next meeting and we would choose our preferreds there
29 and have public testimony at that meeting and then move on? All
30 right.

31
32 **MR. FISCHER:** If that's the direction to get completion from the
33 document on the modifying the recreational closed seasons, I
34 would like to see an option that closes the spawning season with
35 the increase to thirty-four inches and then see where we are.
36 Let's take care of the biologicals first and so let's close the
37 spawning and raise the size to where we're harvesting mature
38 fish.

39
40 Now, we still might be short and have to close some other part
41 of the year, but let's take care of the biologicals first and
42 then look at options, if we have to make any further closures,
43 and the existing paper didn't give us a whole slate of options
44 that included the spawning season and then other months.

45
46 **MR. GREENE:** I guess this question would be for Dr. Crabtree.
47 Looking at the season we had last year with amberjack and the
48 season closing in August, is there any potential that we could

1 move an increase in size limit faster, perhaps for this year,
2 than going through the options paper route, being that there
3 seemed to be a consensus of support for that? Is there any
4 possibility to extend the length of amberjack for this coming
5 season?
6

7 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think, Johnny, from what I've heard, if they
8 can finish this document and bring it to us, we could take final
9 action at the next council meeting. It's really going to depend
10 if we start adding things or messing with it, but I don't think
11 there's any way faster than trying to get the final action at
12 the next meeting.
13

14 **MR. GREENE:** That would be my choice as well. I mean I think
15 that we're down to just a couple of different lengths. I think
16 there has been testimony for thirty-four and thirty-six inches
17 and so I don't think we would have to analyze any of the smaller
18 ones. Then perhaps, to Mr. Fischer's point, the spring season
19 for the biology and then the current summer season. Perhaps
20 that would streamline the process.
21

22 **MR. FISCHER:** We had discussion, and especially if we take final
23 action at the next meeting, but I think we had discussion of
24 getting the scientists cited most frequently, Murie and Parkyn,
25 at the meeting to explain some of the amberjack biologicals, but
26 I don't remember specifically what it was to discuss. It may
27 have had to clarify spawning season and it may have had to
28 clarify something, but I know it was brought up in discussion.
29

30 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Myron, I guess you had mentioned about an
31 option for the spawning season closure and there is a table in
32 there that kind of gives some various season scenarios, buffer
33 scenarios and such. It wasn't satisfactory? It sounds like you
34 might need to talk about that and maybe we might need a motion,
35 I guess, to instruct staff to include that for the next version,
36 if that's in fact what you want to do, or can we just do it?
37 How do you feel about that, Doug?
38

39 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I mean either approach is fine.
40

41 **MR. FISCHER:** Just so Doug and staff understood where I was
42 coming from is close the established spawning season and maybe
43 that's what we were going to consult Murie and Parkyn on, but
44 close the spawning season and the increase in size limit and see
45 how many days we can fish or see how many days we can't fish.
46 Then look into other avenues of closure that might increase
47 days.
48

1 **DR. STEVE BRANSTETTER:** Myron, you might want to look at
2 Amendment 35, because we did look at different closure seasons
3 and the problem with amberjack is it's such a dome-shaped catch
4 curve that I think the bang for your buck was so low on the
5 spawning season was why it was bypassed last time, but that
6 would give you an idea of where you're trying to go if you look
7 at 35.

8
9 **MR. FISCHER:** Right and my issue of the closure of the spawning
10 season had nothing to do with bang for the buck to extend the
11 season. It was if there was -- I think some of the other reason
12 we talked about getting the authorities to speak was that there
13 seems to now be proof of aggregations and anything that makes it
14 easier to harvest the fish during the spawning season I would
15 like to see protected.

16
17 I know you won't get a lot of bang for the buck, but you will
18 down the road with SPR if you protect the spawning fish. I
19 would just like to see other options that would close that and I
20 would like to see it open through the summer and into the fall,
21 if that were possible. That's what we would be seeking.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I think staff heard that and so they will try
24 to amend the document to include that information for the next
25 version.

26
27 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Just for your information, in Table 2.2.2, the
28 season lengths and things are in there for the various closed
29 seasons that are options that are currently in the document and
30 that includes both the March to May spawning closure that you're
31 talking about and if you wanted to look at the effect of that on
32 projected days compared to what we currently are doing.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right and so there is that range of
35 spawning seasons and so I don't know, Myron, and, again, I
36 thought it was referenced in the table and covered some of that.

37
38 **MR. FISCHER:** I will send Doug and I will send staff -- I wanted
39 to see dates that -- It does, but when you look at the spawning
40 closure, it also closed November and I wanted to see it with
41 November open, because we have a tuna fishery in November and
42 when they strike out on tuna, they would really like something
43 to fall back on, on amberjack, and that's the messages we're
44 getting. It was to keep that November timeframe, that October
45 and November, open.

46
47 **DR. FROESCHKE:** One of the great things that the Regional Office
48 has done is they've made the decision tools and things that I

1 think they're going to update and we can send you those, but it
2 would also allow you to explore those kinds of options until
3 your heart is content on the fly and we could do that and so I
4 think that's a good idea.

5

6 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you. Go ahead, Mr. Greene.

7

8 **MR. GREENE:** Committee members noted that the trip limits are in
9 whole weight, but commercial fishermen land greater amberjack
10 gutted. This creates confusion as to what the allowed landing
11 weight actually is.

12

13 It was explained that the assessment uses whole weights and ABCs
14 are expressed in whole weights. The committee passed a motion
15 that all whole weights for trip limits in Action 3 in the
16 Amberjack Framework Document be specified as gutted weight.

17

18 **By a vote of eight to zero, the committee recommends, and I so
19 move, in Action 3 to specify trip limit in pounds gutted weight
20 and include whole weight in parentheses for each option.**

21

22 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's a committee motion. Any discussion on the
23 motion? **Any opposition to the motion? The motion carries.**

24

25 **MR. GREENE:** Options Paper to Update Minimum Stock Size Threshold
26 for Reef Fish Stocks with Low Natural Mortality, staff reviewed
27 the actions and alternatives in the options paper to set minimum
28 stock size thresholds for reef fish stocks with low natural
29 mortality.

30

31 It was noted that at MSST equals 50 percent of BMSY, it was
32 likely that snapper would no longer be overfished, although it
33 would still be in a rebuilding plan. The framework action also
34 includes an action to set a default MSST for all reef fish
35 stocks not affected by Action 1.

36

37 A suggestion was made to allow for exceptions to the default
38 MSST in Action 2. Mr. Atran stated that staff will develop the
39 options paper into a draft framework action for consideration at
40 a subsequent council meeting.

41

42 Red Snapper Poaching by Mexican Lanchas, after an introduction
43 by Captain Joe Hester, Lieutenant Commander Jason Brand and
44 Lieutenant Beth Denicola reviewed an analysis of incursions into
45 U.S. waters off of Texas by Mexican lanchas.

46

47 These vessels typically target red snapper and sharks using
48 longlines and gillnets. Detected incursions and seizures

1 increased over 70 percent since 2008. About 20 percent of the
2 detected incursions were seized.

3
4 When a lancha is seized, the gear and catch are seized, the
5 vessel is destroyed, and the crew is deported back to Mexico.
6 An estimated 1,525,715 pounds of red snapper were poached from
7 U.S. waters by Mexican lanchas over the past two years.

8
9 An impact analysis model indicates that the Coast Guard may be
10 detecting only about 12 percent to 18 percent of the incursions.
11 A committee member suggested making these illegal harvest
12 estimates available to the stock assessment scientists to
13 incorporate into future assessments.

14
15 **MR. PEARCE:** I am not sure how I should proceed with this and I
16 don't think we need a motion or a letter or anything at this
17 time, but I would sure like Jason and Tracy to come back to us
18 at the next meeting and let us know how we as a council can help
19 them stop throwing these fish away or destroying these vessels
20 and maybe using them for some good purpose or whatever or how we
21 can help them possibly prosecute these illegal fishermen for
22 U.S. law.

23
24 I don't think I'm ready to do anything now, but I would sure
25 like for them to come back to us at the next meeting and tell us
26 how this council can help them or what we can do as individuals
27 to try and solve this problem a little more than we have in the
28 past.

29
30 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Mr. Pearce, Jason and I were
31 talking about that this morning. The council cannot write a
32 letter to Congress and request anything in particular. What we
33 can do, if some language is provided to us, the next time
34 Congress asks us to comment on the Magnuson Act, that could be
35 one of the things we suggest to them in response to their
36 request for input from us.

37
38 **MR. PEARCE:** I understand and I just think that no action is the
39 wrong thing to take, for any of us as individuals even, and it's
40 clear that we need to try to help the Coast Guard do their job
41 in a better way and help -- All the hard work we do with this
42 council to preserve the red snapper and we're watching this
43 happen and it affects our fishermen and it affects our states
44 and so I think we have to figure out a better way for the Coast
45 Guard and help them solve this problem and that's all and if
46 there's any way we can do it, Jason, I would like to know, as an
47 individual if we went away from the Magnuson Act, if there's a
48 way to change that or work with that, but that's coming up in

1 this session, the Magnuson Act, and so whatever we can do,
2 because we've got to change what's happening.

3
4 **LCDR BRAND:** Thank you, Mr. Pearce and everyone, for all the
5 support after the brief that was presented. We also have an
6 LEC/LEAP meeting at the next Gulf States Fisheries Commission
7 with Mr. Donaldson and so we will bring that up as an item on
8 the agenda, to get with all the LE folks and come up with some
9 ideas with Tracy. The Magnuson-Stevens Act recommendations,
10 when asked, would be great as well and so we will continue to
11 work this issue and, again, thank you all for your support.

12
13 **MR. PERRET:** We may not as a council be able to write a letter
14 relative to Magnuson or to congressmen unless we were asked to
15 comment, but I guess that's why state directors are so
16 successful in getting federal money. We know how to craft, or
17 those that are directors that are there now, know how to craft
18 things.

19
20 We can certainly write a letter to the Admiral, if this council
21 so desires, thanking them for their excellent enforcement action
22 relative to the efforts off of I guess it was primarily south
23 Texas. In that letter, how puzzled we were to find out that one
24 person had been cited fifteen times and all that kind of stuff
25 and so there's a way to do it.

26
27 If we want to send a letter, I think we should send it to the
28 Admiral and also, we were also surprised that the fish had to be
29 discarded at sea and all that good stuff and then the Admiral
30 knows what to -- I am sure the Admiral and his competent staff
31 would know how to handle it, but, Harlon, if you want to use
32 that approach.

33
34 I do think we should compliment the upper level of the Coast
35 Guard and Texas Parks and Wildlife people that were involved and
36 Tracy's people I am sure were involved for that effort, because
37 I am sure it took a substantial amount of manpower and time and
38 money and so on. Thanks.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Before I go to Roy, I would just add that if we
41 do a letter that also to include some kudos towards their
42 efforts in estimating the amount of pounds and the economic
43 impact and such.

44
45 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think Corky makes good points. I think you
46 certainly can write a letter to the Coast Guard encouraging them
47 to continue their active involvement in addressing it and you
48 can highlight the importance of this issue.

1
2 As we've said, you can't write a letter to Congress, because we
3 can't lobby, but I suspect over the coming year, with the
4 interest in Magnuson and all of these kinds of things, that you
5 will have opportunities to either answer questions or testify on
6 the Hill or lay out the problems you're facing. I think,
7 somewhere along the way, you're going to get an opportunity to
8 bring this up as a problem that we need to deal with and so I
9 think that will arise, but I think for right now, a letter to
10 the Coast Guard would be a good idea.

11
12 **MR. BOYD:** To follow up on Corky's comment, I don't know why we
13 couldn't write a letter or also send that letter to the
14 Secretary of Commerce, who sits on the Presidential Cabinet.
15 That's not Congress and so we could let the Secretary know how
16 we feel about this.

17
18 **MR. RIECHERS:** I certainly appreciate everyone's attention to
19 this matter and just so that all of you kind of understand this
20 from a frame of reference, this is not a new matter. As
21 indicated by the presentation, a greater focus in the past few
22 years or a greater presence highlighting the matter, but this
23 has been an ongoing issue down there for a while.

24
25 Obviously those incursions into federal waters seem to be maybe
26 increasing, but, as the presentation suggested, maybe not
27 increasing, but just the presence of seeing them, but I do think
28 it's very, very important that we now have an estimate of those
29 landings and we can help incorporate that into the assessments,
30 but obviously certainly any encouragement and help that this
31 body could give to any of the law enforcement bodies who are
32 down there, Parks and Wildlife and National Marine Fisheries
33 Service or the Coast Guard, would be very beneficial. Thanks.

34
35 **MR. STEVEN ATRAN:** You're talking about not being able to
36 comment to Congress and something just occurred to me and I
37 don't know if this would really be a valid approach, but the
38 proposed revisions to National Standard 1 are out right now for
39 public comment and National Standard 1 says to achieve optimum
40 yield while avoiding overfishing.

41
42 Illegal harvests are going to hurt both of those and so right
43 now, there is nothing in the National Standard 1 Guidelines
44 about enforcement, but potentially -- I don't know what we would
45 say and perhaps recommend something be added into the National
46 Standard 1 Guidelines dealing with enforcement. Maybe, if
47 that's a good approach, the Law Enforcement AP might be able to
48 come up with some language.

1
2 **MS. LEVY:** I just want to note that the National Standard 1
3 Guidelines are regulations and so they have to -- They are
4 constrained by what's allowed under the Act, the Magnuson Act,
5 and so nothing is going to go into the National Standard 1
6 Guidelines that isn't currently permitted by the law. The
7 mechanism, I think we've heard, is to change the laws and I
8 don't know that commenting on the guidelines is going to get you
9 anywhere in that regard.

10
11 **MR. PERRET:** I would like to recommend that the council send an
12 appropriate letter of thanks to the appropriate Admiral of the
13 Coast Guard, copying the Secretary of Commerce and copying --
14 Robin, your guy is an Executive Director?

15
16 **MR. RIECHERS:** Yes, the Executive Director of Texas Parks and
17 Wildlife.

18
19 **MR. PERRET:** The Executive Director of Texas Parks and Wildlife.
20 I would -- We can have some discussion and this is not part of
21 my motion now, but anyway, Parks and Wildlife, the Secretary of
22 Commerce, the appropriate Admiral of the Coast Guard, thanking
23 them for the recent enforcement action by the their personnel
24 that worked cooperatively in this Texas effort relative to
25 foreign fishing. I would put, as the content of the letter, the
26 volume of snapper that were involved, which is a very large part
27 of our acceptable catch in domestic waters and other appropriate
28 things that the staff sees fit.

29
30 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Is that the end of your motion?

31
32 **MR. PERRET:** What did I say? A thank-you letter to the Admiral
33 -- Jason, what Admiral? Is the Admiral in Washington or --

34
35 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Give her a chance to type something
36 up there and then we can finish it.

37
38 **MR. PERRET:** While she is typing something up, would it be
39 appropriate to copy especially the two United States Senators?
40 Robin, would it be appropriate to copy at least the two United
41 States Senators from Texas? I would like to copy all ten from
42 the Gulf, but especially Texas.

43
44 **MR. RIECHERS:** I think that would be appropriate. I am assuming
45 Mara -- That's the issue regarding that, whether they believe
46 that's appropriate. The other thing I would add, Corky, and if
47 you don't mind a friendly amendment, I think it should also go
48 to Lieutenant Colonel Hunter, who is our Chief of Law

1 Enforcement, as well.
2
3 **MR. PERRET:** I assumed your head guy would send it down, but
4 that's fine. Whoever or whatever appropriate people.
5
6 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We are still trying to craft the motion.
7
8 **LCDR BRAND:** Corky, just to answer your question, the Admiral
9 for the District 8 who supported this initiative is Rear Admiral
10 Kevin Cook.
11
12 **MR. PERRET:** Has staff got that?
13
14 **LCDR BRAND:** He is actually the person appointed to this council
15 on the website.
16
17 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Just take another minute to try to get
18 everything that Corky had said he wanted in the motion on the
19 board.
20
21 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I have the gist of what you all are
22 discussing and so we don't have to put all of that in the --
23
24 **MR. PERRET:** Dr. Crabtree had some good comments relative to
25 content of the letter and so you've got all that and if anybody
26 else wants to offer any suggestions, staff, I'm sure, would be
27 happy to receive those. **That's my motion.** Staff, remember
28 Robin's suggestion for the law enforcement guy with Parks and
29 Wildlife.
30
31 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** The motion is to write a thank-you letter to
32 Rear Admiral Kevin Cook of the Coast Guard, copying the
33 Secretary of Commerce and Executive Director of Texas Parks and
34 Wildlife, thanking them for the enforcement actions relative to
35 foreign fisheries off of Texas. We need a second to the motion.
36
37 **MR. BOYD:** I second.
38
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right. It's seconded and is there any
40 discussion on the motion? **Is there any opposition to the**
41 **motion? Seeing none, the motion carries.** Mr. Greene.
42
43 **MR. GREENE:** Draft Amendment 39, Red Snapper Recreational
44 Regional Management, staff from the Mid-Atlantic Council gave a
45 presentation on summer flounder regional management, Tab B,
46 Number 9.
47
48 Staff reviewed the actions and alternatives in the restructured

1 regional management amendment, Tab B, Number 8. The committee
2 members requested reinsertion of preferred alternatives for
3 regional closed areas and sub-allocations in an appropriate
4 place in the document.

5
6 Action 1 includes two new alternatives modeled after summer
7 flounder management. If selected, regions would provide
8 proposals describing the conservation equivalent management
9 measures for the harvest of the region's portion of the
10 recreational red snapper quota.

11
12 Under Alternative 3, regions would submit proposals directly to
13 National Marine Fisheries for review and approval, while under
14 Alternative 4, proposals would first be reviewed by a technical
15 review committee followed by a NMFS review and approval.

16
17 **Following discussion, the committee passed the following motion.**
18 **By a voice vote, the committee recommends, and I so move, that**
19 **Alternative 3, Action 1 be the preferred alternative to**
20 **establish a regional management program in which a state or**
21 **group of states (regions) submit proposals to NMFS describing**
22 **the conservation equivalent measures the region will adopt for**
23 **the management of its portion of the red snapper quota.**
24 **Conservation equivalency proposals would specify the red snapper**
25 **season structure, bag limit, minimum and/or maximum size limits,**
26 **and optionally closed areas in the EEZ for the harvest of an**
27 **assigned portion of the recreational red snapper quota. If a**
28 **region does not participate or its proposal is determined by**
29 **National Marine Fisheries to be inconsistent with the**
30 **requirements of the regional management program selected in**
31 **Action 1, the recreational harvest of red snapper in the EEZ off**
32 **such region would be restricted to the federal default**
33 **regulations for red snapper.**

34
35 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** There's a committee motion. Any discussion on
36 the motion?

37
38 **MS. LEVY:** I just want to note that there was a little sentence
39 after that that said if the council adopts this, then the sunset
40 is removed, because right now, your preferred alternative has a
41 sunset option, but the committee motion included Alternative 3
42 without the sunset option.

43
44 I also wanted to note, and I think it's after this in the
45 committee report, that some of us got together and restructured,
46 based on yesterday's discussion, how Action 1 and Action 2 read
47 and I don't know whether you want to look at that before you
48 decide what to do here or whether you want to vote on this and

1 then look at the restructured actions and alternatives and
2 decide if you want to do anything different, but they
3 essentially contain the same substantive language, except we
4 added back in the closed area thing, but it looks different is
5 what I'm saying.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I mean we would have to dispense of this
8 motion, I guess, and look at what's been developed and maybe
9 deal with that as a substitute motion I guess is how we would
10 proceed, because it's -- I guess we can see it and modify what
11 we have here or whatever and so I guess I'm open to anything.

12
13 **MR. PERRET:** Is that modified language available to put on the
14 screen? **I will move a substitute motion with the new language**
15 **and we can take a look at it, if you get a second.**

16
17 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a substitute motion to look at the new
18 language that has been brought forward based on Reef Fish
19 Committee discussion and is there a second to the motion? We
20 have a second by Mr. Pearce. Any discussion on the motion?

21
22 **DR. CRABTREE:** I guess we're waiting to get it up there, but I
23 will, once again, state my preference for Alternative 4 with a
24 technical review committee. I still am a little surprised,
25 given the criticisms, particularly from some of the states, of
26 the way the federal government has handled the seasons and some
27 of the statements that have been made, that you're so willing to
28 turn all of this over to the federal government without having
29 some oversight of it. I find that very surprising.

30
31 **DR. LUCAS:** Just to that point, Roy, would you -- In leaving it
32 the way it is currently written, how about having an appeal
33 process, where about if you deny -- If National Marine Fisheries
34 Service denies it, it would then go to a review committee,
35 possibly made up of the Gulf States Fisheries Commission, for an
36 appeal process.

37
38 **DR. CRABTREE:** I guess you could do that, but that seems to even
39 be getting more time-consuming and cumbersome if we go through
40 that way of doing it and it seems, to me, with a technical
41 review committee that maybe had some commission people, but had
42 state people on it, I think the states are all going to have a
43 real interest in watching what the other states are doing and
44 making sure that everybody is upfront and doing the analysis in
45 a transparent way.

46
47 It seems that would give us some oversight of the whole thing
48 and if it was just structured right upfront so it happened, it

1 seems it would work smoother than coming in and having something
2 sent back and then convening panels and going through a whole
3 appeals process, because we're going to be pressed for time to
4 make these things happen by the next year, but I will leave it
5 to you.

6
7 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Do we have the new language up on the screen?
8

9 **MS. LEVY:** This has been restructured and the preferred
10 alternative that's up there now is similar to the -- There is
11 two. There is the preferred alternative that the council had
12 from the last decision point, which was the delegation, and then
13 under each one, instead of having an Action 4 that had you
14 choose what you wanted to delegate, all the options are under
15 the delegation alternative.

16
17 Then, below that, there is a committee preferred, which is what
18 was chosen yesterday, which was the conservation equivalency
19 with the NMFS review. Again, under that are the options for
20 what the states can establish or must establish by conservation
21 equivalency.

22
23 We structured it that way so that could choose the type of
24 regional management you want and then choose what the states
25 would be responsible for or could be responsible for under each
26 one of those.

27
28 **MR. RIECHERS:** Sorry, Chairman Anson, but I am trying to
29 remember. The previous motion we already dispensed of?
30

31 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** No, this is a substitute motion.
32

33 **MR. RIECHERS:** Okay and so you're substituting this and I'm
34 sorry. Okay. Then within the context of the substitute motion,
35 I am going to make one amendment to the substitute motion and I
36 amend that Option e also be listed as preferred. I don't know
37 how you all -- I can handle it with a whole committee
38 substitute, because we've got room on the board, or I can handle
39 it with an amendment. Kevin, you tell you me how you would
40 prefer to do it.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I guess we'll see how the council goes in
43 regards to that. It might be just a friendly amendment if Corky
44 would like.

45
46 **MR. RIECHERS:** Again, I guess I'm a little bit struggling here
47 on the same point of order we were on before, because when we
48 asked them to draft a new conservation equivalency amendment, we

1 assumed it was going to include all the previous actions and
2 items that we had before and it seems as if the reason it's not
3 listed here as a committee preferred is because it wasn't
4 specifically listed in the document we were dealing with
5 yesterday. Again, we're a little bit stuck between what we
6 would have thought was coming back to us and where we are.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Corky, do you accept the friendly amendment, if
9 we want to go that route?

10
11 **MR. PERRET:** First, I was not privileged to the group that put
12 this one together. This is my substitute motion and this is
13 what the group worked up and can you go up so I can read it and
14 see what -- This was agreed upon by all of the Reef Fish
15 Committee or by certain members of the Reef Fish Committee?

16
17 **MR. RIECHERS:** No, this was a redrafting to try to put it back
18 the way we had it from the last meeting, as I understand it,
19 and, Corky, trust me that none of us were privy to this other
20 than now.

21
22 **MR. PERRET:** But you're saying, Robin, that the closed area was
23 not included that had been previously in the document? I agree
24 with Robin and if it was there previously, we should have it in
25 there.

26
27 **MS. LEVY:** The issue is when we had it just as a delegation the
28 closed areas were included, which it is included as a council
29 preferred in the other alternative, which is the delegation
30 alternative.

31
32 The issue was when staff was asked to develop a conservation
33 equivalency type of program and model it after summer flounder,
34 that summer flounder includes size limits, bag limits, and
35 season structure. It doesn't include closed areas and I think I
36 said seasons again. That's why it wasn't put as a preferred in
37 that conservation equivalency model one. It wasn't because that
38 wasn't what summer flounder did and staff was trying to model
39 after summer flounder and so we did add it back as a preferred
40 under the delegation, which is what was selected in the previous
41 document, but there really wasn't nothing selected for
42 conservation equivalency in the previous document, because we
43 didn't have it is what I'm saying.

44
45 **MR. WALKER:** This is the recreational 39 and I just wanted to --
46 I am concerned and I need to be clear on how this Option e would
47 -- I want to make sure it doesn't have any effect on the
48 commercial industry.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** No, this is all for the recreational sector,
3 David.
4
5 **MR. WALKER:** The closure, I didn't want to say these are closed
6 and just as long as it's closed not for commercial.
7
8 **DR. CRABTREE:** Just to that, I mean this would create an area
9 that was open only to commercial fishing, as it stands now, as I
10 understand it. I have just a point of order. This is a
11 friendly amendment and this is Corky's motion then that was
12 amended?
13
14 **MR. PERRET:** Robin's suggestion?
15
16 **DR. CRABTREE:** Yes.
17
18 **MR. PERRET:** Yes.
19
20 **DR. CRABTREE:** I would like to make a substitute motion that the
21 preferred alternative be Revised Alternative 4 with Options a,
22 b, c, and d.
23
24 **MS. BADEMAN:** Are we up to a second substitute now?
25
26 **DR. CRABTREE:** Yes.
27
28 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes and so is everyone clear of where we are?
29 It's the second substitute motion and that's making Alternative
30 4 the preferred. Alternative 4 is the one where it has the
31 technical review committee that would review the plans that the
32 states, the regions, submit. That was a through d, Roy?
33
34 **DR. CRABTREE:** a, b, c, and d would be the preferred suboptions
35 under it.
36
37 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** While they structure that, maybe we can have
38 some conversation to that substitute motion and is there any?
39 First, we need a second.
40
41 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Second.
42
43 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a second by Mr. Williams.
44
45 **DR. CRABTREE:** I just think we would be much better served if we
46 have a small subcommittee that involved state people as part of
47 this process to review it. I think that's going to head off all
48 kinds of disagreements and conflicts and other problems down the

1 road and it's going to give the whole process greater acceptance
2 and I think that's what we need to do.

3
4 As I have said before, I just do not believe that within the
5 context of regional management that the idea of closed areas is
6 workable. I don't know how the NEPA goes. We don't know what
7 those closed areas are and I think the better way to come in and
8 handle closed areas is if a state wants a closed area, they come
9 to the council and ask the council to establish it and we go
10 through the process of doing that and that that's cleaner than
11 having it get tied up into a state's proposal, because I think
12 having that in a state's proposal will really bog down the
13 process of trying to go through an expedited review and get an
14 approval of their process, because it's going to require a
15 complicated NEPA analysis and a plan amendment that the council
16 will have to go through and do.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Mr. Donaldson, you were here as part of the
19 Reef Fish discussion and so I just -- That would be -- We could
20 have it outside of the standard spring and fall commission
21 meetings, but I guess you all would just serve as the
22 facilitator, I guess, to get the group together and then we
23 would have that meeting to set time, so that plans could be
24 available to review and all that and is that correct? That
25 doesn't create any issues for you or staff or anything like
26 that?

27
28 **MR. DONALDSON:** No, we have the resources and staff to be able
29 to handle that, if so desired, and we would work out the details
30 at the commission.

31
32 **MR. RIECHERS:** Obviously I am going to speak against the
33 preferred or against the substitute, as we've had this
34 discussion several times regarding the closed areas, but as far
35 as the review committee goes, you're just alluding to the fact
36 that it's going to Gulf States. There is nothing within the
37 document that would suggest that at this point in time and so I
38 am making that clear.

39
40 I might be able to get more comfortable with a review committee
41 and I don't think I'm going to vote for this motion, but I might
42 be able to get more comfortable with it if we would define that
43 better in the document as we move forward.

44
45 I am not crazy about it, because I think at the end of the day,
46 if we're asking National Marine Fisheries Service to approve
47 these, we would probably just all go to National Marine
48 Fisheries Service. I understand what Roy is attempting to do,

1 which is to maybe provide some more oversight.

2
3 Frankly, he suggested that the states may want it and I
4 certainly trust my other state directors to be able to do the
5 calculus in their own state regarding their landings and making
6 sure that if they agree that they're going to stay within a
7 particular allowable catch limit that they're going to manage
8 their fishery to do that and so I don't really have that concern
9 at all, but I do understand the issue of transparency and if he
10 wanted some other bodies to look at it.

11
12 At this point, I can't support this. Maybe, in a subsequent
13 meeting, fleshing out a technical review committee and a
14 structure for that might make me more comfortable with it.

15
16 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think Robin is right in the sense that there's a
17 lot of variables as to who would be on this technical review
18 committee and it doesn't necessarily have to go the route that
19 the summer flounder technical review committee went, where it's
20 their commission, per se.

21
22 I was kind of interested in this alternative, because I almost
23 thought of it as if that technical review committee was possibly
24 more like an SSC body that looked at it and, in other words, an
25 independent group that could look at it for the merits of the
26 conservation, the biological impacts, and give us feedback as
27 the council.

28
29 In other words, to keep us somewhat in the loop and their report
30 would come to us, as opposed to implementing regional management
31 and now we have the states managing it and they could get up to
32 NMFS and NMFS either kicks it out or doesn't. We are kind of
33 out of the loop, which is not a bad thing, unless regional
34 management has some issues and doesn't work.

35
36 Then we're the ones that implemented it and we have to come back
37 and fix it, but yet, we haven't really been a part of it and
38 we're not real sure -- Maybe the states would know what the
39 issues are, but somebody like me that doesn't work for a state
40 government, I am not really going to have been in the loop and
41 know what's going wrong and how to fix it.

42
43 That was one thing that appealed to me about possibly having
44 this -- I don't like another layer of bureaucracy in the system,
45 from that aspect, but to keep us informed and to have another
46 independent body that looks at it from a technical standpoint
47 doesn't bother me too much.

1 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think the way the technical review committee --
2 The reality is it's going to be an advisory panel that you will
3 set up and appoint people to and you can appoint people from the
4 commission or whatever, but that will be your decision and you
5 will appoint them and their technical review will come to you as
6 well as to the agency.

7
8 I can assure you that if there are problems with regional
9 management that you will have large groups of people come to
10 these council meetings and let you know about them, because if
11 it doesn't work, you're going to be the body that is going to
12 have to change it, because it's your fishery management plan and
13 you set it up and it will be up to you to make the corrections
14 and the tweaks to it and so you're going to need to remain very
15 engaged in this whole process, because I would be amazed if we
16 don't run into problems and need to make changes to this if we
17 go down this path.

18
19 **MS. BADEMAN:** In the long run, I am like Robin and I don't know
20 which of the alternatives in this action I think my state will
21 go for. We have discussed delegation and our commission seemed
22 to be maybe okay with that.

23
24 What concerns me at this point is I've heard three different
25 people talk about this alternative and I have heard three
26 different ways about how it's actually going to work and so I
27 think, at least for me, I need to understand exactly how this is
28 going to work before I can really pitch it to my commission, for
29 one, and get behind it. Thanks.

30
31 **DR. CRABTREE:** I mean it's your plan and so it's going to work
32 how you decide it's going to work and you are going to decide
33 who this technical committee is and when they see things and
34 what they do and how all this happens and we're going to have to
35 lay out that process in the amendment.

36
37 **MS. BADEMAN:** Just to that point, that's fine, but I am not
38 ready to make it my preferred based on that.

39
40 **MR. PERRET:** Well, I am. Every state director that I have ever
41 served with on this council at some time or other has been
42 critical, and rightfully so in many cases, of the National
43 Marine Fisheries Service and its Regional Administrator.

44
45 Yesterday, we heard Dr. Crabtree, by one person, is doing an
46 excellent job and I don't want Dr. Crabtree to be the sole czar
47 to make these decisions. I think we definitely need a technical
48 review committee made up of -- My suggestion would be state

1 directors and/or their designee for the purpose of reviewing the
2 state plans that are going to go forward.

3
4 If indeed, which I'm sure there will be some issues raised, I
5 don't want Dr. Crabtree alone to have to make that decision of
6 yea or nay. I want state people working with Dr. Crabtree or
7 his appropriate staff people to make those decisions. I think
8 it's very similar, in my mind, to the way state resource
9 agencies operate, other than Alabama, I think.

10
11 Every state has a commission and they don't have just an
12 executive director or a secretary. They have a commission and
13 that's a buffer and I think that's what we need in this process.
14 I think it would improve the system rather than just have one
15 agency make the final decisions and, as Dr. Crabtree says, this
16 is a state plan and this is your plan and I think you should
17 have as much oversight over it as possible. Thank you.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any further discussion?

20
21 **MR. FISCHER:** I see compelling arguments on both sides, but I
22 also envision just a streamlined process that we don't have to
23 start requesting approval from sub-agencies.

24
25 We have worked with Roy's office in the recent past on snapper
26 issues and have done that very successfully and I would feel
27 very comfortable, from our seat, submitting a proposal and
28 explaining the proposal and it's not just a blind email and
29 letting it be, but explaining how we came up with our figures
30 and walking away and then some dialogue where his people could
31 say we like these parts and we don't like these parts.

32
33 I could see this committee dragging down and just slowing down
34 the whole process, especially if there's little tweak changes.
35 They are going to send it to National Marine Fisheries, who is
36 going to send it back to them and we'll be trying to set the
37 2016 season in 2018. I just would like to see something quick.
38 We turn it in and make our case and get a response and,
39 therefore, I still support Alternative 3.

40
41 **DR. LUCAS:** I would like to echo what Myron said. We have
42 worked very well with NOAA in the recent past in trying to get
43 our mandatory red snapper reporting system in place. We've been
44 working with his staff and we've gone back and forth and they've
45 had great dialogue and offered great suggestions and we've taken
46 them up on the suggestions and I can't see why that process
47 couldn't work the same way as just working with your staff to
48 make sure that we are meeting your goals and where you see

1 tweaks, we make the tweaks and move forward. Like Myron said, I
2 think it would go a lot faster if we went that process.

3
4 I do still think that there -- I guess if they came to complete
5 odds, if there was a way to then send it to an appeal, just so
6 it gave National Marine Fisheries Service a chance to at least
7 say somebody else then reviewed it. I will be rejecting this
8 alternative.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other comments? We have a second
11 substitute motion to make Alternative 4 the preferred
12 alternative with Suboptions a through d. All those in favor of
13 the second substitute motion that's on the board, please signify
14 by saying aye; all those opposed like sign. We are going to
15 need to raise our hands on this. **All those in favor raise your**
16 **hand, please; all those opposed.**

17
18 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** One, two, three, four, five, six,
19 seven, eight, nine.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** The motion failed and so we go back to the
22 first substitute motion and that substitute motion is to make
23 Alternative 3 the preferred alternative and that's to establish
24 the regional management program in which a state or group of
25 states or regions submit proposals to NMFS describing the
26 conservation equivalent measures and that includes identifying
27 Preferred Options a through e for what those plans could contain
28 and so that's up on the board and is there any further
29 discussion on this motion?

30
31 **MR. FISCHER:** On the motion that was just defeated, I thought we
32 had a strikethrough on Option e and I was going to ask what that
33 criteria was, what that rationale was, and if it applied here.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I think that was the way it I guess carried
36 through from the Reef Fish Committee, that it was struck during
37 that time and just kept in the document.

38
39 **MR. RIECHERS:** No, Roy specifically did not want Option e in his
40 substitute motion that he just made.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right and so any other discussion on the
43 substitute motion? It's on the board. **All those in favor**
44 **please raise your hand; all those opposed.**

45
46 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** For this motion, we had nine for.
47 It passed nine to seven.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** The substitute motion making Alternative 3 the
2 preferred passed nine to seven. Thank you.
3
4 **DR. CRABTREE:** I guess I should be pleasantly surprised and I
5 want to thank all of you for your endorsement and expression of
6 confidence in the National Marine Fisheries Services' management
7 of red snapper.
8
9 **MR. PERRET:** Not all of us voted for you.
10
11 **DR. CRABTREE:** Well, but it's the majority.
12
13 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** In that context, Roy, I think Corky hit it that
14 it would still be a partnership. This is going to be states
15 working with the National Marine Fisheries Service.
16
17 **DR. CRABTREE:** Absolutely. I wouldn't have it any other way.
18
19 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Do you have something, Ava?
20
21 **DR. AVA LASSETER:** If we could go on back to the document with
22 the actions and alternatives.
23
24 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** The document that was presented to
25 the committee or the document that we just --
26
27 **DR. LASSETER:** The document that I emailed Karen and asked her
28 to put up that goes with the report.
29
30 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Okay, because that has not been put
31 on the website or distributed.
32
33 **DR. LASSETER:** I believe it has. If we could back to the first
34 page of that.
35
36 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Ava wants to readdress some prior action,
37 possibly based on the discussions that were had with IPT members
38 after the Reef Fish Committee is what I think is happening.
39
40 **DR. LASSETER:** Okay and apologies. This is another modification
41 that we need to get -- We are requesting some guidance on. In
42 the previous version, in that previous Action 4, because of
43 delegation, the council created boundaries to some of the
44 management measures that could be delegated to the states.
45
46 It wasn't just that your bag limit and size limit and season
47 structure would be set. There were parameters around those
48 between zero and four fish and that's necessary under the

1 delegation option, but it's up to you if you would like to adopt
2 the same, as a council, the same types of boundaries for these
3 proposals or if you would just like to leave it open and then
4 allow the review process to determine if they have exceeded the
5 boundaries or not.

6
7 That's why in the top parts of the preferred options, if we
8 could scroll up just a little bit, a region must establish its
9 season structure and a region must establish a bag limit from
10 zero to four.

11
12 This was all from the previous action with those limits. We do
13 not currently have those on the summer flounder options. If you
14 scroll down a little bit now, right now they are open and we
15 just wanted to get some feedback of would you prefer it this way
16 or would you, as a council, like to put boundaries on what those
17 proposals could modify?

18
19 **DR. CRABTREE:** I heard concerns wanting this to be a rapid
20 process and move quickly and so the extent you put bounds on
21 things now, we can do the NEPA analysis potentially upfront and
22 there will be less process required when the states come up with
23 plans.

24
25 If we leave it wide open and a state comes in with something
26 unexpected or different and we haven't considered it, we will
27 have to go through a whole NEPA analysis and that's going to
28 have to come before you as a council and go through the whole
29 process and so I think putting bounds on this is a good idea and
30 will make this move more quickly through this process.

31
32 **MR. FISCHER:** I do think they should have bounds. I would like
33 to bring one particular one up for discussion and that is size
34 limit. Size limit is a very biological issue, because it
35 relates to what you are extracting from the population and how
36 it's going to affect the population and the fecundity, the
37 biologicals, of that fish.

38
39 We have a thirteen-inch size limit on the commercial, which is
40 about half our fishery, and we have a sixteen-inch size limit on
41 recreational and I could be mistaken, but Texas state waters is
42 at fifteen inches and so we have varying sizes.

43
44 I think if we concluded on one unique size for the recreational
45 fishery, and it may be lower in the sixteen-inch mark somewhat,
46 but I think it should be a council decision and I haven't seen
47 any type of histogram or anything with the mode of catch, but I
48 suspect the mode is eighteen or twenty inches and it's a big

1 fish.

2
3 I don't think people are now fishing on that minimum size, but I
4 would like to see a universal size limit and it may make Roy's
5 calculations a little easier if he's just working on one size
6 limit and I would rather let someone else comment on this that
7 does this work.

8
9 **MR. RIECHERS:** Maybe I am getting confused as to the question,
10 Ava, but as I'm understanding your question is we had had this
11 in the previous document and when you brought it conservation
12 equivalencies into this suite of options -- You're just asking
13 should we apply that same set of ranges that we had in our
14 previous discussions to this new conservation equivalency option
15 or at least that's the understanding that I am getting and not
16 trying to hone in on it anymore at this point, Myron. We had
17 those ranges in there before.

18
19 I guess my notion was always kind of, and maybe there is where
20 the council didn't provide good guidance, but I thought it was
21 going to be part of this suite so it would apply or at least
22 have the option of applying. If it pleases the Chairman, I will
23 make that as a motion and we can then just apply it to the
24 recently adopted, and I am getting lost in action, but I think
25 it was Alternative Number 3 now.

26
27 **DR. LASSETER:** Yes.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Ava, did you want to address that?

30
31 **DR. LASSETER:** Yes and the reason that the summer flounder
32 alternatives do not have those limits is because that's not the
33 way the summer flounder program does it and so we just wanted to
34 clarify do you want to maintain those boundaries or adopt the
35 more summer flounder model?

36
37 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We will probably get to a motion here, Robin, I
38 guess, but there's a couple of other people that are in the
39 queue.

40
41 **DR. CRABTREE:** What I almost heard from Myron was he doesn't
42 think we ought to have minimum size limits be part of what the
43 states are allowed to change and I probably agree with that, but
44 if we are going to allow it, we need to put these bounds in, but
45 you should be bear in mind that remember we saw the new stock
46 assessment yesterday, right?

47
48 I think the TAC is going up by probably a million pounds,

1 because the selectivity in the recreational fishery has shifted
2 towards larger fish. If a state comes in and puts a maximum
3 size limit in place, you're going to shift that back and so you
4 could lose a million pounds right off the TAC because of what
5 states do with a slot limit or something. That's going to
6 create a huge disruption if that happens.

7
8 We have heard -- I think it was Dr. Barbieri from the SSC who
9 told us that having a whole range of different size limits in
10 the Gulf is going to create a lot of problems for the stock
11 assessments in terms of estimating selectivities.

12
13 We all sit here and we talk about the need for better science,
14 but we ought not do things that are going to make it harder for
15 the scientists to deal with this and I frankly haven't heard
16 anyone in the public come in and ask us to change the minimum
17 size limit. Maybe there has been someone, but it doesn't seem
18 to be a burning issue in anyone's mind.

19
20 We have talked about slot limits and things, but it seems like
21 the prevailing public opinion has always gone about that and so
22 we're putting something in here that's giving flexibility that
23 maybe no one is ever going to use, but it potentially has some
24 real consequences if it did change.

25
26 If Florida put in a maximum size limit, 40 plus percent of the
27 catch occurs there and that could have a real impact on the
28 overall selectivity of the fishery and that could affect the
29 total allowable catch.

30
31 **MR. FISCHER:** Roy, actually what I was trying to say is I think
32 size limits should not be part of this. The council should set
33 a size limit and leave it at sixteen and for the very reason you
34 just said, from the last meeting and Dr. Barbieri talking about
35 stock assessments. To that, I would -- Do we have a motion on
36 the board to accept this suite? Robin, did you make such?

37
38 **MR. RIECHERS:** I think part of the problem is we've got the
39 motion previously on the board and people are still confusing
40 that as a motion that's standing.

41
42 **MR. FISCHER:** No, the motion with the actual numbers in it. I
43 don't think we passed that and that is in the document on the
44 very first page, under Preferred Alternative 2. I think we
45 should keep those bounds, where regions can establish their
46 season structure and the bag limit has to be from zero to four.
47 I would choose to eliminate -- Leave the minimum size at sixteen
48 inches, what it's set at, and let others debate the maximum

1 size, if that has an effect on the population, and then a
2 Preferred e about closed areas.

3
4 I would like to see the numbers, if it helps the states see what
5 they're working with. Now, this is what you're working with.
6 You're working with fish and you're working with season
7 structure and size should be set at sixteen inches.

8
9 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Myron, you are talking about two
10 different things and let's try to keep them separate. On one
11 hand, you're saying that size limits should not be a part of
12 this, but on the other hand, you're saying for the other items
13 there should be limits and so they're like two different motions
14 and the only administrative or parliamentary problem is this
15 motion has already been approved, but I think if the council
16 wants to take out size limits, that's fine and if they want to
17 put the boundaries into this Alternative 3 like exists in
18 Alternative 2, that's fine too as separate motions, as long as
19 we all understand what we're doing.

20
21 **LCDR BRAND:** I just wanted to remind you that we have a Law
22 Enforcement AP and Committee meeting before the next council and
23 so if there's any charge or any questions that you would like to
24 take us to take a look at in regards to this preferred
25 alternative.

26
27 I kind of understand that most of the enforcement will be done
28 dockside. However, with a closed area, that would be at-sea
29 enforcement and would federal be able to enforce these closed
30 areas or would this just be left up to the states to do? Some
31 of those questions I still have, from my perspective.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Certainly the council wants to do that and look
34 for some more guidance and might make a motion to add that as a
35 charge to put on the agenda or to bring up for discussion.

36
37 **MR. PERRET:** I am just trying to get -- Can we have the last
38 motion that was passed, the first substitute motion, I guess it
39 was, my motion I guess it was? Can we put it up there and keep
40 it for a minute?

41
42 Now Myron is talking about, and Roy, the size limits and whether
43 or not to have a specific size limit. Myron, are you now
44 wanting to establish a certain number or a certain size?

45
46 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** To that point please, Myron.

47
48 **MR. FISCHER:** I was going to make a motion.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Martha, did you have any other --
3
4 **MS. BADEMAN:** Just a point of order. If we're going to start
5 fixing this, don't we need a motion to reconsider before we do
6 that? That's all, since that's about to happen.
7
8 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** You can be very technical about
9 this with parliamentary rules, but as long as everybody
10 understands what's happening, I think we could go forward and I
11 see Roberts Rules as guidelines.
12
13 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Mara, can you get us back on track here,
14 please?
15
16 **MS. LEVY:** Okay and so we identified two issues. I think if you
17 want to change what you just selected as your preferred that you
18 need a motion to reconsider. If you want to modify these
19 options to reflect what is in Alternative 2, so that you have
20 the boundaries, then I think you can make that motion, but if
21 you want to actually change what you've just selected as a
22 preferred, I think you need to have a vote on a motion to
23 reconsider that decision.
24
25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Since Myron brought it up, Myron, do you want
26 to go forward?
27
28 **MR. FISCHER:** I move that this Preferred Option b set bounds
29 where the bag limit must be from zero to four fish.
30
31 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Let's wait until we get this on the board here.
32 Myron, can you repeat the bounds? Is it zero to four? Yes,
33 zero to four fish, of course. Is that your entire motion,
34 Myron? Myron, is that your entire motion or did you want to
35 include anything else?
36
37 **MR. FISCHER:** Bag limit.
38
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We got that for b and do you want anything with
40 size limit?
41
42 **MR. FISCHER:** Not at this time.
43
44 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Not at this time.
45
46 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Second.
47
48 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** That's the motion, that new Preferred Option b

1 set bounds from zero to four fish.
2
3 **MS. LEVY:** Just a suggestion that if you feel like setting the
4 bounds for the conservation equivalency alternatives is
5 necessary and that's what we're getting at, you may want to have
6 the motion put those bounds in both Alternative 3 and 4. I
7 understand that you haven't selected 4 as a preferred, but they
8 are addressing the same thing and so it may just be to add the
9 zero to four fish in Option b in both Alternative 3 and 4.
10
11 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Myron, as Mara pointed out, it would be more
12 consistent to have zero to four in all the other alternatives,
13 Alternatives 3 and 4.
14
15 **MR. FISCHER:** Sure, that's fine.
16
17 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Option b would be to set the bounds from zero
18 to four fish. I think the motion should read that Option b in
19 Alternatives 3 and 4 be set -- The recreational bag limit be set
20 zero to four fish, if you will accept that, Myron. It adds a
21 few more words in there than you had originally.
22
23 **MR. FISCHER:** Yes.
24
25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** The seconder agrees?
26
27 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Yes.
28
29 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right. Thank you. Is everyone clear on
30 this now, Option b in both Alternatives 3 and 4? Again, we just
31 selected that in a substitute motion just a few minutes ago and
32 Alternative 3 is the preferred alternative, but for making
33 consistency in the document, we're including it in 4, that the
34 recreational bag limit be set to zero to four fish. Any other
35 discussion on this motion? **All those opposed to this motion**
36 **please indicate by saying aye. The motion carries.**
37
38 **MR. FISCHER:** I would like to create a similar motion regarding
39 Preferred Option c. Of course, this would do for the other
40 alternatives. A region must establish a minimum size limit no
41 smaller than fifteen inches. Mr. Chair, I phrased it
42 incorrectly. The size limit must be set at fifteen. We want to
43 have a uniform size limit Gulf-wide is what we're seeking, a
44 minimum size limit Gulf-wide.
45
46 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I don't have the document, but, Mara, is this
47 also for 4? Do you recall? This would also be applied to 4?
48 It would read "both Alternatives 3 and 4" again, for

1 consistency. Correct? Is it 4, Ava? Is that correct?
2
3 **DR. LASSETER:** I would also think Alternative 2 in that case.
4 Why are you having it different in 3 and 4 than 2?
5
6 **MR. FISCHER:** Mr. Chair, I could give brief rationale.
7
8 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Hold on one second. Is it Alternatives 2, 3,
9 and 4?
10
11 **DR. LASSETER:** I believe so, yes. Mara?
12
13 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** 2, 3, and 4. It's Alternatives 2, 3, and 4
14 that the region must establish a uniform size limit of fifteen
15 inches and do I have a second for this motion?
16
17 **MR. RIECHERS:** Second.
18
19 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a second from Mr. Riechers and is there
20 any discussion?
21
22 **DR. DANA:** Just a technical question. What is the age
23 difference between a fifteen-inch and a sixteen-inch?
24
25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Two or three months maybe, maybe.
26
27 **MS. BADEMAN:** Myron, why fifteen inches then, if our current
28 size limit is sixteen?
29
30 **MR. FISCHER:** By lowering the size limit, it still gives the
31 anglers flexibility. If you raise the size limit, obviously
32 those fish have to be returned to the water and fifteen was in
33 the range between fourteen and eighteen and it would give a
34 state an opportunity -- If they wanted to have a smaller size
35 limit, they could creep smaller and just discussions we've had
36 internally, it shouldn't affect the -- It may affect the
37 mechanics of a stock assessment, but it shouldn't affect the
38 stock and especially with commercial at thirteen inches and they
39 are harvesting half the fish at a smaller size limit.
40
41 Your size will be fifteen inches and Roy may oppose it and it
42 may be -- I am just trying to make calculations Gulf-wide and
43 have every state on the same playing field with size limit.
44 Sixteen would be the next option if you substituted the motion.
45
46 **MR. WALKER:** I had asked this question to Will Patterson the
47 other day and I was asking him about size limit, about changing
48 the size limit to increase the recreational access to more days.

1 I spoke with him out in the hall and asked him if more studies
2 would be helpful and he said, of course and he would like to see
3 some more studies to look at size limits.

4
5 I don't know if you want to leave it at fifteen or maybe we
6 would like to put some thought in it and I would like to see
7 some more information on, some more studies on, to tweak that
8 size. I think Alabama, when they had their landings, it was
9 showing some smaller size limits and, of course, they said the
10 landings came in lower.

11
12 In the headboat pilot program, the fish turned up being smaller
13 and it just I think gives you a -- I am kind of concerned about
14 leaving it at fifteen and you may want to look at thirteen. I
15 wouldn't want to be stuck with thirteen until I knew more about
16 the size limits.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Myron, you had your hand up earlier and did you
19 get your comments in? Okay. So I have Dr. Crabtree and then
20 Roy Williams.

21
22 **DR. CRABTREE:** Just to be clear, I mean my read on this is this
23 says that the states have to include a fifteen-inch minimum size
24 limit in their conservation equivalency plan and they can't go
25 below it and they can't go above it.

26
27 The weird part of this, to me, is the default federal size limit
28 will remain sixteen inches, unless we do something else to
29 change that, and so if a state opts out, it will have a sixteen-
30 inch size limit off of that state and I have a hard time -- It
31 seems cleaner, to me, if we want to have fifteen inches to be
32 the size limit, to just change the size limit to fifteen inches
33 everywhere.

34
35 **MR. FISCHER:** We agree, Roy, but I don't think it would be
36 germane to enter it into this motion here.

37
38 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I agree with what Roy said. I am also concerned
39 that if we go to a lower size limit that it's going to also
40 force a lower bag limit too and that's -- I am kind of concerned
41 about that.

42
43 **MS. LEVY:** I think I originally nodded my head when you talked
44 about Alternative 2, but after further thought and discussion,
45 Alternative 2 is a delegation and so if you're going to say you
46 have to set a -- There is just no delegation of that.

47
48 I mean with a conservation equivalency, I guess you're saying

1 you have to include a fifteen-inch size limit in whatever plan
2 you submit us, but it just doesn't seem to fit with the
3 delegation, because really then you're just not delegating that
4 to the state.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** To clean that up then, Myron, if you wouldn't
7 mind, my suggestion would be to remove Alternative 2 from your
8 motion, based on that.

9
10 **MR. FISCHER:** That's fine.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** That's fine and so we can get it to apply
13 appropriately. Roy, I think you seconded the motion.

14
15 **MR. WILLIAMS:** No, Robin did.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Robin, do you agree with that? Okay. All
18 right.

19
20 **MR. RIECHERS:** Just to walk everyone through this, I mean
21 basically we went to a sixteen-inch minimum size limit and then,
22 as I'm recalling, the commercial size limit went to fifteen and
23 now it's at thirteen and, in fact, since I'm the one at fifteen,
24 that's one of the reasons we stayed at fifteen at that point in
25 time, was just because of the differential between commercial
26 and recreational and we were going to keep it at one size limit
27 in our state.

28
29 Also, the yield per recruit analysis conducted by the Southeast
30 Fisheries Science Center I believe suggested that it was
31 maximized at fifteen inches total length during their last
32 assessment and so there is some biological rationale for fifteen
33 inches.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other comments or discussion on this
36 motion?

37
38 **MS. BADEMAN:** I just -- I don't necessarily have a problem with
39 fifteen, but it seems to me that wouldn't we just -- Wouldn't we
40 want to do this across the board, through a different way than
41 this amendment?

42
43 If we want to change the size limit to fifteen inches, we'll
44 just do it, the minimum size limit. I see that as a separate
45 issue than this amendment.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I don't know and --

48

1 **MS. BADEMAN:** The default thing.
2
3 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Dr. Crabtree had some comments to that and
4 certainly if we change it, then I just -- I think we have to
5 have some verbiage in here that dictates or kind of tells the
6 states, as they submit their plans, that hey, this is what
7 you're allowed to do or this is what you should be following.
8
9 Granted, if we change it across the board and just don't have
10 this option in there, then that could be a better way to do it,
11 but I don't know if someone has some more comments on that or we
12 can just go ahead and vote and deal with that later, but any
13 comments to that? Okay.
14
15 We have a motion that Option c in Alternatives 3 and 4 must
16 establish a uniform minimum size limit of fifteen inches. **All**
17 **those in favor of this please raise your hand.**
18
19 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** One, two, three, four, five, six,
20 seven, eight, nine, ten.
21
22 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have ten four and just for the record, all
23 those in opposition, please raise your hand.
24
25 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** One, two, three, four, five. **It**
26 **passed ten to five.**
27
28 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** That takes us through this.
29
30 **DR. CRABTREE:** So you don't want to put any bounds -- I think
31 the maximum size limit issue is much more significant and has
32 much more ramifications and if you leave a maximum size limit in
33 here, you potentially allow one state to unilaterally make a
34 decision that could result in significant changes in the TAC.
35
36 We have put no bounds on that and I don't think fifteen or
37 sixteen inches changes anything really, but the maximum size
38 limit clearly does and then the closed area thing is a really
39 open-ended thing and I'm not quite even sure how to put bounds
40 on that, but if you don't want to allow the states to set the
41 minimum size limit, I sure don't think you want to allow them to
42 set maximum size limits, because I think that's a much more
43 significant issue.
44
45 **MR. FISCHER:** Roy, we are taking them alphabetically and it's d
46 and so I agree with Roy that the size limit is a minimum size,
47 as we're used to fishing now fifteen inches. **Therefore, I would**
48 **make a motion that we remove Preferred Option d of a maximum**

1 size limit.
2
3 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We are getting that motion on the board. Dr.
4 Lasseter, does this apply to Alternatives 3 and 4 only?
5
6 **DR. LASSETER:** Myron, would your intention be delegation as well
7 and you would not want to delegate this? Okay. So I would say
8 2, 3, and 4.
9
10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Myron, that would be okay to include it then,
11 to remove Option d in Alternatives 2, 3, and 4?
12
13 **MR. FISCHER:** It's not rationale, but it's just as time goes on
14 and as science changes and science gives us other information --
15 If science would dictate that we shouldn't be doing it this way
16 and they come to us in three or five years, I'm sure the sitting
17 body at that time would then incorporate it, but we don't have
18 any evidence that this would do any good whatsoever.
19
20 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a motion and do we have a second to the
21 motion?
22
23 **DR. CRABTREE:** Second.
24
25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's been seconded by Dr. Crabtree. Any
26 discussion?
27
28 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I would like Roy Crabtree to explain to me your
29 comments about how setting a maximum size limit is going to have
30 an effect throughout the Gulf. I don't get that.
31
32 **DR. CRABTREE:** Recall the presentation on the stock assessment
33 yesterday and we saw a figure that showed how the recreational
34 selectivities had shifted towards larger fish and as a
35 consequence of that, the TAC went up. If you put a maximum size
36 limit on there, you are essentially shifting it back down and
37 the TAC is going to go down on it.
38
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other discussion on this motion?
40
41 **MR. ATRAN:** I have been looking for the discussion of slot
42 limits that the SSC had and I can't find it, but I do recall
43 that maximum size limits were found not to have a whole lot of
44 impact, mainly because there were fewer fish caught at the large
45 size limits than at the small size limits.
46
47 Now, based upon what Roy just said, selectivity has shifted
48 towards the larger fish, there may be a little bit more impact

1 than what that slot limit analysis indicated, but I don't think
2 this is a major item. I think the main thing is trying to
3 provide uniformity of the regulations would simplify it across
4 the Gulf.

5
6 **DR. PONWITH:** The size of the fish that are brought in matters
7 in the stock assessment. The relationship is complex and so I
8 would be careful about making kind of strong one-to-one
9 relationships, but Dr. Crabtree is correct.

10
11 That was one of the things that did change in the stock
12 assessment between this update and the last benchmark, is that
13 those selectivities did change and it did change the
14 relationship.

15
16 I think what Steven just said is exactly true and that is that
17 the size composition/age composition of the landings are
18 important in the stock assessment and having different
19 regulations in different subregions will add to the complexity
20 of the stock assessment and I think that's the take-home
21 message.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right and so any other discussion? The
24 motion is to remove Option d, eliminating a maximum size limit,
25 in Alternatives 2, 3, and 4. **All those in favor of the motion**
26 **please raise your hand.**

27
28 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** One, two, three, four, five, six,
29 seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen,
30 fifteen.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** So we have fifteen and just for -- **Any**
33 **opposition? Okay and it was pretty much unanimous.** Let's take
34 a quick break at this time for about ten minutes, please. Thank
35 you.

36
37 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

38
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We are going to go ahead and continue the
40 discussion and, Dr. Lasseter, you had a couple more points in
41 the document?

42
43 **DR. LASSETER:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman. We want to look
44 back at the updated actions and alternatives to Alternative 5.
45 Staff also reorganized the Action 1 and, as you noticed, the
46 preceding options are now the various management measures and so
47 we've removed the sunset options within the alternatives and we
48 made them a stand-alone alternative.

1
2 You had selected Option c, to sunset regional management after
3 three calendar years of the program. That was selected with
4 your Preferred Alternative 2 and you did select now a new
5 preferred alternative and you have not selected a sunset option
6 and so, as it stands now, Alternative 5 has no preferred
7 alternatives.

8
9 **MR. FISCHER:** I know this was somewhere else, but I thought we
10 had further discussion that, and I thought it stemmed from Roy,
11 that the sunset option is moot, because the council can vote
12 something in or out as needed and it wasn't necessary and maybe
13 we didn't vote on it and maybe he just made the comment and we
14 let it be, but I thought after that discussion that it was
15 decided that a sunset wasn't needed.

16
17 **DR. LASSETER:** I understood that at this time you had not
18 selected -- You no longer have a sunset selected and I wanted to
19 out how it's restructured. They are here and if the council
20 does not wish to consider sunsets, you could move this to
21 considered but rejected or we can just leave this here for now
22 and I just wanted to point out that there is not a preferred
23 sunset at this time.

24
25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any direction from the council? Does anyone
26 want to make a motion to remove the alternative for a sunset?

27
28 **MR. PERRET:** Myron is absolutely right that a majority of the
29 council at any meeting can modify whatever, but I assume the
30 reason it's in there the way it is is because of sector
31 separation with the sunset and now maybe -- Myron now says we
32 don't need a sunset here and I agree, but we didn't need a
33 sunset on sector separation, but we put it in and so I think,
34 for consistency, leave it in for now and it certainly can be
35 changed.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other discussion? Ava, have you got some
38 direction then or any other things in the document?

39
40 **DR. LASSETER:** Yes and if we could scroll down to Action 2, to
41 address the sub-allocation alternative for regions being able to
42 modify allocations.

43
44 We have modified the Action 2, Regional Management and Sector
45 Separation, and the tables that you will see in here are not
46 part of the alternatives. These will be in the action on
47 allocation, but we've included them here just so that you could
48 see an example of what each of them do and so I would like to

1 review this action for you again.

2
3 Alternative 2 would extend sector separation, essentially,
4 extend separate management of the recreational components, and
5 apply this amendment, regional management, to the private
6 angling component only. Now, the table there would represent
7 your current preferred alternative for allocation, but applied
8 to just the private anglers only.

9
10 Alternative 3 would extend the separate management of the
11 components, but to apply this amendment, regional management, to
12 both components, but to continue to manage them with separate
13 allocations. We have provided options for each of the states
14 and each of the states could decide if they wanted to adopt sub-
15 allocations for their state. This way, we could analyze the
16 sub-allocation on that state in the document and so this is how
17 we approached trying to work the sub-allocation back in.

18
19 Then Alternative 4 was the previous Alternative 4 as well that
20 ends the management of the separate sectors at the time that
21 this amendment is implemented, which could be shortly before the
22 sector separation would sunset.

23
24 This alternative would end sector separation at the time of this
25 amendment and have this amendment applied to the entire
26 recreational sector without there being separate subquotas and
27 so these tables are from the document that you have in the
28 briefing book and the table on the right-hand side reflects the
29 current preferred alternatives in the document.

30
31 Currently, you have both 2006 and 2010 removed and so we also
32 provided you, on the left, the difference if you just exclude
33 2010.

34
35 **MR. BOYD:** Mr. Chairman, is this a new document? I am having
36 trouble finding this document.

37
38 **DR. LASSETER:** I believe we did email them out. There was
39 discussion in the committee and Myron asked if we could work
40 some of this up and Robin also wanted some of these actions and
41 alternatives put back in and so staff got together and have
42 brought you a document that we felt better reflected what had
43 been asked for and we just wanted to go ahead and show it to you
44 at this time and get any guidance that we can, so we can
45 continue working on the document.

46
47 **MR. BOYD:** When did we email it out?
48

1 **DR. LASSETER:** This morning. Yesterday, I printed out and I
2 apologize that I couldn't email it. I couldn't copy the tables,
3 but your preferred alternative in the last iteration of the
4 document, which included landings only through 2012. We updated
5 the landings through 2013 and the alternatives.

6
7 We updated the landings to include 2013 and they now have the
8 calibrated MRIP numbers and so the handout you got yesterday,
9 the highlighted rose shows you the difference between the
10 preferred alternative before 2013 was added and the calibrated
11 landings were modified. This was at Mr. Boyd's request.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We are having some technical difficulties here
14 with some other conversation.

15
16 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

17
18 **DR. LASSETER:** If I can explain, in the Reef Fish Committee
19 Report, there is a place where it says the restructured
20 alternatives will be provided on the screen. We have emailed it
21 out and it is on the web and I apologize for the confusion.
22 Staff got together and reworked this quickly to give you an
23 updated version that you could comment on and that we could get
24 some more feedback on.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Anything else you want to add or talk about
27 related to this?

28
29 **DR. LASSETER:** This particular action, I am hoping that the
30 Alternative 3 now expresses what you were interested in for the
31 sub-allocations. Did we get it successfully?

32
33 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I will be quite honest with you that I've been
34 having a little trouble trying to keep up with you and I am
35 checking my emails and I don't see it. I am not saying you
36 didn't send it, but I am having some technical difficulties on
37 my end and I certainly appreciate the staff taking the time to
38 try to be very attentive to the council's wishes and needs, but
39 this is quite a bit of information here to try to digest at this
40 point in time.

41
42 If somebody else has had the document and they have followed
43 along better than I and they have comments to try to get to
44 Ava's point of getting some feedback as the document is still
45 under development, certainly I don't want to stop any of the
46 conversation, but you know this does have an impact on the
47 overall tone and discussion, I guess, related to the entire
48 document. Does anybody have any comments?

1
2 **MS. LEVY:** Just to -- I don't know that you need to do anything
3 except maybe indicate that you're okay with us putting this into
4 the next iteration of what you see and essentially what we tried
5 to do in crafting Alternative 3, which is really what is
6 different than what you had seen before -- The wording is a bit
7 different in the other alternatives, because we were trying to
8 make it more clear exactly what was getting applied to what and
9 which allocations were being used, et cetera, but what
10 Alternative 3 tries to do is give you an option, at a state or
11 regional level, to select keeping sector separation and managing
12 the two separate components separately at whatever level you
13 choose, which went back to that alternative that you had before
14 in the prior document that was to allow the regions to establish
15 sub-allocations.

16
17 It's attempting to get at that and then trying to make the other
18 alternatives more clear and as long as you're comfortable with
19 us continuing with this for the next version, then I think staff
20 would probably be good.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I would certainly let folks respond to that. I
23 guess, Dr. Lasseter, if you could answer this question. Does it
24 have, in these current alternatives that were just now included,
25 I guess an option -- If a state didn't want to or a region
26 didn't want to and let's assume that the option that was
27 selected was --

28
29 There was an option for states to opt out or opt in and just
30 submit a plan and they kind of develop or is there an option for
31 a state to select the Gulf-wide percentage? Can that be
32 addressed in here, if we have like one that doesn't want to, yet
33 another state that does? Can they have a choice or is this all
34 or nothing? Is this every state has to select all the
35 percentages that are in here?

36
37 **DR. LASSETER:** The way we've structured it for the Alternative 3
38 is that the council could select options for which states would
39 intend to continue sector separation within their region. Now,
40 whether or not you could decide this annually and modify it,
41 that's when we get tricky, because an allocation decision, a
42 sub-allocation decision, is going to require a greater analysis,
43 a deeper analysis, and so I am leaning toward -- We can discuss
44 it in the IPT afterwards, but I am assuming that you would have
45 to make the decision for each state at this time, but this does
46 offer up each state could do it or not. If you don't want to do
47 it, your state is not selected as an option.

48

1 **MR. RIECHERS:** Ava, as I'm understanding it, it does have an
2 opt-in-opt-out notion to it right now, which was what we talked
3 about in committee. That was the thing we were trying to fix
4 and the only caveat you're saying to that is it appears, at
5 least the way it's drafted at this moment in time, is it's an
6 opt in or opt out right now and then it may not have the
7 flexibility to think about through time, given the way it's
8 structured at this moment. Is that fair?

9
10 **DR. LASSETER:** That is how I understand it and if a state did
11 want to opt in at a later date, we would have to follow a proper
12 document procedure.

13
14 **MS. BOSARGE:** So on Alternative 3, if a state opts out, what
15 does it revert to, Alternative 2 or Alternative 4 percentages?

16
17 **MS. LEVY:** I don't know about the percentages. I am not sure
18 that these tables reflect all the different variations that can
19 happen, which would have to be reflected in the allocation
20 alternative, which is Alternative 4, but the way this is
21 written, for the states that decide to do this, the private
22 angling and for-hire components would be managed by each region
23 under separate quotas that are based on the component allocation
24 in Amendment 40 and the regional allocation selected in Action
25 4.

26
27 In all other regions, the private angling component would be
28 managed by each region under the quota that's based on the
29 allocation in Action 4 and the federal for-hire component would
30 be managed under a Gulf-wide quota that's based on the
31 allocation in Amendment 40.

32
33 I don't know how the percentages worked out, because that's
34 going to have to be in the allocation amendment. I think these
35 were just put in here as an example and I don't know what would
36 happen if some states opted in and others opted out and how
37 those might shift.

38
39 **MS. BOSARGE:** As a follow-up, Mara, if a state opts out,
40 essentially it reverts back to Amendment 40, in the sense that
41 for-hire will not be under state management at that point and
42 only private angling?

43
44 **MS. LEVY:** Right and so this action is structured to either
45 allow the council to say for everybody they are going to be
46 managed separately, right, and regional management only applies
47 to private angling. That's one of the alternatives here.

48

1 Another alternative is there is no sector separation and
2 regional management applies to the recreational sector as a
3 whole. This third option is a combination of those two,
4 depending on what you choose for each state. This allows each
5 state or region to either operate regional management with
6 sector separation or without it and so this is a combination of
7 those other all-or-nothing approaches, to sort of allow you to
8 decide on a case-by-case basis what each region would want to
9 do.

10
11 The reason that we're putting it in here upfront is because then
12 we can do the NEPA analysis on the impacts of keeping sector
13 separation for some regions and getting rid of it for others,
14 depending on what you do, so that you can implement it. What
15 happens is if we don't decide upfront, then when you come in and
16 one state is like, oh, I want to do sector separation, then we
17 don't have a NEPA analysis or anything that tells us what the
18 impacts of that are and so we're trying to frontload it right
19 here.

20

21 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other comments on this?

22

23 **MR. FISCHER:** We passed Amendment 40 and I don't think I would
24 even want to address Alternative 4 if it dissolves Amendment 40.
25 That's not the goal. The goal is to work within the system.

26

27 I think Alternative 3 allows the states to work within the
28 structure of 40, where their charter boats are granted their
29 historic catches on the same years that we had in the sector
30 separation document. To that, I would like to see discussion on
31 this, because I think we've progressed with alternatives that we
32 would like to see and I'm trying to come up with a preferred and
33 I'm trying to get to the correct page again.

34

35 I would like to see Alternative 3 as a preferred, but I would
36 only want to speak to Louisiana as Option d being the preferred.
37 If we do that, then we're bound that each state can't add --
38 Because there is not enough room on the board for five motions
39 and so I would like to see some discussion and see where we go
40 on that and allow states just to have the feeling of states, but
41 our view is Alternative 3 with a minimum of Option d and
42 allowing other states the opportunity to comment and maybe then
43 we'll sweep it in as one motion.

44

45 **MR. RIECHERS:** Like you, Kevin, I certainly want to applaud the
46 IPT team for getting together and attempting to draft as much of
47 this as they can. I think the discussion we had in committee
48 was to craft something that allowed for the flexibility of

1 opting into this or opting out and I don't know if this current
2 set of alternatives captures that. It seems like it may be
3 difficult for it to capture it, based on what you just said,
4 Myron.

5
6 The other part is I think we have a very difficult time in
7 picking preferreds on this, given that we have some people who
8 haven't been able to access it and so forth and I think,
9 procedurally, we probably wouldn't want to go down that road
10 today and we may want to digest this and each person have their
11 opportunity to look at it a little more closely.

12
13 What I would just suggest is that maybe one of the things is
14 going back to that committee discussion and making sure that we
15 have that flexibility that Myron just spoke to.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes and I will also add that, as Dr. Lasseter
18 had said, that this was just something to try to address the
19 committee's intent or recommendations to try to get at a broader
20 suite of options and that's essentially what she's trying to do
21 and Mara just added that if there was anything that we could,
22 based on the brief look at, that we could improve or give
23 further guidance on, then we can do that.

24
25 **DR. LASSETER:** I just want to add that we don't need -- We are
26 happy if you want to make preferred alternatives, but it's not
27 as much what we're going for. It's more just to lay out where
28 the structure is and if there's anything you want to add or take
29 out or remove and we understand that you don't even have the
30 discussion for each of these actions yet, but we just kind of
31 wanted to get some sense of direction.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes and so I don't know if that -- I certainly
34 would allow everyone that wanted to speak to go ahead and speak,
35 but I would kind of just put a hold, if you will, or we can come
36 back to this at the next meeting with these, but if we have some
37 immediate comments to this or what's been provided to us, then,
38 again, to help staff for that next version, then let's go ahead
39 and do that, but, as Robin stated and I agree, it's a little
40 premature, based on just really seeing this document, to kind of
41 select any preferreds.

42
43 **DR. LUCAS:** Mara, I think you explained this earlier, but I am
44 just trying to clarify what you were talking about. In
45 Alternative 3 that's down there, if a state opts in to that or
46 opts out or let's say a state opts out and we then only manage
47 the private recreational sector, which then goes, I guess, back
48 up to the Alternative 2 that was before it, and the council is

1 managing the for-hire sector, that's still the percentage that
2 Mississippi's for-hire sector is going to get is what this
3 document says or no?

4
5 **DR. LASSETER:** To clarify that, these little tables we just put
6 in to show you an example and these are the allocations and
7 that's a completely separate action.

8
9 All of these are based on your current preferred alternative,
10 except actually these exclude 2010 only. We will look at this
11 again in a few minutes and we'll get to the allocation action
12 and hopefully I can clarify that a little more. These would not
13 be the results and this is one alternative and you will be able
14 to select from a range of alternatives for the allocation.

15
16 **MR. PERRET:** You know we've been discussing regional management
17 for how many years now, Myron, two-plus? The main focus of
18 regional management is flexibility and giving a region and/or a
19 state, if you will, the flexibility to manage their own
20 fishermen.

21
22 Now, we sat here yesterday for several hours and, at my count,
23 I've got fifty individuals that commented and never have I sat
24 through a public testimony where this council received so much
25 thanks for doing something and that was for Amendment 40 and
26 sector separation.

27
28 I don't know how many of those fifty commented relative to they
29 want to opt out of the regional management thing. I think we
30 definitely need the option that would not include the for-hire
31 sector in sector separation.

32
33 Now, we get a lot of public testimony and we meet in another
34 area of the Gulf and we may, in all probability, hear the whole
35 other end of the spectrum, but certainly at this stage I
36 certainly want to see it included for discussion and for
37 additional input.

38
39 **MS. BOSARGE:** Two follow-ups and I guess I will do Corky's
40 first, since he just finished. I think what you were saying,
41 Corky, is that you want to make sure there's an option in there
42 so that the for-hire stays at the federal management level and
43 opts out of state management, which I think is Alternative 2,
44 where we have that ability to choose that alternative, which
45 would keep the for-hire sector at the federal management level
46 and push private anglers down to the states for state
47 management.

48

1 **MR. PERRET:** Do you want me to answer my opinion?
2
3 **MS. BOSARGE:** Yes.
4
5 **MR. PERRET:** Well, number one, there may be regions that don't
6 want any part of regional management, but let's say all five do
7 and I want to give those five regions the option to have it
8 whichever way they want to do it.
9
10 Now, listening to what I heard yesterday, if I were a state
11 director in a particular state, I would certainly want to try
12 and accommodate their wishes. Some states, their for-hire may
13 be in a different situation, but I think we need those options
14 in the document.
15
16 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** To that point, Dr. Lasseter, is that -- I mean
17 these were just some additional alternatives, but that
18 particular alternative will still stay in the document as it
19 moves forward, because that is a major option or it could be a
20 selection, correct?
21
22 **DR. LASSETER:** I am also understanding -- Corky is actually
23 pointing out something different that is not in here and we can
24 work up that alternative. It would be similar to 3, but it
25 would allow the states to choose whether or not their for-hire -
26 - Yes and so we'll get that as a new alternative for the next
27 iteration.
28
29 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Well, this is really going off the rails.
30 Again, I appreciate staff trying to be quick and for expediency
31 purposes bringing something to the council, but for the next
32 time we look at this, and I would say we don't spend much more
33 time on this document and move on to the rest of the Reef Fish
34 Summary and look at the other things we need to do, if it's a
35 new alternative with a new analysis, I would say it just becomes
36 an additional alternative to those --
37
38 **DR. LASSETER:** We haven't done any analysis.
39
40 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Okay, but as part of the next document, you
41 might have some of that in there, but anything that's new, it
42 gets added and all the previous alternatives that we had when we
43 had a document to look at for this council meeting still stay in
44 there, but you just change the order and add more alternatives
45 and so I think that would be probably the best way that we go
46 ahead and not spend much time talking about choosing and which
47 state might want to do this.
48

1 As long as it sounds like you've got some of the intent of the
2 council to look at as much flexible options -- I saw a puzzled
3 look at the last discussion with Corky and you or Dr. Lucas's
4 request and I did too, because I didn't think there was that
5 ability for a state to just come in, if everyone else didn't
6 have a for-hire percentage selected, for a state to come in and
7 offer that as a plan.

8
9 I think there was some inequitable problems with that and so,
10 again, get with the IPT and try to be as inclusive as possible
11 for the next iteration, but let's try to move on.

12
13 **MR. RIECHERS:** The only thing is I would have what you draft as
14 an option, but we haven't voted on adding a lot of extra
15 alternatives here and that's what has kind of led down this
16 particular road, both in committee and now here again. I would
17 just caution adding lots of things to the document that haven't
18 been voted on by the full council to add.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I don't know necessarily -- Well, we do and we
21 don't. We do when a document comes from scoping and we give
22 some general guidance and we ask them to come with some
23 alternatives and so I mean these are just some additional
24 alternatives and I don't know that we necessarily need to vote
25 on each specific alternative that we want to see in the first
26 iteration. I do agree with you in some way that we do give
27 direction, but we don't give specific direction before we see
28 them written down.

29
30 **MR. RIECHERS:** I hear you and I'm not trying to dictate exactly
31 how this goes, but also, as we move through documents and we
32 think we're getting closer to them, that becomes less and less
33 and so I would just -- We just need to think about where we want
34 to be and everyone wants to talk about expediency and those
35 sorts of things and so I understand between you and staff that
36 you can work through this, but just understanding kind of the
37 discussion this morning that we spent trying to clean up past
38 things and also in committee. Just understand that.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Anybody have anything?

41
42 **MR. FISCHER:** I just wanted to tell Mr. Perret that we totally
43 agree with him. The whole object is flexibility. I can say the
44 Louisiana charter boats want to be included in a state
45 management plan. My question to you is where are you proceeding
46 to next? Are you staying on this document to the end?

47
48 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Well, I was going to ask Ava if she had any

1 other additional things that she might want to bring to our
2 attention and potentially we could kind of give some general
3 guidance as to include for the next version or not and it looks
4 like she does.

5

6 **DR. LASSETER:** Really it's the timeline and if we could talk
7 about what you expect for the document coming back and then,
8 going on down the road, your intention for getting this put in
9 place.

10

11 The reason that there is that one alternative about ending
12 sector separation is it would be contemporaneous with adoption
13 of this amendment and that just makes the other alternatives
14 easier to analyze and it makes the document work, because sector
15 separation will only be in place for 2015 to 2107.

16

17 Here we are in 2015 and we've got a very restructured document
18 and we're going to bring it back to you, if we could talk about
19 that and when you would like to see it again. We are trying to
20 get a sense of at what point within the sector separation sunset
21 might this be going final.

22

23 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Personally, I would like to see it as soon as
24 we can and keep it on the agenda and continue our discussions as
25 we work, realizing that the sunset provision is in the for-hire
26 sector.

27

28 To Corky's comment about the preference by a good portion of the
29 charter boat captains that were here and gave public testimony,
30 a lot of the comments that came out during their testimony, when
31 they made that comment, is they didn't know what regional
32 management represented to them and so I think these alternatives
33 and this new addition as we all talk about what we would like to
34 see -- I think it goes to the broader questions that are still
35 in a lot of people's minds as to what regional management would
36 look like. To answer your question, Ava, I think as soon as
37 possible, at the next meeting at the earliest, if you can do
38 that.

39

40 **MR. FISCHER:** I do think there's one more thing in this document
41 we have to discuss and it would actually be a question for Roy
42 and it may be moot. It's on Action 4 and if you do have the new
43 document, it's when you scroll down to Preferred Alternative 6.

44

45 The issue is the sector separation document excluded the catches
46 from 2006 and 2010 and this document only excludes 2010 and is
47 that an issue or -- It's the other way around. Is that an issue
48 in calculating and is it a legal issue? Is it something that we

1 should amend this? I just don't know the burden it is on your
2 office.

3
4 **DR. CRABTREE:** I don't think it's a burden, but I think if
5 you're going to do it differently than you did it in Amendment
6 40 that you're going to need to explain why, because in
7 Amendment 40 we excluded both years, right? Just 2010 and here
8 we're -- If here you want to exclude 2010 and 2006, I think
9 you're going to need to explain why you excluded 2006 here, but
10 not there.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I have Mr. Boyd and then I'm going to pass it
13 over to you, Johnny, to continue.

14
15 **MR. BOYD:** I just want to express a little frustration and to
16 follow up on Robin's comments. We seem to differ at different
17 times about putting things in documents. We have a document
18 here where we are injecting things and it sounds fine to me.

19
20 Yesterday, in Amendment 28, we had considerable discussion from
21 Dr. Crabtree and from Martha and from several people about some
22 things that should go in Amendment 28 and what we heard was
23 we're not going to put anything in there until you give us very
24 specific instructions and so how should we go? That's my
25 question to council staff and you don't have to answer me right
26 now, but it's just a frustration.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I've got comments, but, Doug, go ahead.

29
30 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** It's two contexts. One is I think
31 what Roy is saying is in Amendment 28 we need rationale for some
32 of the alternatives that staff is not capable of developing.

33
34 In this instance and in general, if staff can identify some
35 alternatives they think the council would be interested in in a
36 draft document, we can bring them forward. We are not saying
37 they are preferred, but they're bring them to your attention for
38 consideration and then you all decide if they're preferred or if
39 they're considered but rejected and that sort of thing. So it's
40 two different contexts.

41
42 One it's hard for us to develop rationale without specific
43 guidance and it's easier to identify a range of alternatives
44 that would satisfy NEPA and provide the council with a better
45 base for decision making. It's just different contexts.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I will let Leann talk and then, Johnny, you've
48 got it after that.

1
2 **MS. BOSARGE:** Thank you and I did want to give specific
3 instruction to staff to make sure that I get clarification on
4 one thing in Alternative 2 when we come back with this document
5 and this is mainly clarification because there seems to be
6 confusion in Mississippi in the for-hire fleet.

7
8 If Alternative 2 was selected, can you put some discussion in
9 there that tells us that yes, the for-hire fleet would stay at
10 federal level management and that as of right now, their
11 percentage of the quota, of the recreational quota, that 42
12 percent or whatever it is, that's fleet-wide across the Gulf and
13 that's what they have. We have not said that at the federal
14 level we are going to hand Mississippi charterboats 4 percent of
15 that. We haven't done that.

16
17 We've got a lot of things that we're talking about, but as of
18 right now, what we heard yesterday a lot was a twenty-day season
19 across the Gulf for the whole for-hire -- That 66 percent of the
20 season, twenty days or whatever.

21
22 Make sure that that's very clear in there, so that they don't
23 think that going with Alternative 2 still drills down to a
24 state-level quota at this point for them, because it doesn't
25 right now. It's just a for-hire Gulf-wide quota and we haven't
26 figured out what to do with it.

27
28 **DR. LASSETER:** If I may, the Alternative 2 there -- There's a
29 little note at the bottom and so that table is based on your
30 preferred allocation and this is also breaking down 57.7 percent
31 of the recreational quota. Is this what you're getting at?

32
33 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Can you all talk offline and see if --

34
35 **MS. BOSARGE:** If all of you all are okay with me giving her that
36 direction.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes. Go ahead, Johnny.

39
40 **MR. GREENE:** Committee members discussed how the boundary lines
41 between regions would be used, as each region's regulations
42 would be enforced upon landing. As an example, Dr. Crabtree
43 said the lines are needed for closing parts of the EEZ should a
44 state or region not have an approved conservation equivalency
45 plan. Should I pause here before I move on? Then I will carry
46 on.

47
48 Revised Public Hearing Draft Amendment 28, Red Snapper

1 Allocation, staff summarized the amendment, Tab B, Number 10,
2 and discussed a potential timeline for taking final action.
3 Staff noted that final action could be taken in June 2015 and
4 indicated that the amendment will be updated to reflect the
5 recent red snapper stock assessment.
6

7 Dr. Crabtree recommended that the committee further discuss the
8 purpose and need for this amendment and consider the role that
9 the recalibration of recreational red snapper landings and the
10 change in selectivity could play in reallocation discussions.
11 The committee initiated preliminary discussions on these issues
12 and staff noted that guidance from the council would be helpful
13 to update the amendment.
14

15 **MR. BOYD:** A question. At 9:15 or so or nine o'clock, we
16 received a Strelcheck presentation and are we going to have
17 another presentation this morning by Andy?
18

19 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I wasn't planning on it. I thought it was just
20 to add to the record. Dr. Crabtree, is that germane to any of
21 the conversation or remaining items in the Reef Fish Report?
22

23 **DR. CRABTREE:** Well, it depends on what you want to do and I
24 haven't heard anything out of this council as to what do you
25 want to do with Amendment 28. If you have specific questions,
26 it might be germane, but I don't know what you want to do with
27 it and so we need to give staff some guidance as to what we're
28 going to do with this amendment and do you want to add something
29 or do you not or do you want to -- That's what I don't know.
30

31 **MR. BOYD:** A follow-up. I would like for Andy to go ahead and
32 give this presentation. I have tried to quickly go through it
33 and I think it's important that this council might even hear
34 again the specifics on the SPR calculations and some of the
35 other issues, selectivity, that came out of yesterday's
36 discussions.
37

38 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think what this presentation tries to get out
39 is the quota goes up and I think it tries to get at the details
40 of recalibration and the details of the selectivity change and
41 how that affected the TAC. Whether that's relevant to this now
42 depends on where you guys are trying to go.
43

44 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Andy, you're coming up to the podium and how
45 long do you think you will need? Just a few minutes? Ten
46 minutes?
47

48 **MR. ANDY STRELCHECK:** I would say one to two minutes. I am not

1 going to give the whole presentation, but I just wanted to talk
2 about a single slide in the presentation, because it's come up
3 numerous times now during the meeting.

4
5 If you go to Slide 4, I recognize this is somewhat hard to see.
6 The time series goes out a fairly lengthy time period. Shannon
7 Calay presented this at the Scientific and Statistical Committee
8 meeting and what this is showing is the yields associated with
9 the overfishing limit and so not your F rebuild level. They
10 would be lower than this.

11
12 If you take a look carefully at the graphics, the royal blue
13 line, which is one of the lower lines, that's the SEDAR-31 base
14 overfishing limit that was produced from the previous
15 assessment. The red line, that's the new overfishing limit
16 trend that's being produced from the current stock assessment
17 and so there was a change there and that's what you've seen
18 obviously with the higher yield estimates that are now being
19 generated from the current stock assessment.

20
21 The question was what caused that change and what impacts did
22 some of the changes that we've discussed on the record at the
23 SSC meeting and obviously here at the council meeting, how did
24 those influence that increased level of yield?

25
26 Shannon took a look at removing the newly calibrated MRIP
27 estimates and going back to the old MRIP estimates without the
28 calibration, as well as not changing the selectivity, which were
29 information she provided during her presentation on Monday.

30
31 She looked at it from keeping one of those in, but taking the
32 other out or removing both of them, but, as you can see, if you
33 remove the calibrated estimates for MRIP and the selectivity
34 estimates, it generates that light blue line and so that is
35 essentially a comparable baseline run with the previous
36 assessment, with those changes not taking place.

37
38 You can see they're very close to in line with the previous
39 assessment. However, if you modify one or both of those, those
40 yield levels start going up and ultimately the difference
41 between the base run, continuity run, and the approved run that
42 was selected by the SSC is about two or two-and-a-half million
43 pounds. That's all related to changes in the recreational
44 selectivity function and the modification to the MRIP estimates.

45
46 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right and so any -- Does anybody have any
47 comments to that or any questions for Andy?

48

1 **MR. BOYD:** Yes, I have. Based on the presentations yesterday
2 and based on this, I have a motion, if staff would put that up
3 for me. It's a two-part motion and I would like to change a
4 little bit of what's on there. **The motion is in Action 1 of**
5 **Amendment 28 to add two alternatives and they would be**
6 **Alternative 8 is the increase in allowable harvest (due to the**
7 **changes in recreational data) from the updated assessment will**
8 **be allocated to the recreational fishery. The percentage**
9 **increase for the recreational fishery should be that amount**
10 **attributable to recalibration of MRIP catch estimates. This**
11 **would result in an increase of, and I don't have that number of**
12 **pounds, to the recreational fishery. Then Alternative 9 is the**
13 **increase in allowable harvest (due to changes in recreational**
14 **data) from the updated assessment will be allocated to the**
15 **recreational fishery. The percentage increase in the**
16 **recreational fishery should be that amount attributable to the**
17 **recalibration of MRIP catch estimates and the change in size**
18 **selectivity. This would result in an increase of, and I don't**
19 **have the number of pounds and I will get Andy to put that in,**
20 **for the recreational fishery. That's my motion, Mr. Chairman.**

21
22 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a motion and is there a second for the
23 motion? It's been seconded by Dr. Stunz. Is there discussion
24 on the motion?

25
26 **MR. PERRET:** If we approve this motion, do we have an
27 opportunity to have our S&S Committee and our advisory panel and
28 so on provide input to us prior to us giving final approval on
29 something like this?

30
31 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Yes, this is simply adding
32 alternatives to the document for consideration and so an
33 analysis will have to be done.

34
35 **MR. PERRET:** So we will get a complete analysis by our advisory
36 groups?

37
38 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** The IPT will do the analyses and
39 that can be reviewed by the SSC at the next meeting.

40
41 **MR. PERRET:** When is the next meeting?

42
43 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** It's usually three weeks before the
44 council meeting and so it will be about the first of March.

45
46 **MR. PERRET:** From a logistics standpoint, we should be able to
47 get all of this done prior to the next meeting?

48

1 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** That I don't know. I don't know
2 what's involved in doing the analyses. That would be up to the
3 IPT and if they can't get it done within the next month, then it
4 won't come back as a full analysis in March, but I am sure they
5 will do the best they can to do that.

6
7 **DR. STUNZ:** Just I speak in favor of this motion. The way I'm
8 looking at it and understanding what Andy just presented, we had
9 this fundamental change in the way the data was collected from
10 MRIP, which obviously was incorporated in this last assessment
11 that we saw, resulting in the two-million, and I'm trying to
12 remember, but two-million-whatever-pounds that it was.

13
14 In looking at this and, Andy, please correct me if I'm wrong or
15 not in interpreting this right, but when you look at these
16 sensitivity runs or whatever you want to call it, that overage
17 in that assessment is largely due to the MRIP recalibration
18 that's coming from this recreational sector.

19
20 To me, it makes logical sense that that overage or increase in
21 allocation or whatever we want to call it should go back to that
22 sector that in fact is contributing to this assessment and those
23 two-million pounds.

24
25 **DR. CRABTREE:** Presumably, if we pass this motion, then staff
26 will need to go in and revise the purpose and need to reflect
27 that part of the purpose and need is to deal with the MRIP
28 calibration and these other things and fundamental changes in
29 the recreational fishery that are changing the TAC and all of
30 that. I think staff would need to do that and then we can look
31 at that language at the next meeting, because I would rather not
32 try to hash that out right now.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you.

35
36 **MS. LEVY:** Just a technical point. If we could change
37 "recreational fishery" to "recreational sector" and it's not a
38 big deal, but just to be precise. Thank you.

39
40 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Doug, do you approve of that change?

41
42 **MR. BOYD:** I have no problem with that. We need to change it in
43 both of the alternatives.

44
45 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Dr. Stunz, that's good to you? Okay. Just
46 making sure. Any other discussion on the motion?

47
48 **MS. BOSARGE:** I am not opposed to looking at what Doug wants to

1 look at right here. I think it's definitely something that we
2 have to go back -- I mean that's all in this recalibration and
3 we have to go back and examine the original allocations and how
4 that goes back in time and how you hash all that out.

5
6 Having said that, I don't think that it belongs in Amendment 28.
7 If you put this alternative in with these other alternatives
8 that we have in there right now, which is just a simple shift of
9 allocation, even if you change the purpose and need, you're
10 looking at two fundamentally different things.

11
12 You've got this first set of alternatives that are just shifting
13 allocation, which was originally for stability and things of
14 that nature. Then you've got these other alternatives that are
15 going to follow it which are changing allocation based on how we
16 originally allocated the fishery.

17
18 In other words, those numbers have changed and so therefore
19 you're going to go back and revamp them. To me, those two
20 things don't belong together in a set of alternatives. You are
21 looking at two different problems and solving two different
22 problems.

23
24 Now, I am not opposed to looking at this in a separate amendment
25 and also because when you get into that, there's a whole lot
26 more than just saying, okay, we recalibrated and all that was
27 attributable to the recreational fishery and therefore, we're
28 going to shift allocation in this manner. You will get into
29 some of the same problems that we had in allocation within the
30 recreational fishery in Amendment 40, where, when you start
31 going back, in 2007 you constrained the commercial fishery and
32 so now you're not comparing apples to apples before 2007.

33
34 You see where there will more hurdles that will have to be
35 hashed out and this is just going to get longer and longer and
36 longer as far as the alternatives that are included in it. I
37 would rather see this done in a separate amendment, where we can
38 attack each one of those issues and come up with a good, strong
39 foundation for how we're doing this.

40
41 **MR. BOYD:** Leann, I understand what you're saying and I thought
42 about that and I think in this document, unless counsel
43 disagrees with me, is that you could have two preferred
44 alternatives or you could have one.

45
46 You could take one of these two new ones and make it the
47 preferred and that's the document and there is no other
48 discussion or you could have a preferred here that would add

1 just this overage that we're talking about or just this
2 recalibration that we're talking about and you could go back and
3 have another alternative that's no action in the rest of it or
4 you could have the preferred alternative that we have now. I
5 believe you could do two here.

6
7 **DR. CRABTREE:** I am not sure about that, but my suggestion to
8 you, and I understand the point Leann is making, but if we come
9 in and work on the purpose and need, we may well find that some
10 of these alternatives don't meet the purpose and need and we
11 could pare this down to a more focused document.

12
13 I don't know and that kind of comes down to what you're trying
14 to do with it, but I am not sure I would want to see us split
15 this into two separate amendments at this point, but what we've
16 struggled with really has been the purpose and need and exactly
17 what we're trying to achieve.

18
19 It does seem me, to me, that this motion is more focused and it
20 seems more definite in that you can calculate the number that
21 are the X's now and put it in there and it does seem
22 conceptually easier for me to wrap my hands around. The other
23 alternatives in there have been much more general of reallocate
24 some percentage of fish based on perceptions of net benefits and
25 all of these, but we've never had a good way to know how much
26 should we allocate and what exactly will it do.

27
28 That's one of the problems, remember, that came out of the SSC
29 in the economic study. It tended to indicate direction, but no
30 one could really tell us how much and we had all of these
31 arguments about what is marginal and all those kinds of things,
32 but I think maybe, with some work on the purpose and need, when
33 we come back in that we might be able to narrow down the number
34 of alternatives that are in the document at that point.

35
36 **MR. RIECHERS:** I know there's been a lot of attack on purpose
37 and need and certainly that's an easy thing to attack. I would
38 say that as we've looked back at our documents that sometimes
39 our purpose and needs have not been as fleshed out as maybe they
40 should have been and maybe they're not here, but, quite frankly,
41 this document started as a call for looking at reallocation.

42
43 We have also had some past history with that on other species
44 and it is a very difficult thing to look at, but we've said
45 we're going to look at it and there's been a call and a policy
46 for the councils to look at it.

47
48 We have received the economic analysis in regards to where those

1 additional pounds should -- Which direction they should go and
2 so while the first suite of options there deal with various ways
3 to do that, they actually have a purpose and the purpose was to
4 reallocate from one sector to another based on the economic
5 analysis that was brought before this council.

6
7 Even though other folks keep saying there is no purpose and
8 need, we did have an original purpose and need and that's part
9 of it and it's achieving those net benefits, which may address,
10 in this case, where we believe, from this point on, more of that
11 harvest should go. We attempted to create some alternatives
12 that did that in a fair and equitable manner, where both sides
13 were benefitting some from those increases.

14
15 There are certainly other percentages one could put in there,
16 but we at least attempted to try to create some alternatives
17 that would do that, in addition to those that just moved
18 percentages. We've got a suite of alternatives that go about it
19 in a different set of ways.

20
21 **MR. WALKER:** I've got to speak against this, this recalibration.
22 If you back up in the history, the red snapper fishery began in
23 Pensacola, Florida and it was 100 percent commercial and it was
24 100 percent available for the nation to get 100 percent net
25 benefit.

26
27 Over the years, it's been -- They've come up with the
28 allocations and a lot of these allocations -- I mean these
29 recalibrations are based on the certainty and so forth and as
30 you go back in time and as I have been offshore in the 1980s and
31 the 1990s and 2000s, it was the -- You didn't see these
32 recreational fishermen offshore.

33
34 You saw a few charter boats and as time went on, you would see
35 bigger boats and they started out in the twenty and twenty-five
36 foot and then thirty and thirty-five and then on up and I see
37 one going down the interstate last year that was the high
38 thirties and it had five engines on the back of it. It's just
39 evolved and the electronics and the things that have provided
40 these calibrations, but in earlier years, we just didn't witness
41 this recreational effort. We saw some charter effort that was
42 offshore and like the range and they've had the improved weather
43 conditions and the artificial reef program.

44
45 At the same time, back in history, the commercial consumer and
46 seafood supply access has been capped and weren't allowed to
47 grow and the charter for-hire, they have been capped, but there
48 has been no constraints on other efforts and it's a shame that

1 something hasn't been done earlier in years and things continued
2 to go on.

3
4 As far as these uncertainties, I think the further you go back,
5 it's -- It gets kind of weak, in my view, and more recent years,
6 with the two fish bag limit, it's more accurate, I would say, in
7 the more recent years.

8
9 The SESSC has said, over and over, that -- You know you just
10 keep taking it and spinning the bottle and sending it back to
11 the SSC and we're not getting from the SESSC what we want and
12 let's consolidate these SSCs into one. This is just going on
13 too long and the commercial industry has asked for closure and
14 they want action. They are ready for someone to take action on
15 this amendment.

16
17 The calibration, it's weak, in my opinion, and the further you
18 go back in history. Of course, if you go back to shortly after
19 the Civil War, it would be pretty accurate. It's 100 percent
20 commercial, but I would speak in opposition to adding this.

21
22 **MR. BOYD:** Just a comment on that. If that same rationale was
23 used in transportation today, we would still be on horseback and
24 in covered wagons.

25
26 **MR. PERRET:** I think if indeed the recreational data methodology
27 was wrong that we should correct it and I agree with the attempt
28 Mr. Boyd is going to do. I think that those fish should go to
29 the recreational sector.

30
31 My problem is putting it in 28. I am against 28 and this would
32 go in 28. I can vote for this motion, but I am sure not going
33 to vote for 28 unless I see some rationale to justify providing
34 a sector with fish that have consistently not stayed within
35 their allocation and that's the problem I have, is where this is
36 going. I agree with you, Doug, on the motion, but I don't agree
37 where it's going.

38
39 **DR. CRABTREE:** I hear all the things you're talking about and I
40 know Amendment 28 has become a really charged amendment, but I
41 mean this motion is talking about an adjustment to the
42 allocation and if you look at the title of Amendment 28, it is
43 "Red Snapper Allocation".

44
45 Now, as I said, you want to -- We're in a dilemma right now.
46 Our allocations are mostly all based on our perception of what
47 the historic mix in the fishery is and one of the problems with
48 red snapper, and a number of other species, is those allocations

1 were put in place in Amendment 1, way back in 1990, and they're
2 based on a landings back from I think 1970 to 1986 and that's a
3 problem for us now, because it's hard to correct all those
4 landings that far back and even as David said, the world has
5 changed.

6
7 I mean we've got bigger boats and bigger engines and populations
8 have shifted and it gets harder and harder to know why the mix
9 in the fishery thirty-five years ago really has any relevance in
10 where we are today.

11
12 Now, we have economic data, which I don't want to get into
13 arguing about the economic data. People have interpreted it in
14 very different ways and we have struggled with trying to figure
15 out what that means to us and how we get there, but I think we
16 do have to deal with the fact that if our allocations are based
17 on the historical mix and our perception of what that historical
18 mix is changes, because of new science on what the surveys mean,
19 that's something I think that you have to deal with and take
20 into account in some fashion or another.

21
22 I don't know where else to put this at this point and so I think
23 that's something you're going to have to sort out and I think
24 there may well be good reasons for paring this amendment down
25 next time, but these are difficult decisions and somewhere we
26 need to find some better basis for deciding what the optimal
27 allocation is other than what we think it looked like forty
28 years ago, because I don't think anybody is really going to be
29 happy with that kind of thing.

30
31 **MR. PERRET:** Roy, I agree with you, but my problem with the
32 current allocation document is that this potential reallocation
33 is being done and fish are being moved from a segment whose
34 hands were tied. They could not increase. We shut them down
35 when they reached their quota and we're providing fish to a
36 segment that consistently went over.

37
38 If that sector had stayed within the allocation, I could be
39 supportive for economic and social and all those other reasons,
40 a changing world, to move fish over, just like I'm supportive of
41 the king mackerel thing that we're looking at on a possible
42 reallocation, but, saying that, I am not happy that the
43 commercial sector of king mackerel fishermen have gone over and
44 that's why I want accountability measures that if indeed we move
45 fish over, I want them held accountable and I also want a
46 provision that as the world changes, and we know it is, and as
47 recreational fishing increases, if we move something over from
48 the commercial side to the recreational side and then the

1 recreational guys are being hammered because they're catching
2 more fish, then we should allow for that switch or portion of it
3 to go back where it came from.

4
5 My problem is a sector that has consistently gone over and, in
6 my opinion, we are rewarding them for that and that's my problem
7 with reallocation of red snapper.

8
9 **MR. PEARCE:** I understand all the arguments and I understand the
10 fact that maybe the private recreational fisherman is catching
11 more today than he did before. I understand that there's bigger
12 boats with five engines on the back on them, like David said
13 over here. I understand all of those things and the world does
14 changes, but we have to be able to factor in the change on the
15 other side of that world.

16
17 All we can look at is the catch from the private recreational,
18 but what about the fact that there are bigger planes and there
19 are bigger trucks that haul seafood across this country to the
20 people that own that fish in the Gulf?

21
22 I mean those people need access as much as the recreational
23 fisherman does and I think we're losing sight of the fact that
24 there's more to this picture than just catching fish and there's
25 more to this picture that this country deserves the right to
26 have access to that product and so it deservedly should be just
27 the same for the general public as it is for the private
28 recreational fishermen and I'm not against the private
29 recreational fishermen, but I am telling you those same accesses
30 that they have increased, those accesses to that species and
31 that fish, or whatever fish we're talking about, to the American
32 public has expanded as well and why should we take their access
33 away because they have expanded because another side of the
34 fishery has expanded as well?

35
36 I think it's hard to put all of this into perspective when
37 you're looking at this one, because we can't measure that as
38 well and we can't look at it as well, but we clearly know that
39 fish is a center-of-the-plate protein in almost every restaurant
40 now.

41
42 We clearly know that the planes and the trucks and the fish --
43 There is more access to that too now and how do we measure that
44 and how do you take away from those people their access that
45 they've worked for a long time and they get because technology
46 has changed?

47
48 We've got better cooks and better chefs and better everything

1 and a lot of it is geared at fish. You can go to a restaurant
2 today and I can promise you the center-of-the-plate protein is
3 going to be fish.

4
5 You've got shrimp and crab and those are good too, but the
6 center-of-the-plate protein is always fish and so now we're
7 going to be reallocating away from that center-of-the-plate
8 protein and were going to be reallocating away from the citizens
9 of this country that own that resource as much as you and I do
10 without thinking about that their access has grown as well.

11
12 We need to take that into consideration and we need to really
13 think about that and it's very hard for me to do something
14 without thinking about the other side.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I am going to add a point in here. First off,
17 we need to be talking specific to the motion and I think the
18 last couple of comments were maybe looking beyond the motion.
19 We as a council are looked upon to evaluate allocations and to
20 make decisions on them.

21
22 I think it would be appropriate to have, to the extent
23 practical, all of the available tools by which we would come up
24 with that decision and so this particular motion looks at
25 another way of looking at how to make or how to come to that
26 decision and certainly we will have our discussions again on
27 this much or this much or nothing and that's a decision.

28
29 If there is any additional comments to be made, I want them to
30 really focus on the merits of this motion and looking at the
31 data or including this analysis and this data in our decision as
32 to how we proceed in evaluating whether or not any reallocation
33 needs to occur. Corky, to that, and can we keep it to this
34 motion, please?

35
36 **MR. PERRET:** Yes and I had council members tell me they could
37 not vote for sector separation because the specific percentages,
38 et cetera, et cetera, was not provided in the motion. We don't
39 have any idea what the pounds are going to be.

40
41 Now, increase of X pounds to the recreational sector, I would
42 have to assume that would be to the recreational sector for the
43 coming season as well as in the future is what you're getting at
44 and I agree with that, but we're being asked to vote on an issue
45 that we have no idea what that's going to be. Again, I'm
46 supportive of it if the new methodology is more accurate in
47 providing the information to us, but I would like to have a
48 number, to know what we're talking about.

1
2 **DR. CRABTREE:** Let's remember we're just adding an alternative
3 for analysis and when this comes back to you, we will have
4 numbers in there and a full analysis of it and so you're not
5 deciding and you're not changing the preferred. We already have
6 a preferred, but we're just adding another alternative to be
7 analyzed.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other discussion?

10
11 **MR. WILLIAMS:** A question for Doug Boyd, the maker of the
12 motion. Doug, is this meant to be a one-time increase and would
13 it have the effect of replacing those marginal increases in
14 allocation, those 75/25 increases? In other words, are you
15 planning to keep those in the document as well as this one-time
16 increase?

17
18 **MR. BOYD:** Yes and a while ago, I spoke to Leanne's question. I
19 said that the council could make a decision to have one of these
20 two alternatives as the only alternative and do a one-time
21 increase and this would just be it and it would be there or they
22 could choose to keep the other alternative of 75/25 or move to
23 100 percent to the recreational.

24
25 I am not trying to tell you what to do. I am just saying with
26 these two motions that I think there's been a change in the
27 fundamental understanding of the catch ratios and there's been a
28 fundamental understanding that the numbers we've dealt with over
29 the past few years have been incorrect and we need to recognize
30 that those numbers greatly affected the recreational industry.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It looks like we're ready to go. The motion is
33 to have two new alternatives included in Amendment 28 and you've
34 seen them up on the board.

35
36 **MR. BOYD:** I would just say, to Corky's point, that yes, I wish
37 I had numbers, Corky, but we got the presentations yesterday and
38 I don't feel comfortable giving you a number at this point and I
39 would hope that staff would have that in there when we come
40 back.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Let's go ahead and take a vote and raise your
43 hands again, please. **All those in favor to include the two**
44 **alternatives in Amendment 28, please raise your hand.**

45
46 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I've got one, two, three, four,
47 five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, eleven.

1 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I think John raised his hand late. All those
2 **opposed, for the record.**
3
4 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** One, two, three, four.
5
6 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Four opposed. The motion carries. All right,
7 Mr. Greene. I forgot and there might be something else. Go
8 ahead, Martha.
9
10 **MS. BADEMAN:** Thank you and so to dovetail with our past motion
11 and conversation, I would like to make a motion to revise the
12 purpose and need of this action and I think Karen is going to
13 put it up there, but I will read it.
14
15 The purpose of this action is to reallocate in a fair and
16 equitable manner red snapper resources between the commercial
17 and recreational sector to increase the net benefits from red
18 snapper fishing. The need for the proposed action is to base
19 sector allocations on the best scientific information available
20 and use the most appropriate allocation method to determine
21 sector allocations while achieving optimum yield, particularly
22 with respect to food production and recreational opportunities
23 and rebuilding the red snapper stock.
24
25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a motion to change the verbiage of the
26 purpose and need in the current document and Martha just read it
27 and it's on the board and do we have a second for the motion?
28
29 **DR. LUCAS:** Second.
30
31 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a second from Dr. Lucas. Any
32 discussion on the motion?
33
34 **MS. BOSARGE:** Martha, for my peace of mind, would you be willing
35 to put something in there, that first sentence, that says maybe
36 to evaluate the allocation or evaluate reallocating, as opposed
37 to saying we are going to reallocate?
38
39 **MS. BADEMAN:** I can live with that.
40
41 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Dr. Lucas, are you fine with that, too? Okay.
42 Any other discussion on the motion?
43
44 **MR. GREENE:** Just a question. I don't remember a time when we
45 have gone back in and redone a purpose and need to a process and
46 now, maybe the staff has worked on it or whatever, but it seems
47 like there was a need or a reason that we started this process
48 and perhaps because it's taken so long that the need has

1 changed, but I don't ever recall running into something like
2 this before and is this common?

3
4 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Doug, you can comment, but I don't recall many
5 times it happening, but, as you stated, this has been a fairly
6 long process and it's one that the council doesn't usually take
7 up and so I think everyone had a hard time trying to wrap their
8 minds around to get to an appropriate purpose and need and
9 certainly at Reef Fish, counsel had recommended that we address
10 the purpose and need portion of the document.

11
12 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** It's a reasonable thing to do.

13
14 **MS. BADEMAN:** Just to that point, it happens. It happens on the
15 South Atlantic sometimes and I think, at least in my mind, a lot
16 of this was, in my mind, where the purpose and need was before.
17 We did just add those alternatives that Doug had about the
18 calibration stuff and I am trying to, out of the best scientific
19 information available in there, to try to speak to that issue as
20 well. That's kind of where I came from with this.

21
22 **MR. WALKER:** My question is do we plan on sending this to the
23 SESSC?

24
25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We had some discussion about the timing and
26 whether or not the SSC would evaluate it and do you have an
27 immediate answer to that, Doug?

28
29 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** If we do send it to them, it would
30 be sequential. We would need the stock assessment people to
31 estimate what those numbers are and what the impacts are and
32 then the economists can give us -- In fact the economists on the
33 IPT can give us the relative impacts and we can have those
34 reviewed by the Socioeconomic SSC.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** What do you think the timeline -- Would that be
37 something we could bring it back the next meeting or is this a
38 June revisit?

39
40 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I would think for both SSCs that it
41 would probably be a June revisit. I just don't know how long it
42 will take to get those initial numbers.

43
44 **MS. BOSARGE:** When I'm reading the first paragraph of this
45 motion, to me it says we are evaluating reallocating for
46 economic purposes and that's the way we have it structured right
47 there, the syntax.

48

1 To me, there is two things we evaluate when we look at
2 allocation. We want to make sure it's fair and equitable and
3 then we evaluate it on the basis of the net benefits.

4
5 There is two things, two components, that we have to make sure
6 are in line in our allocation, but the way this reads is that
7 we're going to allocate it in a fair and equitable manner, the
8 red snapper resources, between commercial and recreational to
9 increase the net benefits from red snapper and so that is our
10 purpose. It's economic. Our purpose is economic driven, in my
11 mind in this, the way it's written right here.

12
13 When we get into our debate, we are saying we are doing this to
14 increase the net benefits. To me, it should read that we're
15 going to evaluate the allocation to, number one, make sure it's
16 fair and equitable between the two sectors and, number two, to
17 make sure that we have maximized net benefits, based on that
18 allocation between the two sectors. To me, this focuses too
19 much on the economics the way it's reading right now.

20
21 **MS. BADEMAN:** In my mind, net benefits go beyond economics, in
22 my opinion, and I -- There is no mention of economics in there
23 and I mean there is social factors and there certainly are
24 economic factors, but its more than just efficiency, if that's
25 what you're trying to get at. As we all know, that's part of
26 this, but it's not the sole driver. I don't know how to fix the
27 wording to fix your problem there.

28
29 **MS. LEVY:** I will make a suggestion and not to the wording, but
30 that I guess that if the real motion is to modify the purpose
31 and need to better reflect the best available scientific
32 information and the MRIP calibration and new stock assessment
33 information, to make the motion to give staff direction to look
34 at those things and maybe come back with some suggestions as to
35 what a modified purpose and need could be, because I think you
36 can tell from the conversation that it sort of requires a lot of
37 thought process in how you're articulating it.

38
39 I don't know if you want to try to work out how to articulate it
40 right now or give the direction and have staff go back and take
41 that into account and then bring you something that you can
42 consider and then tweak if you want to.

43
44 **MR. PERRET:** Since I am against 28, I probably should keep my
45 mouth shut, but I have said for many meetings that the purpose
46 and need certainly needs some work. We heard Myron this morning
47 talk about biology of the amberjack stock and spawning time and
48 we hear Robin all the time talk about conservation and there is

1 nothing in this purpose and need that says one word about
2 conservation.

3
4 How is it going to improve the conservation of the red snapper
5 stock, whether you give them all to one segment or all to the
6 other? If I was supportive of this, I would put something to do
7 with conservation in there and so I am giving you all a
8 suggestion.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Mara gave us some food for thought, so to
11 speak, on how we might want to approach this, but we do have a
12 motion on the board.

13
14 **MR. RIECHERS:** I think Mara's suggestion is trying to get at the
15 notion of us trying to edit a purpose and need with seventeen
16 members around this table is obviously a difficult thing to do.
17 I think what Martha has attempted to do was address some of the
18 past concerns that we've been hearing, both from members of this
19 council as well as members of the audience.

20
21 I am in favor of voting this up, but I would also suggest that
22 counsel -- The problem is that counsel has been hearing these
23 discussions and certain members of the staff and I would suggest
24 that yes, if you've got better suggestions as you go back and
25 think and work through this, that we have those come back
26 forward before us at the next meeting and I think if wording is
27 even better still, then we adopt that.

28
29 I think, as a whole, the umbrella of the notions are both in the
30 past purpose and need as well as in this one, but certainly we
31 can always craft those things a little bit better.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I would just say, Martha, you're the one that
34 brought the motion forward and if that's a way forward and we --
35 I would hate to have this go out and then there's going to be
36 some retooling and such and so we have multiple purpose and need
37 statements, but I would leave that up to you and the rest of the
38 council.

39
40 **MS. BADEMAN:** I am comfortable if staff has -- If they look at
41 this and they have suggestions on how to improve it, I am okay
42 with that. I just wanted to get a starting place.

43
44 **DR. ASSANE DIAGNE:** Essentially, if I understand this, we will
45 be given the latitude of providing you suggestions for purpose
46 and need the next time you see this, but our first reaction
47 looking at this, based on the alternatives that you are
48 considering, that you will add to the document, essentially,

1 fundamentally the purpose and need for this amendment really has
2 nothing to do with net benefits and net benefits, in the
3 understanding, are economic by nature, because if it is to
4 reflect the best data that we have, the best scientific
5 information and so forth, perhaps that is the direction that the
6 IPT will be looking into in crafting the purpose and need.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you and so we have a motion and it's been
9 seconded and we've had discussion and so let's go ahead and vote
10 this motion. The motion is on the board. **All those in favor**
11 **signify by saying aye; all those opposed like sign. The motion**
12 **carries.** Is there any other things related to Amendment 28 that
13 needs to come up? Johnny, if you can carry on.

14
15 **MR. GREENE:** Report of the Ad Hoc For-Hire Red Snapper AP, staff
16 summarized the report, Tab B, Number 11, and discussed the
17 motions made by the AP. The committee inquired about regional
18 differences relative to the support for a one fish bag limit. It
19 was noted that for-hire operators from Louisiana, Mississippi,
20 and Texas generally opposed the bag limit reduction. The
21 committee noted that due to section 407(d) of the Magnuson-
22 Stevens Act, the for-hire component may not fully harvest its
23 quota if a split season is in effect.

24
25 In response, Jim Greene, Chair of the AP, indicated that for the
26 for-hire component, accountability is more important than access
27 to the resource. The committee discussed a motion to expand the
28 for-hire management scoping document initiated in 2014, but the
29 motion failed.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Go ahead, Mr. Greene.

32
33 **MR. GREENE:** As we went through this report on Tuesday at
34 committee, I was kind of surprised that there wasn't very much
35 conversation about it. Having attended and chaired that AP,
36 there was a good mix of people who were there and there were a
37 lot of ideas that were fleshed out and there were people who put
38 down their differences and actually worked together and it was
39 very surprising to me, actually. I was kind of in amazement,
40 especially the later the meeting went.

41
42 There was a lot of talk about what can we do this year and I
43 think that kind of got everybody moving in a common direction.
44 I think it would be a good idea to put this group back together
45 as soon as we can notice it and get it back together. They were
46 pretty specific in asking questions about how does that process
47 work and it has to be noticed for twenty-one days, I believe was
48 the answer, and they wanted to meet as soon as practically

1 possible after this.

2
3 **With that, I would like to make a motion to convene the Ad Hoc**
4 **Red Snapper For-Hire AP to provide recommendations to the**
5 **council regarding the for-hire amendment.**
6

7 **DR. DANA:** Second.
8

9 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a motion to convene the Ad Hoc Red
10 Snapper For-Hire AP to provide recommendations to the council
11 regarding the for-hire amendment and it's been seconded by Dr.
12 Dana and is there council discussion?
13

14 **MR. GREENE:** I think it was a pretty good meeting and I think
15 they covered a wide range of topics and I think that we should
16 put them back together and see what happens and see if we can
17 further flesh out some of these ideas.
18

19 **MS. BADEMAN:** I attended that meeting also and I thought it was
20 a really positive meeting. There were a lot of different
21 personalities and views around the table and I thought that they
22 came together and were pretty productive in the end. My
23 question for you, Johnny, is the for-hire amendment that you
24 were talking about, are you talking about the recommendations
25 from this AP?
26

27 I know we had talked about, in committee, adding that to some
28 amendment that I can't remember the number now that no one
29 really knew what it was and I'm not sure which for-hire
30 amendment you're talking about in this motion.
31

32 **MR. GREENE:** In the report, they were talking about wanting to
33 put an amendment together and so I would probably at this point
34 just move to strike the words "regarding a for-hire amendment"
35 and just leave it at that particular point for right now, if my
36 seconder will agree.
37

38 **DR. DANA:** I agree.
39

40 **MR. BOYD:** I would just like to comment that I was there also
41 and just as an observer, I thought that the interaction was
42 incredibly good and there were diametrically-opposed opinions,
43 but everybody worked together and it was well done and well
44 managed.
45

46 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I take this motion that basically they're just
47 going to -- As long as they come up with a majority vote on any
48 of the motions that come forward, they're going to come up with

1 anything under the sun and is that correct, Johnny?
2

3 **MR. GREENE:** They were all over the place and they talked about
4 stuff that I never even dreamed of as far as that goes and I
5 thought I had really educated myself well on it and so there's
6 no telling what you're going to come back with and I think
7 that's kind of the beauty of this whole thing, is trying to get
8 outside of the box and do something different.
9

10 **DR. CRABTREE:** I am fine with convening this somehow. I guess
11 one thing that has disappointed me is we have a remarkably
12 successful headboat pilot project that's in its second year and
13 it works great.
14

15 It maintains them within their quota and they are economically
16 doing much better and it provides flexibility and all of these
17 things and we are in a position where it's going to lapse at the
18 end of this year and it would probably take us two years to go
19 through the whole process of putting in a program for that and
20 we really haven't had much discussion about that, but we put
21 this in place to try something and it's been a remarkably
22 successful program and I think it's just a shame that we're not
23 going anywhere with what's come out of that.
24

25 **DR. DANA:** I am going to vote for this and not because we should
26 be holding AP meetings for AP meetings sake, but because we have
27 placed a three-year sunset on this particular initiative and
28 while the last meeting, as I'm told, was productive, it was only
29 two days and the first day was just organizational.
30

31 We owe it to the expedited process or program to allow for this
32 diverse group to come together and finalize their thoughts on
33 how they would like the program to proceed.
34

35 **MR. RIECHERS:** When it was first talked about in committee and
36 there was an amendment process starting, I was less likely to
37 support it. I will support this as it is. Certainly those
38 individuals coming together and trying to come up with ideas
39 that they can bring back to the council.
40

41 I would hope that they focus though on those things that are
42 executable in a manner, in a timely manner, that we'll actually
43 be thinking about probably not even in June, but obviously the
44 next season, and things that aren't going to require referendums
45 and those sorts of things. Those are the kinds of things we
46 need now and not things that are way down the road.
47

48 **MR. WILLIAMS:** When are we considering this to meet, as soon as

1 we can? Could we also consider, or at least be understood by
2 staff, that at least we give them one charge to make a
3 recommendation as to what to do with the headboat program,
4 because we had many recommendations yesterday that the headboat
5 have their own advisory panel and that they be convened to come
6 up with a plan themselves.

7
8 I don't see how we could do that at this meeting. We would have
9 to get applications and so on from people who wanted to be on
10 it, but it's a relatively small universe, I think eighty boats
11 or something like that, and they've got records back to 1990 of
12 what they have captured and if there's some way to begin the
13 process, specifically to ask this panel as to what their
14 recommendation would be as to how to deal with the headboat
15 program, I would like to do that. I don't know that it's
16 necessary to stick this in the motion, but if staff would at
17 least understand that I would like to see that as one of their
18 charges.

19
20 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think one of the recommendations that came out
21 of their last meeting was that the council convene an ad hoc
22 headboat red snapper and grouper AP and they -- They have
23 already told us that we need to pull together a headboat AP to
24 start looking at that and so I'm fine with doing this, but I
25 guess after we dispense with this motion, the question is do we
26 want to put together a headboat AP?

27
28 **MR. PERRET:** Somebody said, and I think it was Robin and I agree
29 with him, let's try and get doable things, something that's
30 near-term and not long-term, and let's not kick it down the
31 road. With that, I have not heard anybody in opposition and I
32 call the question on the motion.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** He called the question on the motion and so we
35 will go ahead and vote. **All those in favor signify by saying**
36 **aye to convene the Ad Hoc Red Snapper For-Hire AP to provide**
37 **recommendations to the council; all those opposed like sign.**
38 **The motion carries.**

39
40 **MR. GREENE:** I would like to present another motion that the
41 council convene the Ad Hoc Headboat Red Snapper and Grouper AP.

42
43 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** We would have to create one.

44
45 **MR. GREENE:** I was understanding that there was one already in
46 existence and did we -- I think, following on the heels of Dr.
47 Crabtree's comment, I think that there is something there that
48 needs to be done and if we do not have an ad hoc headboat red

1 snapper grouper type AP, then perhaps we need to put one
2 together, but we've got three years to do anything within
3 Amendment 40 context.

4
5 However, as Dr. Crabtree noted, their EFP expires the end of
6 this year and there is not anything to extend that. Now, I
7 don't know if that's the proper avenue or if we should do
8 something different and I will certainly take some guidance
9 here.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I think we heard from the AP, the Red Snapper
12 AP, that that was a recommendation, to convene a headboat
13 advisory panel to look at that very issue, as Dr. Crabtree
14 pointed out, and so I think Doug just told me that they are
15 advertising or in the process of advertising right now and so I
16 took that statement to mean that we can just add -- If we wanted
17 to make a motion to create another headboat AP, ad hoc AP, that
18 would look specifically at implementing this among the fleet and
19 maybe with looking at what tweaks or changes need to be made
20 would the charge to them and come back with the plan that we
21 could then use to develop an amendment, that might be something
22 that we could go toward.

23
24 **MR. GREENE:** Well then I think she's getting it up there now,
25 that the council create an Ad Hoc Red Snapper Headboat and
26 Grouper AP and I believe that would basically do what we're
27 trying to accomplish here.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I need a second.

30
31 **MR. PERRET:** I second, but I've got a question. Johnny, why not
32 just -- Never mind. Now it's all right. Thank you.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Do we need to give them a charge or let them
35 know what they're doing or we just want to create one and then I
36 guess we'll give them a charge once we create it? Is that the
37 intent or do we need to do that, Doug?

38
39 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** It would be nice to have a charge
40 that we can let people know what they're applying for to
41 accomplish. We don't have a charge necessarily that we
42 advertise for the existing APs, but when we create a new one, we
43 develop a charge. What I heard Dr. Crabtree say is the charge
44 was to evaluate the future or continuation of the current
45 program.

46
47 **MR. GREENE:** Yes, sir, that's correct. I mean I do agree that
48 it has worked well and they stayed under quota last year and it

1 seemed like it worked very well and it was a very small group of
2 individuals and I think, just following on what Dr. Crabtree's
3 comments were, it would be relevant, but if he or anything else
4 would like to add to that, I certainly have no problem with it.
5

6 **DR. DIAGNE:** Just a quick suggestion, perhaps. It could be a
7 Headboat Reef Fish AP, for flexibility's sake. They may be
8 looking at things surrounding red snapper and grouper and so if
9 the maker of the motion agrees to just make it a Reef Fish
10 Headboat AP.

11
12 **MR. GREENE:** I don't have a problem with that. I just had put
13 red snapper and grouper in there because that was what was in
14 the other one, but I certainly have no issue at all with Reef
15 Fish.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Corky, you were the seconder on the previous
18 motion.

19
20 **MR. PERRET:** That's fine.

21
22 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** That's fine, okay.

23
24 **MR. BOYD:** I don't have any problem with the idea that Roy has,
25 Dr. Crabtree has, of looking at some way to analyze how this EFP
26 worked and if it's viable and if we should go forward with it.
27 My problem is I don't want to create any more ad hoc APs or APs
28 that we have to and we have two APs already in existence and one
29 is the Reef Fish AP and one is the Red Snapper AP and couldn't
30 this be given to those two committees, one of those two
31 committees, and let them analyze it and bring it back to us?
32

33 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It could. To that point?

34
35 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Just to the point, we do have, I think under Reef
36 Fish Amendment 1, there were all of the headboats that were
37 required to report their landings and so we have landings data
38 for this particular group of people and it's a relatively small
39 group, eighty to a hundred boats or something like that. I
40 don't know exactly what the number is, but I would hope we could
41 get that group and that whoever we put on that group be a subset
42 of that group, to come up with their own fishery management plan
43 and that they be charged with doing that.
44

45 In particular, some kind of regulations of how they would
46 replace the expiring headboat collaborative that was assembled
47 as an EFP and how we would replace that and I would like them
48 specifically to work on that problem.

1
2 **DR. CRABTREE:** I was going to essentially say what Roy Williams
3 just said, that I think this needs to be a headboat group and
4 the focus ought to be on the EFP and where do we go from there
5 and what changes would need to be made to it and what program
6 would replace it when it expires.

7
8 **MR. RIECHERS:** I don't want to belabor the point, but I wonder
9 whether we're getting a little bit ahead of ourselves, because
10 while Dr. Crabtree has indicated and certainly we've had
11 testimony from Mr. Boggs and Mr. Williams and others that the
12 program is working well for them, we've got other headboat
13 operators who weren't in the program and we probably need to
14 hear some from them as well.

15
16 We have law enforcement who was working with the program and we
17 probably need to hear from them. I haven't seen the reports or
18 any of the information surrounding that and kind of the report
19 back on all of that EFP at this point in time and not that they
20 can't get together and talk about their industry and certainly
21 they can do that, but I think we also need to see some of that
22 information come before this council, so that we can all have
23 the benefit of seeing that information and what worked and what
24 didn't work and see it in writing and have those conversations
25 with our various interests in our various states and get a
26 little better handle on that before we assume that the first
27 thing we need to do is extend the EFP or find a way to extend
28 that same program, because that may or may not be what we
29 eventually want to do.

30
31 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think those are some good points and I think we
32 could certainly pull together a presentation reporting on the
33 performance of the first year of the program for the next
34 council meeting. I know Andy would do that and I don't want to
35 put words in Mr. Boggs' mouth, but I am sure he would be willing
36 to participate in that and we could review the program and the
37 problems we've seen and all those sorts of things.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Very good.

40
41 **DR. DANA:** I am fine with the motion and I just want it
42 clarified when it says the charge will be to evaluate the future
43 and continuation of the current program, to me, the current
44 program means the EFP and it doesn't mean perhaps expanding that
45 to include all headboats. What I would want that AP to be
46 considering is if it works and if it's the right thing to do,
47 how does that include all of the charter boats? Sorry.
48 Headboats.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** That's a good point, Dr. Dana, to make sure
3 that it's clear in the motion that that is the intent and if
4 Johnny agrees with that, in making it more clear.
5

6 **MR. GREENE:** I certainly don't have any problem with that at all
7 and I think Dr. Dana is absolutely correct. **I mean I think**
8 **that's the intent, is that the program is expiring and they've**
9 **had some success with it and I haven't noted any issues and I've**
10 **kept up with it rather well, I believe, but I think that perhaps**
11 **we change it to "the current program with the intent of**
12 **expanding towards full implementation for that industry." Or**
13 **"full participation" perhaps.**
14

15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** That would be to evaluate the EFP program and
16 consider expanding to the full -- Consider the EFP program and
17 consider the possibility of including it for full participation.
18

19 **MR. GREENE:** Yes, sir.
20

21 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Who seconded the -- Dr. Dana, you seconded the
22 motion. You didn't? Who -- Roy, did you? It was Corky.
23 Corky, did you second? Corky says okay.
24

25 **MR. RIECHERS:** What we're going to do is charge this group with
26 creating an IFQ for the headboat fishery, as I understand it
27 then, because that's what the EFP basically provided. When we
28 were having them get together and talk about options and EFPs, I
29 was more likely inclined to vote for the motion.
30

31 In some respects, I don't know that I can support it in its
32 current form. Again, I think we need to actually make sure we
33 understand and I understand the people that are in the program
34 like it quite well. I also have heard from those who are
35 outside the program who may or may not like it if they were in
36 it and can't say whether they would or wouldn't, but certainly
37 had some issues with it as it was established in our state.
38

39 I think what we need to do is make sure that we get the reports
40 before us before we give them a full-blown charge and maybe we
41 can have that at the next meeting. What I am going to maybe
42 suggest, and certainly if we want to go ahead and try to create
43 it, that we create the Headboat AP, because that's the first
44 step, and then we work on charge after we've seen those reports,
45 but that's just my suggestion and so I will vote no to the
46 current motion, but if we would alter it in that way, I could at
47 least accept that.
48

1 **MR. FISCHER:** I would just ask Robin why doesn't he seek
2 amending it?
3
4 **MR. RIECHERS:** Probably because I'm going to lose anyhow, Myron,
5 and I just wasn't going to take up the time, if you really want
6 to know the truth, but I will create a substitute motion that
7 the council move to create an Ad Hoc Reef Fish Headboat AP and
8 the charge will be subsequently determined after receiving the
9 reports from National Marine Fisheries Service regarding the
10 **EFP.**
11
12 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Do we have a second to the substitute motion?
13 We have a second from Myron.
14
15 **MR. FISCHER:** I agree with Robin's approach, because until we
16 see the report, this may be a direction we don't want to go
17 into. I think we're just a little too far ahead of ourselves
18 creating a committee and giving them a charge before we even see
19 a report.
20
21 **MS. BADEMAN:** I'm okay with this motion and you know I kind of
22 feel like no matter what comes out of this report and how you
23 feel on this issue and potentially doing an IFQ in this fishery,
24 we're going to need to come back and probably look at that
25 charge before we get this group together, based on the results
26 of the report, and edit it anyway and so why don't we just deal
27 with it then?
28
29 **MR. PERRET:** Talk about kicking the can down the road and do we
30 have any idea when we would get this report?
31
32 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think we can do something at the next council
33 meeting.
34
35 **MR. WILLIAMS:** That was really what I was going to say. It
36 seems like, to me, that we would solicit applications for this
37 Ad Hoc Reef Fish AP and we would have them at the next meeting
38 and we would assemble that AP and we would also get the report
39 from Dr. Crabtree's office and then we could give the AP a
40 charge and so I'm okay with this motion too and I'm going to
41 vote for it.
42
43 **MS. BOSARGE:** Just a reminder that we did already receive a
44 presentation on the headboat EFP and how it had been performing
45 with all the numbers and the percentages and the feedback and
46 what they had done. I think Randy Boggs presented it and it
47 wasn't at the last meeting, but it might have been at the one
48 before that, but it gave a full summary of how they did and I

1 think we have heard, maybe not in a report directly from law
2 enforcement on only this, but we have heard from law enforcement
3 off and on throughout this process as to how they feel about it
4 and so I don't have a problem going ahead and giving that AP a
5 charge and getting the ball rolling, since we are under a time
6 constraint and if what they decide they want to do is implement
7 that headboat program for the entire industry. I would rather
8 move along with it and we can change it later if we need to,
9 rather than just forming it and not moving forward with it.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** As Doug stated earlier, they would prefer to
12 have, when they go to send out solicitations for folks to apply
13 to the various APs, they would like to have kind of generally
14 what the topic of discussion would be or the charge would be for
15 them and we may not get -- When we come back to the next
16 meeting, we may not get a list of appropriate people, because we
17 had not defined what it is that they would be potentially
18 discussing and that would be talking about an EFP-type program
19 for the entire headboat fishery.

20
21 We can give them the specifics possibly at the next meeting,
22 with a more fleshed-out report, but I think some general
23 direction as to what they could be talking about would be
24 helpful to pass on as we try to get participation or
25 applications to the AP here that we're trying to form.

26
27 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Well, I mean we do have some context here. The
28 headboat EFP will expire in another year and, Robin, do you have
29 any problem if staff puts our solicitation for a Headboat AP in
30 the context of the EFP expiring and we are looking to figure out
31 whether we want to do anything beyond that?

32
33 **MR. RIECHERS:** Well, I mean you could also put in the charge
34 that the EFP is expiring and we're considering regional
35 management and how would that headboat and those headboat
36 operators from each state work in the context of that? So I
37 mean there's a lot of moving parts that we always have in this
38 council and so I understand the EFP is expiring. That's part of
39 the problem with trying to do fisheries management options with
40 EFPs, because you have a temporary timeframe that they're done
41 for and then they're going to expire.

42
43 The answer to your question, Roy, is I guess I wouldn't mind
44 staff putting some sort of verbiage in regarding what the things
45 are to be considered, but I don't know that EFP is the only
46 thing they should be considering at this point.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other discussion? Let's go ahead and vote

1 on the substitute motion that the council create an Ad Hoc Reef
2 Fish Headboat AP. The charge will be determined after the
3 headboat EFP report is presented. **All those in favor signify by**
4 **saying aye; all those opposed like sign. The motion carries.**
5

6 We are at 12:30 just about, Mr. Greene, and according to my
7 stomach, it's time for lunch and so let's go ahead and take an
8 hour break and we will pick up Reef Fish when we reconvene.
9 Thank you.

10
11 (Whereupon, the meeting recessed at 12:30 a.m., January 29,
12 2015.)
13

14 - - -

15
16 January 29, 2015
17

18 THURSDAY MORNING SESSION
19

20 - - -
21

22 The Full Council of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management
23 Council reconvened at the Grand Hotel Marriott, Point Clear,
24 Alabama, Thursday morning, January 29, 2015, and was called to
25 order at 8:30 a.m. by Chairman Kevin Anson.
26

27 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We are going to go ahead and restart the Reef
28 Fish Committee, Mr. Greene.
29

30 **MR. GREENE:** Yes, sir. I have a motion and just to bring
31 everybody back up, we are still under Report of Ad Hoc For-Hire
32 Red Snapper AP. We are pretty much at the bottom of the page
33 and there's just going to be a couple more motions and then I
34 guess we'll move on, or at least for me anyway. I could
35 probably continue on with some more if you would like, but
36 whenever you're ready, I will start with the motion.
37

38 **The motion is to begin the development of an amendment**
39 **considering a wide range of management approaches to improve the**
40 **flexibility and accountability in the federal for-hire**
41 **component.**
42

43 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Is that your motion, Johnny?
44

45 **MR. GREENE:** Yes, sir, that is correct.
46

47 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Do we have a second to the motion?
48

1 **MR. WALKER:** I will second the motion.
2
3 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's seconded by David. Is there discussion on
4 the motion?
5
6 **MR. GREENE:** As you're all aware, we started the clock ticking
7 with Amendment 40 and we only have a three-year sunset in which
8 to work and so with that being said, we kind of have to start
9 getting stuff together as quickly as possible to have any hope
10 of trying to make anything happen within this three-year window
11 what we have to operate.
12
13 **MS. BADEMAN:** Johnny, I take it your intention here is to start
14 with what the AP has come up with so far, those four ideas that
15 they had?
16
17 **MR. GREENE:** Yes, I figured we would just start with that and
18 then if they come up with some other stuff, just kind of add to
19 it. I kind of figured we would just get the staff working on
20 this and as ideas are brought forward, then they can just be
21 plugged in as it moves along. It will kind of have to be one of
22 those work-in-progress type of things, to make sure that we get
23 everything that is brought up by the AP and then if other people
24 have interest or ideas, we can include them as well.
25
26 **DR. DANA:** Essentially what this would be, given the expedited
27 program, the three-year program that will sunset after that
28 point -- This will be like a management plan to add some
29 structure and make it as feasible as possible or successful or
30 whatever?
31
32 **MR. GREENE:** Yes, ma'am. That's correct.
33
34 **MR. RIECHERS:** Johnny, I am assuming that these ideas, this wide
35 range of management approaches, will they also include options
36 or as they meet, and, of course, we don't know when or if the
37 sector separation amendment will be signed, but obviously these
38 options and approaches can include things beyond what might be
39 considered there and I guess I'm a little concerned that we're
40 only considering the federal for-hire component, but I am just
41 trying to get a notion of how broad the charge is. Are you
42 confining it to Amendment 40 or are you trying to be broader or
43 what's your goal here?
44
45 **MR. GREENE:** At this particular point, we passed Amendment 40
46 and we have had a lot of discussion about that. In Amendment
47 40, it did speak exclusively to the federal for-hire component
48 and I think at this point I'm just trying to grasp those

1 particular items.

2
3 Now, should Amendment 40 not be signed or whatever, then maybe
4 some of this would be moot, but at this point, we just have a
5 very small window of time in which to operate, as you all well
6 know how long it takes to do stuff like this, and I am just
7 trying to allow staff to have time to get something going,
8 should there be additional good ideas come out of the next AP,
9 but I would -- To answer the first part of the question, to take
10 what they already came up with and insert that and them,
11 depending on what comes out of the next AP, it would also be
12 included as well.

13
14 **MR. RIECHERS:** Well and I mean you heard me speak to your
15 previous motion that I think set up the ad hoc and as we had
16 done in committee, I think they were merged into one motion. At
17 that point, I indicated I was going to have trouble supporting
18 the development of an amendment at this point.

19
20 I think, again, we may be getting ahead of ourselves here,
21 because we're asking staff to feed off something that the ad hoc
22 is fixing to go work on and so I'm not certain whether I'm going
23 to vote for or against the current motion. Good ideas can come
24 from a host of different folks at different times and so I don't
25 ever want to preclude people getting together and coming up with
26 suggestions and certainly staff is part of that mix, but they
27 can certainly do that as well, even without this motion.

28
29 Again, I am just -- As we indicated earlier, as they were split,
30 it seems to me that we could get one moving and not necessarily
31 go into a full amendment process yet, but I certainly appreciate
32 the motion anyhow.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Johnny, just a point of clarification to me.
35 You mentioned the sunset of the Amendment 40 and everything and
36 so would this be ideas that would center on the notion that the
37 for-hire sector would still remain as a separate sector or --
38 Obviously some things you can put in place now would still have
39 carryover in the next and is it wide open? I am, I guess, a
40 little concerned, just in light of the alternative approach and
41 regional management that we've been trying to deal with now for
42 the last couple of years.

43
44 Albeit there might be some ideas that come out of it, but at
45 least it might be a detractor and that's what I just would be
46 concerned about, is that it would detract some of the focus with
47 trying to go forward with regional management and trying to
48 craft that and that would be as far as looking at the entire

1 recreational sector and the notion of flexibility and
2 accountability and all that stuff.

3
4 **MR. GREENE:** Well, I mean you kind of answered the question for
5 me, to a degree, because it has taken a couple of years to get
6 Amendment 39 going and we don't have the luxury of that kind of
7 time.

8
9 I didn't want to be laser precise on telling them to do this,
10 because then you and I and all of us get labeled as pushing
11 anything and so I chose a wide range, because I figured if there
12 are those ideas out there that someone has that they want to
13 throw on the table, then I think we should look at that.

14
15 We got some emails of some management plans by some various
16 associations, plus there is other stuff out there. I just
17 didn't want to limit it to a specific idea or a topic and I just
18 wanted to let the staff develop the -- Begin the development of
19 an amendment with that appropriate protocol and then just insert
20 the ideas as they come up and present us what they have as the
21 meetings come forward.

22
23 **MR. BOYD:** At this point, I think I would speak against the
24 motion, because we just created an Ad Hoc Headboat AP to look at
25 what they deem were the successes of their particular EFP and we
26 haven't heard from them yet.

27
28 They are only 50 percent into their test, if you want to call it
29 a test, and they have another 50 percent to go, another year,
30 and they could run into problems and issues that we don't even
31 know about today and we're also waiting to hear from an
32 additional meeting, from one more meeting, of our charter for-
33 hire AP and so I think I'm with whoever said it a while ago and
34 I think we're a little premature on developing an amendment at
35 this point. Thank you.

36
37 **MR. WALKER:** I will speak in support of it. We have heard
38 enough public comment that the council develop this and we need
39 an FMP. These fishermen, charter boats, let them develop their
40 FMP and let them come up with the ideas and there's nothing
41 wrong with the council staff exploring all options. Anything is
42 better than the alternatives and you already have witnessed for
43 years what the alternatives will give you.

44
45 I think it's time to be proactive and I would support it and I
46 would like to see -- Let's get some work on it and get some
47 ideas. There is a lot of idea out there that they could support
48 and they could use and implement and it's their plan and let

1 them develop it. I think this is a good thing to start and it's
2 a good idea. Let's get started. Let's be proactive.

3
4 **MR. BOYD:** To that point, this doesn't say that the industry is
5 going to develop a plan. It says develop an amendment that the
6 council is going to consider and I don't think we have all the
7 information we need yet and I think it's just premature.

8
9 **MR. WALKER:** We've been discussing so many things that an
10 amendment -- Yes, it's a plan, but you're going to take public
11 comment and it's a long process and it takes a long time and we
12 are just -- We hear it all the time, that we kick the can down
13 the road. I would like to look at this plan. I would like to
14 look at getting started with something.

15
16 **MR. SANCHEZ:** I spoke against the sunset for this very reason.
17 We are looking at a sunset and so we're under a time crunch and
18 let's get going.

19
20 **MS. BOSARGE:** When we passed our motion a minute ago to form the
21 AP, we decided that we need to leave it vague and open-ended and
22 now I see this as very open-ended and flexible and we don't want
23 that now. Now we want specifics and that confuses me.

24
25 As far as this, I will support this. I think that we do have
26 the information we need to get started on this. We had an AP
27 that met and they came up with a lot of options that were a wide
28 range of management approaches for that sector, for that for-
29 hire component.

30
31 I think staff has what they need to get started and put it in
32 the form of a document and let us flesh it out from there. I
33 think some of these APs that are going to meet in the future
34 will help to guide us with that, but I don't see any reason or
35 rationale why we can't go ahead and get some of those ideas that
36 have already been given to us and endorsed started in the form
37 of a document.

38
39 **MR. GREENE:** In the report when you read it, one motion that
40 passed, and I will quote right off of it, is that the council
41 consider management options such as angling management
42 organizations made up of for-hire vessels, one part of which
43 could feature dividing the for-hire into regional groups, a
44 catch share program, a tag program, a days-at-sea program. I
45 mean that's pretty much a wide-ranging set of management
46 approaches.

47
48 I mean it's just trying to capture all of those ideas and

1 building off of what went on earlier, as Ms. Bosarge suggested,
2 is one of the reasons I did so, but it's just a very simple deal
3 and we have to start somewhere and we know that three years is
4 not much time in this process.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** There is a motion on the board to begin the
7 development of an amendment considering a wide range of
8 management approaches to improve flexibility and accountability
9 in the federal for-hire component. **All those in favor of the**
10 **motion signify by saying aye; all those opposed like sign. The**
11 **motion carries.**

12
13 **MR. GREENE:** One more motion and it will be the same motion as
14 the last, except you can just substitute the last few words with
15 -- Instead of "charter for-hire component" as in "headboat
16 component".

17
18 **I will read it and it's to begin the development of an amendment**
19 **considering a wide range of management approaches to improve**
20 **flexibility and accountability in the federal headboat**
21 **component.**

22
23 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** There is a motion on the board and do we have a
24 second to the motion?

25
26 **MS. BOSARGE:** Second.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's been seconded by Ms. Bosarge. Johnny, do
29 you want to talk about it first?

30
31 **MR. GREENE:** Just going back to some of the comments that we
32 made earlier before we broke for lunch about the success the
33 program has had and as Ms. Dana pointed out, there is changes
34 that need to be made and looked at.

35
36 I understand that perhaps it's a little unorthodox to put all of
37 this together at one time. However, time is a very sensitive
38 thing here for a lot of these guys and they're businessmen
39 trying to make a living and provide for their families and pay
40 their taxes and do their jobs.

41
42 I just feel that it's time to just get the stuff together and I
43 don't know that staff would have a whole lot to put together at
44 this point, but at least they will have a heads-up that it's
45 coming and will do the best they can to accommodate it.

46
47 **MS. BADEMAN:** I was just going to note that the previous motion
48 didn't say "charter" and it just said "for-hire".

1
2 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** I thought, in the discussion and everything, I
3 was under the impression it was for charter for the first one
4 myself and unless I hear some or see some shakes of the head, I
5 think everybody else had the same consideration.
6

7 **MR. BOYD:** I thought it was for-hire, which is both components,
8 the headboat and the charter for-hire.
9

10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Then, Johnny, as long as staff understands it's
11 both then.
12

13 **MS. LEVY:** Does that change anybody's -- First of all, does that
14 change anybody's decision point, that we have one motion that's
15 talking about an amendment just for charter and not headboats
16 and we have another one now that we're talking about just
17 headboats, realizing that we have one permit and one component
18 quota for those two things.
19

20 I don't know if it changes anybody's discussion point, but I
21 wouldn't want to just change it to "charter" in that motion if
22 there was some confusion and maybe we need to go back and
23 specify that that's charter and revisit that motion or
24 something. I am not exactly sure what we should do, but --
25

26 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** The reason I was thinking it was charter is
27 because we had just passed a motion developing an Ad Hoc
28 Headboat AP to look at the EFP in the context of coming up with
29 another plan or advice that might have been based solely on the
30 EFP or something else. In my mind, they were given that charge
31 and we were going to do it after we got some recommendations and
32 so I just thought of it that way.
33

34 **MS. BOSARGE:** I guess I was under the impression it was the
35 charter for-hire component as well. Like you said, we
36 established two separate APs and then this addressed the first
37 AP and then it looks like we're going to address the second AP
38 and maybe there was an oversight when it was typed up, but I
39 thought Johnny said charter for-hire.
40

41 **DR. LUCAS:** I thought we were going to do both of them in the
42 same and I don't see why we can't do both of them in the same.
43

44 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** So I think that's what Mara was trying to get
45 to, is if people felt like that would change their vote if
46 having them combined when they previously thought it was just a
47 separate thing and I don't -- I mean does that change people's
48 votes on it? I mean do we want to call the question or call a

1 reconsider or -- I mean we can do a couple of things here and so
2 I'm just trying to dispatch this and Mara's point was to make
3 sure everyone was clear on what they were voting.

4
5 If you were unclear and you feel like the first motion dealt
6 just with charter boats and that were two separate entities and
7 you thought it was charter that you were voting on the first one
8 and having headboats now included in that, if that changed your
9 mind, then -- I mean it doesn't appear to be a big deal to folks
10 and so we can go ahead with the second motion and then it's very
11 clear, by the two, that both of them are going to go forward as
12 development of an amendment and so I think we might as well just
13 go with the second one, just to be clear, so we don't have to
14 worry about editing and everything, is my opinion, and then we
15 will have clear guidance and understanding. Any other comment?

16
17 So we have the motion and it's to begin the development of an
18 amendment considering a wide range of management approaches to
19 improve flexibility and accountability in the federal headboat
20 component. **All those in favor of the motion signify by saying**
21 **aye; all those opposed like sign. The motion carries.** Back to
22 you, Mr. Greene.

23
24 **MR. GREENE:** That concludes that section and we will move on to
25 Final Action Framework Action to Adjust Recreational For-Hire
26 Red Snapper Management Measures. Staff summarized the
27 alternatives in a draft framework action to adjust the red
28 snapper bag limit on for-hire vessels, Tab B, Number 12(a).

29
30 It was noted that there was no support for a reduced bag limit
31 in the public comments received during the last one-and-a-half
32 weeks since a video summary of the framework action was posted
33 on the council website.

34
35 A motion to make Alternative 2 the preferred alternative, set
36 the red snapper bag limit at one fish per person per day in the
37 for-hire industry, and make it contingent upon the approval and
38 implementation of Amendment 40, failed by a vote of three to
39 six. No other motions were made for this action.

40
41 A supplemental action with alternatives to implement a split
42 season for for-hire vessels was produced based on a
43 recommendation by the Ad Hoc Red Snapper For-Hire AP, Tab B,
44 Number 12(b). Committee members expressed concern that there
45 was a lack of economic and other analyses on the impacts of the
46 alternatives. No motions were made regarding split seasons.

47
48 **DR. DANA:** I have a question about the motion on Alternative 2

1 to be the preferred alternative, set the red snapper bag limit
2 at one fish per person per day in the for-hire fishery. We
3 heard extensive testimony yesterday that there was sentiment for
4 two fish versus the one fish per person and where does that
5 stand at this point?
6

7 **MS. BADEMAN:** This motion failed.
8

9 **DR. DANA:** I am sorry and I have been told it failed and I
10 misread. Sorry.
11

12 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right. Mr. Greene.
13

14 **MR. GREENE:** Final Action Framework Action to Adjust the
15 Recreational For-Hire Red Snapper Management Measures, staff
16 summarized the alternatives in a draft work action to adjust the
17 red snapper bag limit on the for-hire -- I am sorry. I picked
18 up at the wrong spot. My apologies.
19

20 Other Reef Fish SSC Summary, the SSC also reviewed the proposed
21 SEDAR assessment schedule and recommended that a standard red
22 snapper assessment be conducted in 2017. A standard assessment
23 would allow new sources of information to be included, provided
24 they were specified in the terms of reference.
25

26 The SSC discussed alternative red snapper MSY proxies. There is
27 a poor relationship between spawners and recruits, which makes
28 it difficult to estimate the proper proxy for FMSY. Following a
29 discussion over reproductive strategies and where red snapper
30 fit in, the committee passed the following motion.
31

32 **By a vote of six to zero, the committee recommends, and I so**
33 **move, to remove red snapper SPR consideration from the status**
34 **determination criteria document and request council staff**
35 **develop a plan amendment to adjust the FSPR levels for red**
36 **snapper to alternatives for: status quo, FSPR 24 percent, FSPR**
37 **22 percent, FMAX (FSPR 20 percent). The plan amendment should**
38 **also determine the timeline for F Rebuild at each FSPR.**
39

40 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a committee motion and is there any
41 discussion on the motion?
42

43 **MS. BOSARGE:** I wanted to have a little discussion on this. I
44 like the motion. I like pulling this out and looking at it by
45 itself, because I think it is very important, rather than having
46 it in that other document, so that we can focus on it.
47

48 What I wondered though, listening to the different presentations

1 that we were presented with over the week, the science seems to
2 suggest that the possible range of SPRs is anywhere from 20 to
3 40 percent. Now, I don't feel like as a council we're moving
4 upward in this and we're probably moving in the other direction,
5 but to give us a range and allow us to see where we're at on
6 that risk/reward tradeoff spectrum, can we not look at 40 to 20
7 and then obviously we're going in the 26 or down category there,
8 but so that I understand where my risk profile is at right now,
9 I feel like I need to see the entire spectrum, in order to
10 determine how much more risk I want to take on in that direction
11 and does that make sense?

12
13 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It does to me and yes, there were, as I recall,
14 a couple of comments during public testimony relative to
15 providing enough alternatives that provide you the wide range or
16 spectrum of opportunities and alternatives.

17
18 In one direction, that doesn't necessarily provide you a wide
19 range and so potentially we could amend the motion or someone
20 could amend the motion to include some additional numbers, but
21 is there any other committee discussion?

22
23 **MR. SANCHEZ:** I am not sure what adjusting or changes to SPR,
24 given the ranges, would do to a thirty-year rebuilding, maybe
25 forcing you into a much more stringent timeframe and without me
26 fully understanding that, I am reluctant to go that route.

27
28 **DR. PONWITH:** Of course, this isn't to make the decision to
29 change. It is to do the analysis so you can see what happens
30 and it was based on -- My understanding is it was based on the
31 outcome of the discussion that there is uncertainty with this
32 and that it is an opportunity to take a look at the associated
33 risks with each of these and from that standpoint, it certainly
34 makes sense, to me, to bracket, so that you get a full range of
35 the distribution and not that you're biasing a decision to any
36 one or another, but when you can see a range, it makes it a
37 little bit easier to understand that relationship.

38
39 **MS. BOSARGE:** I am not sure, procedurally, how this would work,
40 since this came out of committee, but I think it was Doug's
41 motion and would you accept a friendly amendment to add in an
42 SPR of 40, 30 and then go with the 26 and 24 and --

43
44 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Leann, it's a committee motion and so probably
45 a substitute motion to add maybe whatever numbers that you feel
46 is appropriate and see if we can get a second.

47
48 **MS. BOSARGE:** Then I would like to make a substitute motion and,

1 staff, you can copy and paste the motion that's on there and
2 right before "status quo", put in an FSPR of 40, FSPR of 30".
3

4 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We're at FSPR 26 right now.
5

6 **MS. BOSARGE:** You are going to have to put in -- You can take
7 out status quo, if you want, and in between the 30 and the 24
8 percent, put an "FSPR of 26". Never mind. Legal says no.
9

10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Leann, I think that captures what you want and
11 do we have a second for the motion?
12

13 **MR. GREENE:** Second.
14

15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's been seconded by Mr. Greene and is there
16 any committee discussion on the motion? All right. **Any**
17 **opposition to the motion? The motion carries.**
18

19 **MS. LEVY:** I think that, and I'm not sure and so correct me if
20 I'm wrong, but when we got messed up about where we were in the
21 committee report, did we talk about the split season issue? If
22 not, then at least we should get that in that that was part of
23 the committee report.
24

25 I am just raising it that we also had, in addition to the bag
26 limit reduction, you looked at a split season. He read it?
27 Okay. Sorry. I didn't hear it and I wanted to make sure it was
28 out there.
29

30 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Go ahead.
31

32 **MR. GREENE:** Other Business, a committee member asked that an
33 education session be scheduled at a future council meeting on
34 SPR. Mr. Gregory replied that explaining SPR in layman's terms
35 was difficult, but he would look into finding someone who could
36 provide a seminar to the council on the topic. Mr. Chairman,
37 this concludes my report.
38

39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Greene. Myron.
40

41 **MR. FISCHER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We had a request from
42 some of our field samplers that said if they could get an SPR
43 for dummies, they would really like to attend and if it gets
44 pushed down to the Key West meeting or something like that --
45 Randy is not here, but I will speak for him and I don't think
46 we're sending them. If it's up on the northern Gulf, we would
47 like to have our staff show up at these meetings and that would
48 be a nice one for them to sit in on.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Just for a heads-up, I think Mr. Gregory said
3 he would try to get something for the next meeting and is that
4 correct, the April meeting, the March/April meeting?
5

6 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** We can, but we need to look at our
7 schedule. We had a busy March/April meeting schedule even
8 before today and so we'll see how everything shakes out.
9

10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes, we'll see.
11

12 **MR. BOYD:** I might note that Myron didn't say for Doug. He said
13 for dummies.
14

15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Right. To accommodate some staff travel plans,
16 we are going to move Mackerel Committee in front of Data
17 Collection and so the Mackerel Committee will be our next report
18 and so, Dr. Dana, that's you.
19

20 **MACKEREL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

21

22 **DR. DANA:** Thank you, Chairman Anson. The Mackerel Committee
23 met on January 28, 2015 and was chaired by Pam Dana. We talked
24 about the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Amendment Renumbering.
25 Staff noted that the current list of CMP amendments had been
26 renumbered and organized to move similar management changes
27 along as efficiently as possible.
28

29 CMP Amendment 24, tabled until 2016, will address Atlantic
30 Spanish mackerel allocation shifts. CMP Amendment 26 will
31 address Gulf and Atlantic King Mackerel ACLs, allocations, stock
32 boundaries, and sale provisions and CMP Amendment 28 will
33 address splitting the commercial king and Spanish mackerel
34 fishing permits.
35

36 SEDAR-38 Stock Assessment, ACL Control Rule Buffers, SEFSC staff
37 presented the Gulf migratory group king mackerel stock
38 assessment, Tab C, Numbers 4 and 4 (a). The assessment
39 determined the fishery is not overfished or experiencing
40 overfishing, with favorable reviews of the model.
41

42 A substantial change in this assessment is the new winter mixing
43 zone that has been reduced to the area south of the Florida
44 Keys. This zone assumes a 50/50 mixing between the Gulf and
45 Atlantic migratory groups. Recruitment has been declining in
46 recent years and SEFSC staff recommended monitoring this trend
47 in recruitment in the future.
48

1 Overall, the stock is perceived to be healthy and indicative of
2 successful management strategy. The projected retained catch
3 estimates increase in the first year of projections, 2015, and
4 decrease thereafter to equilibrium levels. Council staff shared
5 the results of running the SSC OFL and ABC recommendations
6 through the council's ACL/ACT Control Rule, Tab C, Number 4(b),
7 which indicated a necessity for a 9 percent buffer for the
8 combined recreational and commercial fisheries between the ABC
9 and the ACL.

10
11 This should be addressed again at a later date, once the council
12 has a better idea of how it wants to proceed with redeveloping
13 the commercial zone allocations in the Gulf.

14
15 We then moved to CMP Amendment 26 Scoping Document. Council
16 staff reviewed the CMP 26 scoping document, Tab C, Number 5,
17 which addresses Gulf and Atlantic King Mackerel ACLs,
18 allocations, stock boundaries, and sale provisions.

19
20 The ACLs can be increased in both migratory groups. The
21 councils are also interested in exploring sector reallocations
22 within their own regions. The Gulf Council also must revisit
23 the commercial zone allocations for the Gulf migratory group of
24 king mackerel, since the SEDAR-38 stock assessment determined
25 that the current Florida East Coast Subzone was actually part of
26 the Atlantic migratory group.

27
28 This requires redistributing the percentage of the Gulf
29 commercial quota voided by the loss of the Florida East Coast
30 Subzone amongst the remaining Gulf commercial zones. The
31 councils must also consider recognizing the new stock boundary
32 and mixing zone from the SEDAR-38 stock assessment, which
33 defines the new winter mixing zone as south of US 2 Highway 1 in
34 Monroe County from the Dade/Monroe County line in the east to
35 the council jurisdictional boundary in the west from November 1
36 through March 31.

37
38 Also, the South Atlantic Council is interested in allowing bag
39 limit sales of king mackerel in the Atlantic shark gillnet
40 fishery, to permit a historic practice in this particular
41 fishery.

42
43 Lastly, committee members were interested in seeing sector-
44 specific accountability measures developed for the king mackerel
45 fishery. **The committee recommends, and I so move, to recommend**
46 **that CMP Amendment 26 go out to scoping.**

47
48 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a committee motion to recommend that

1 Amendment 26 go out to scoping. Any discussion on the motion?
2 **Any opposition to the motion? The motion carries.**
3
4 **DR. DANA:** The committee recommends, and I so move, to hold
5 scoping meetings in the following locations: Port Aransas,
6 Texas; Mobile, Alabama; Galveston, Texas; Panama City, Florida;
7 Grand Isle, Louisiana; Tampa Bay, Florida; Biloxi, Mississippi;
8 and Key West, Florida.
9
10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's a committee motion. You see the locations
11 listed on the screen and is there any discussion?
12
13 **MR. BOYD:** In consultation with Robin, I would like to add one
14 more location on that and that's San Antonio, Texas. If we can
15 do that, I would like to and I will give you rationale.
16
17 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** If you want to make a substitute motion and get
18 a second, then we can discuss it.
19
20 **MR. BOYD:** I will make a substitute motion and if you just copy
21 the motion and add San Antonio, Texas. While they're doing
22 that, my rationale is that some large percentage of the
23 saltwater licenses are held by fishermen in San Antonio and one
24 of the key fish that they fish for are mackerel and so I would
25 like to hear from that group if we can and Robin and Lance are
26 okay with it.
27
28 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Lance indicates that he did second it and so do
29 we have any other discussion?
30
31 **MR. PERRET:** Lance added a San Antonio meeting a while back
32 which I seconded for public hearing and I was just wondering if
33 we had a good turnout at that meeting. It was on sector
34 separation.
35
36 **MR. LANCE ROBINSON:** Yes, we had a good turnout.
37
38 **MR. PERRET:** I just wanted to know. We had one recently added
39 and if we had a good turnout, then we ought to do it again, I
40 guess.
41
42 **MR. BOYD:** I would just say that I have chaired several meetings
43 in Port Aransas where we've had zero people show up, just as a
44 contrast.
45
46 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Just making sure, Doug, but obviously we have
47 funds to pay for one more scoping meeting?
48

1 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Funds are not as much of a
2 constraint as time is, but yes, we have the funds.
3

4 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other discussion on the substitute motion?
5 Again, the substitute motion is proposed scoping hearing
6 locations in Galveston, Port Aransas, and San Antonio, Texas;
7 Mobile, Alabama; Biloxi, Mississippi; Kenner or Grand Isle,
8 Louisiana; Key West, Tampa Bay, and Panama City, Florida. **Any**
9 **opposition to the motion? Seeing no opposition, the motion**
10 **carries.**
11

12 **MR. FISCHER:** I think we just discussed that we would go with
13 just Grand Isle and not the Grand Isle/Kenner. In the summary,
14 it doesn't have Kenner listed in it, but it's on the board.
15

16 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you for catching that and I guess we can
17 -- You're from Louisiana and so it will be all right.
18

19 **DR. DANA:** Myron is correct. We did have Kenner yesterday put
20 on there and it was just an omission on my part.
21

22 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Myron, as long as you're happy that it's just
23 going to be Grand Isle, Louisiana.
24

25 **MR. FISCHER:** Grand Isle is good and it's where all the
26 fishermen are, Grand Isle/Fourchon.
27

28 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Okay. Very good. Dr. Dana.
29

30 **DR. DANA:** Thank you, Chairman Anson. The committee then moved
31 into CMP 28 Scoping Document. Council staff reviewed the CMP 28
32 Scoping Document, Tab C, Number 6, which addresses splitting the
33 Gulf and Atlantic king and Spanish mackerel commercial fishing
34 permits.
35

36 The South Atlantic Council is interested in splitting the
37 federal commercial permits for these species to facilitate more
38 region-specific management of the Atlantic migratory group of
39 mackerels. The South Atlantic Council wants to explore a two-
40 for-one permit reduction system similar to the same system in
41 place for their snapper grouper permits.
42

43 Though the Gulf Council has not yet formally agreed to
44 participate in CMP Amendment 28, the council has heard and
45 voiced concerns in the past over Gulf-specific permit issues,
46 including how to address increasing effort in the Western and
47 Northern Gulf zones from traveling fishermen.
48

1 Multiple options could be considered for how to determine which
2 fishermen qualify for which permits and what qualification
3 protocols would be necessary to achieve management goals. **The**
4 **committee recommends, and I so move, to move forward with**
5 **scoping hearings on CMP Amendment 28 at the same meetings as CMP**
6 **Amendment 26.**

7
8 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's a committee motion. Any discussion on the
9 motion? **Any opposition to the motion? The motion carries.**

10
11 **DR. DANA:** Staff then reviewed concerns presented by king
12 mackerel gillnet fishery permit holders, Tab C, Number 7, and a
13 summary of a meeting with those stakeholders and council members
14 held January 12, 2015 in Key West, Florida, Tab C, Number 7(a).

15
16 The gillnet industry is asking the council to consider raising
17 the current trip limit from 25,000 pounds to 45,000 pounds. To
18 accompany the increase in the trip limit, the industry has
19 proposed accountability measures which would reduce the current
20 and following year's quotas by the amount of each individual
21 overage over the proposed trip limit.

22
23 The industry goal is to reduce the probability of fishermen
24 getting fined due to accidental overages. Gillnet fishermen
25 think that a 45,000-pound trip limit is highly unlikely to be
26 met, making a trip limit overage that much less likely. Some
27 fishermen suggested that a 35,000-pound trip limit would
28 constitute a compromise between the current and requested trip
29 limits.

30
31 In reference to the council's request whether smaller nets could
32 be used to reduce the amount of fish potentially caught in a
33 single set, the fishermen noted that the fish can sometimes get
34 strung out over large areas, requiring the larger nets to
35 encircle and catch the fish.

36
37 Fishermen also requested that the council consider removing
38 latent permits that have no gillnet landings, revoking those
39 gillnet endorsements.

40
41 Fishermen supported creating a system whereby a fisherman
42 suspecting themselves of being over the trip limit could call a
43 NMFS port agent prior to landing their catch. The port agent
44 would meet the fisherman at the dock and, if the fisherman was
45 in fact over the trip limit, he would not be fined and the
46 amount of catch over the trip limit would be excluded from his
47 sale profits. Any profits from the sale of the landed fish over
48 the trip limit would then be given to the proper authorities to

1 go to the National Treasury or donated to charity.

2
3 **The committee recommends, and I so move, to recommend that the**
4 **council create a framework action plan to evaluate alternative**
5 **gillnet trip limits and accountability measures and elimination**
6 **of latent permits to minimize the potential for enforcement**
7 **action due to accidental trip limit overages.**

8
9 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a committee motion. Any discussion on
10 the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? The motion is**
11 **carried.**

12
13 **DR. DANA:** Mr. Chairman, this concludes my report.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Dr. Dana. That takes us to the next
16 committee report, Data Collection, and Mr. Pearce.

17
18 **DATA COLLECTION COMMITTEE**

19
20 **MR. PEARCE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The committee reviewed
21 the technical subcommittee report for electronic charter boat
22 reporting, Tab E, Number 4. If anyone has got any comments on
23 that, now would be the time. Johnny, did you have any comments
24 on this? I mean this is that technical report and did you have
25 any --

26
27 **MR. GREENE:** Well, we had talked about it earlier and I was
28 trying to get to the report myself, but I mean I believe we
29 passed a motion in committee and is that right?

30
31 **MR. PEARCE:** Yes, we did. I will go to that. **After discussion,**
32 **the committee recommends, and I so move, that the Data Committee**
33 **direct staff to begin developing a plan amendment that would**
34 **require electronic logbooks for the charter for-hire vessels in**
35 **the Gulf and South Atlantic that considers the use of VMS and**
36 **other recommendations from the joint council technical**
37 **subcommittee report. It's a committee motion.**

38
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a committee motion and is there any
40 discussion on the motion? I guess, Johnny, since you brought up
41 the other motion in Reef Fish relative to an amendment of
42 flexibility and accountability, this kind of has some -- This
43 also could be duplicative, I guess, and so I don't know if
44 there's -- I don't want to put it all on you, but I just wanted
45 to see if you have any thoughts on how these two could work
46 together or be merged together.

47
48 **MR. PEARCE:** Mr. Chairman, I think this is really not

1 duplicative, because this has got the Gulf and South Atlantic as
2 well and I think I would like our gentleman from the Gulf and
3 South Atlantic to let us know how he feels and if they're ready.
4

5 **MR. BOWEN:** Thank you, sir. Yes, the South Atlantic Fishery
6 Management Council is moving forward with electronic reporting.
7 We have completed the dealer amendment that specifies weekly
8 electronic reporting, the headboat amendment that specifies
9 weekly electronic reporting for headboats, and we are working on
10 an amendment to do the same for charter boats. We are also
11 exploring a way to have commercial logbooks done electronically.
12

13 **MR. PEARCE:** Does that help, Mr. Chairman?
14

15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes, it does. Again, relative to the
16 accountability, which some people have couched that, in terms of
17 data collection, as being accountable and not just the payback
18 options and everything. I am just, again, trying to streamline
19 the process, I guess, and make sure that staff isn't spending a
20 lot of efforts in developing two documents I guess is all I was
21 just concerned about.
22

23 **MR. PEARCE:** I understand.
24

25 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Staff or Doug, if you have any comments and if
26 you understand that and it's all good to you, then I am just
27 wasting time, but go ahead, Martha.
28

29 **MS. BADEMAN:** I was just going to say I think this is a broader
30 issue. I mean there's a lot of folks in Florida that have both
31 permits and it would be silly for them to have two different
32 electronic logbook procedures and one streamlined would make it
33 easy.
34

35 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Very good.
36

37 **DR. FROESCHKE:** One thing to think about, I think the motion on
38 the board that you have builds on the recommendations of the
39 technical subcommittee, in that it was built as a replacement or
40 recommended as a replacement for the current charter survey and
41 part of the recommendations is that was supposed to be a
42 multispecies fit and not designed for a single species or
43 problem, whereas the previous motion, that's sort of the intent
44 and so I see them as different and whether there is need or
45 funding to do both of them I guess is a different problem, but
46 it is a little bit uncertain on how to proceed, given two
47 different charges.
48

1 **MR. PEARCE:** Mr. Chairman, we have a motion on the table.
2

3 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes, we do, Mr. Pearce. Any other discussion
4 on the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? The motion**
5 **carries.**
6

7 **MR. PEARCE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Data Collection
8 Committee also received presentations regarding the EM/ER
9 implementation plan, the MRIP calibration update, and the recent
10 red snapper workshop. Mr. Chairman, this concludes my report in
11 line with Doug Gregory's Paper Reduction Act.
12

13 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Pearce.
14

15 **MR. GREENE:** I wasn't really sure where to jump in there with
16 what was going on, but I mean I was -- Obviously with what we
17 passed in Reef Fish and trying to figure out how this is all
18 going to tie together has been rather uncertain, to me.
19

20 I understand that we have a multi-council action here and that
21 Martha is right and there will be people that are dealing with
22 it on both aspects and I can understand that. I wasn't sure if
23 something like this needed to stay in Data Collection or if it
24 needed to go to the Reef Fish Committee, because that's where
25 it's ultimately going, to my knowledge.
26

27 I have had some question about that. Now, I didn't know where
28 the South Atlantic was and if they were ramped up as much as
29 what the Gulf seems and obviously with the Gulf having a three-
30 year sunset on some of the stuff that we're doing and I would
31 personally like to include this in the charter for-hire industry
32 and to try to do something within a very small window of three
33 years and incorporate this at the same time seems like it's a
34 bit arduous, at best, to try to do that.
35

36 I mean I understand the expense and I understand Martha's point
37 about having boats dually permitted and I don't know if it would
38 be better to just scale it back to just do something in the Gulf
39 for one or two species quickly or whatever. I don't know, but
40 obviously we've put that technical group together and it seems
41 like that they have done what we've asked them to do and now it
42 seems like they're just kind of -- Everybody is kind of saying,
43 okay, well now what?
44

45 I guess my question is, okay, now what? Does this go to the
46 Reef Fish Committee for some type of implementation or where do
47 we go from here is my question.
48

1 **MR. PEARCE:** As Chairman of the Data Collection, this is, to me,
2 clearly data collection and I do believe that we're going to be
3 following the joint technical subcommittee committee report and
4 I don't see any difference in one fish, two fish, three fish.

5
6 I think that if you're getting everything in order to do
7 reporting, it's just a matter of what that report says,
8 basically, and what you report and what you don't report. I
9 just think that we can move this as quickly now as we could have
10 through Reef Fish and I don't see why it would go to Reef Fish.

11
12 **MS. BADEMAN:** Just one more on this. I think in that technical
13 group we also had HMS people on here as well and so I think this
14 goes, again, not just beyond the Gulf and South Atlantic
15 Council, but this whole other suite of species that's out there
16 and so I think I would prefer Data Collection.

17
18 **DR. CRABTREE:** Whatever committee you decide to do it, it seems
19 to me you have two for-hire permits now, a CMP for-hire permit
20 and a reef fish for-hire permit. You're going to want to modify
21 both of those FMPs and require all of those for-hire permit
22 holders to report.

23
24 I assume we are going to require them to report everything they
25 catch, whether it's in these plans or not. CMP, of course, is a
26 joint plan with the South Atlantic and so whether we're in
27 agreement or not -- We have separate permits, because ours is
28 under a moratorium, but it will need to be a joint amendment
29 with them to do that, but it does seem, to me, we want to have a
30 general reporting requirement that's going to go on all of these
31 for-hire vessels with either CMP permits or reef fish permits.

32
33 **MR. GREENE:** I certainly understand all of those points and
34 they're very good comments. It seems, to me, that the headboat
35 collaborative has had real good success reporting almost daily
36 within their industry.

37
38 I realize it's twenty boats or whatever and it's worked very
39 well and I mean why can't we -- I mean we put together a
40 technical subcommittee and they came back and gave us
41 recommendations, but yet, when you look at what the headboat
42 collaborative has been able to pull off, it seems like you could
43 almost just borrow the technology and the information they have
44 and go that route.

45
46 Without getting into a super long debate about it, it just seems
47 like that has worked pretty well from the people I have talked
48 to in that industry who have been reporting for twenty years now

1 with logbooks, with paper logbooks, and have now gone to
2 electronic and so I'm just looking to build off of that.

3
4 **MR. PEARCE:** I think I know what Johnny is saying and I think
5 that will all be incorporated as we move down and I think,
6 again, this is South Atlantic as well as us and so we've got to
7 make this plan work for both of us and I think that's the
8 direction we're heading and I'm sure when we begin the
9 development of this plan that all of those things, the headboat
10 and all, will be taken into consideration, how the reporting
11 went around and everything. This is pretty much a really good
12 move that we've been trying to do for a long time.

13
14 **DR. PONWITH:** You know you can see from the electronic reporting
15 and electronic monitoring policy from NOAA that this is the
16 direction that we believe we need to go in, but there are
17 caveats with that in terms of making sure that it's done in a
18 way that's manageable and that we understand the costs to it.

19
20 We also had our technical advisory committee put out their
21 report and there are some very valuable findings in there to
22 guide this process and my sense on this is that the worst thing
23 we could do is little tiny stabs at this across this fishery or
24 this geographic region.

25
26 My sense on this is, with respect to the Data Collection
27 Committee, is if you're going to embark on this, being mindful
28 of all those caveats, that the best way to do it is go big and
29 make sure you're taking into consideration the entire geography
30 and multiple permits and then get advice from the subcomponents
31 underneath there, rather than creating twelve tiny projects or
32 programs that don't link to one another and end up having
33 inefficiencies because of it.

34
35 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Dr. Ponwith, given the direction
36 the council wants to go, it seems to me the burden of doing this
37 falls on the Science Center and what's the next steps and what
38 can we do to help get this implemented as quickly as possible?

39
40 **DR. PONWITH:** You know I actually disagree that the burden falls
41 on the Science Center. We are a partner in data collection with
42 the council and with the states and with the industry themselves
43 and I view this as a very, very strong partnership to make this
44 happen.

45
46 The Science Center can't make this happen unilaterally. For one
47 thing, the Science Center would have to stop an awful lot of
48 what they're doing right now if we unilaterally had to foot the

1 bill for this and so I think the discussion is how do we set
2 this up.

3
4 The Science Center can create the technical, sort of the -- Let
5 me explain one of the things that we're doing in the South
6 Atlantic. The South Atlantic is interested in having electronic
7 reporting for the vessels, switching to an electronic logbook
8 for commercial vessels, and we're doing a pilot on that.

9
10 What we've done was created sort of the minimum data
11 requirements and here are the fields that we have to have and
12 here is the level of precision we need for each of those fields
13 and then gone to the commercial enterprises and said here are
14 the data we need and you figure out how to write the software to
15 create the system to collect those data.

16
17 What I can envision is a similar thing. We would say these are
18 the data that we need and this is an opportunity to engage with
19 the industry and find out are there more data that we would like
20 to amend that list by, given this is an opportunity for change,
21 and then create the specs for what data we would collect, but
22 then it's a matter of working together to figure out how to do
23 that.

24
25 Do we create those specs and then allow commercial enterprises
26 to write software and then sell that software to the industry
27 and we would have to engage with enforcement to understand if we
28 make this mandatory, which would be my recommendation if you're
29 going to do it, if you make it mandatory, what are the best ways
30 to make this enforceable and all the other aspects. Again, a
31 very strong partnership will be required for this to be
32 successful.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Harlon, do you have any comments?

35
36 **MR. PEARCE:** Yes, I do. This has only been in the works for
37 eight years that I know of and I would sure like to get
38 something finished before my next two meetings and I get the
39 hell off of this council, but I don't think anything -- We've
40 done so much and moved so -- I mean I don't see the problem and,
41 Bonnie, I know you keep throwing these roadblocks at us, but
42 doggone it, just get it done. Just get it done.

43
44 **DR. PONWITH:** I don't see anything I said just now as a
45 roadblock. I was asked the question of what will it take to
46 make this happen and this is a paragraph and it's very simple, a
47 handful of words, and there's a lot that has to happen to go
48 from this to that and it's going to take a partnership and

1 that's all I'm saying.

2
3 I can sketch out and I think that the technical report that you
4 have in your hands right now does a very good job of sketching
5 out all the things that have to happen. They are doable, but it
6 just takes a partnership.

7
8 **GULF SEDAR COMMITTEE**

9
10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right. No other comments on that and so
11 that will take us to the next committee report, Gulf SEDAR, and
12 that will be presented by myself. This is Tab F. Staff
13 reviewed the status of ongoing and planned stock assessments in
14 the Gulf through 2017 and that was Tab I, Number 4.

15
16 The committee was encouraged to consider which data-poor
17 species, in addition to red drum, to assess in 2016. The
18 Southeast Fisheries Science Center noted a change in effort
19 estimation for MRIP, which would require Southeast Fisheries
20 Science Center assessment scientists' time, and thereby possibly
21 reduce the number of assessments which could be completed in the
22 Gulf in a given year.

23
24 The council stated that their 2016 priorities were currently the
25 same and wanted to see more assessment slots in 2016 and beyond.
26 The council decided to wait until the March 2015 meeting to
27 determine which data-poor species would be assessed in 2016,
28 giving the Science Center time to develop a list of species to
29 include in the data-poor assessment and to provide better
30 guidance on the potential impacts of the MRIP calibration effort
31 on the assessment schedule. This concludes my report. Next
32 would be Administrative Policy, Tab G, and Mr. Boyd.

33
34 **ADMINISTRATIVE POLICY COMMITTEE**

35
36 **MR. BOYD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Administrative Policy
37 Committee met on Monday of this week and I too have an
38 abbreviated report. Mr. Gregory has a Report Reduction Act in
39 effect and so I'm going to read as little as possible here.

40
41 Staff reviewed the current structure of the Gulf Council SSC,
42 indicating how it differs from other councils. An integration
43 of the three major SSCs, Standing, Ecosystem, and Socioeconomic,
44 into a single SSC is expected to provide improved scientific
45 advice to the council.

46
47 **The committee approved, and I so move on behalf of the**
48 **committee, to integrate the three SSCs, which currently total**

1 thirty-five members, into a single Standing SSC of eighteen
2 individuals with the following approximate multidisciplinary
3 structure: not less than seven stock assessment or quantitative
4 biologists/ecologists; three ecosystem scientists; three
5 economists; three quantitative anthropologists/sociologists; one
6 environmentalist scientist; and one other scientist from one of
7 the above disciplines or from some other field. That's a
8 committee motion.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Boyd. We have a motion on the
11 board and is there any discussion on the motion?

12
13 **MR. WALKER:** Well, with all these allocation issues and all of
14 the social and economic and several of these have been brought
15 up and it's been taken to the SESSC and they have reviewed these
16 and it's come back to the council and I think it's extremely
17 important to keep the SESSC. I don't see any reason to
18 consolidate it.

19
20 I have talked with some of the SSC members and they don't seem
21 to disagree. It's kind of like having the Army lead the air
22 strikes. I mean it's just -- They're not going to be
23 interested, the biologists, as much so in the social and
24 economics and I think you need to keep this separate and it's
25 really important and it's important to a lot of people in this
26 country to have these decisions and the council sends these to
27 review and I think it's extremely important to keep the SESSC
28 separate.

29
30 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think, David, the next motion kind of addresses
31 that, because it talks about a special Socioeconomic SSC, but I
32 have a question on this list, because I wasn't here when you all
33 did this, but what does an environmental scientist exactly mean?
34 Do you mean a scientist who specializes in the environment or
35 what do you mean?

36
37 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** More particular, it could be
38 someone, a scientist, that works for an environmental
39 organization, but we didn't want to label somebody as "NGO",
40 because there's consulting firms and other aspects of that.

41
42 **DR. CRABTREE:** Why do we want to do that? We don't generally
43 set the SSC up to represent constituent groups. We set it up to
44 have qualified scientists on it and we don't have a commercial
45 scientist and a recreational scientist and I don't think we
46 ought to have an environmentalist scientist either and we ought
47 to have good scientists that represent the disciplines that we
48 think we need to get the science advice.

1
2 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** It would be easy just to do away
3 with that term and just say two other scientists from the above
4 disciplines or from some other field.
5
6 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think that's a good change.
7
8 **MR. PERRET:** So this motion is open to amendments, right?
9
10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** That's correct.
11
12 **MR. PERRET:** I would move that we remove "environmental
13 scientist" and, for the last bullet, instead of "one", put a
14 "two" and at the end of "other scientists." We are going to
15 have two qualified scientists from other fields and just two
16 scientists and we don't need "from one of the above disciplines
17 or from some other field". Just "two other scientists."
18
19 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** They are making final edits.
20
21 **MR. PERRET:** That's my amendment.
22
23 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Corky, I think you wanted the last bullet --
24
25 **MR. PERRET:** I want to delete "from one of the above disciplines
26 or from some other field" and just leave it at "two other
27 scientists." Thank you.
28
29 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** That's your motion, Corky? Do we have a second
30 to the substitute motion?
31
32 **MR. BOYD:** I second.
33
34 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right. It's been seconded by Mr. Boyd and
35 is there discussion?
36
37 **MS. BOSARGE:** I have a question, because I was confused about
38 this during the committee discussion as well and it has to do
39 with the second motion that we're going to get to, like Dr.
40 Crabtree said, but it affects my decision on this and so I need
41 an answer.
42
43 That Special Socioeconomic SSC that we have a motion to create,
44 two economists, two anthropologists/sociologists, when we have
45 economic or net benefit analysis or things of this nature that
46 are typically evaluated in an economic manner, using that field
47 of study, is that special SSC going to evaluate those on their
48 own as someone that specializes in that and we get a report or

1 have what we done here is going to create this eighteen or
2 nineteen members now on a Standing SSC and when we have an
3 economic issue, we pull those extra four people in, but we still
4 have stock assessment people and this and that that are making
5 decisions on or voting on motions that are economically driven?
6

7 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** It's the latter. The full SSC
8 votes on issues, along with the special SSC. They would be
9 fully integrated. Now, what the specialists can do and what any
10 of the disciplines there can do is go off and form a working
11 group and address issues and come back and report to the full
12 Standing SSC, but the full Standing SSC votes on the issues
13 brought before it.
14

15 **MS. BOSARGE:** Essentially the way it would work is we would have
16 a working group of that special SSC and they would evaluate
17 whatever the economic issue is and they would make motions in a
18 report and then the full SSC would read that and make their
19 decision based on that?
20

21 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** It could work that way or they
22 could do it together as one meeting and have the discussion at
23 the meeting and have a motion at the meeting, but the reason I
24 was trying to get at least three of each discipline is to give
25 them enough synergy to where they can address specific issues if
26 they wanted to, but typically the SSC meets as a whole and votes
27 as a whole, with the special SSC counting as a voting member of
28 the Standing when they meet together.
29

30 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other discussion?
31

32 **DR. STUNZ:** I've got a quick question for you, Doug. The red
33 drum and the shrimp and all those, are those still active then
34 and will still just function normally as I guess what we would
35 have had here?
36

37 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Right. There is no proposals here
38 to change the structure of the special SSCs other than to limit
39 their number to less than five.
40

41 **DR. STUNZ:** Just one more follow-up question to that. Then kind
42 of like Leann, the two motions that are going to follow this up,
43 you have this Special Socioeconomic SSC and so one of those
44 people will be one of the three on the Standing SSC or not
45 necessarily or I guess I'm wondering, where do you get the
46 continuity to carry it back to the main group that's going to
47 vote on what happened on the Special Socioeconomic SSC?
48

1 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Okay and let's take an amendment
2 that really requires input from economists and anthropologists.
3 We would convene the Special Socioeconomic SSC with the standing
4 SSC to address that and if it was red snapper, reef fish, we
5 also convene the Reef Fish Special SSC and so we would have the
6 two special SSCs meeting together with the Standing.

7
8 Now, if there was something in-depth in particular that the
9 three economists on the Standing SSC wanted to address as like a
10 separate working group, like we're doing now with ecosystem and
11 some of the shrimp issues, they can go do that on their own and
12 come back to the full body if they want, but that's the normal
13 way we've been operating. That's going to be an alternative
14 structure that's available to us that we've just been exploring
15 this year and it started with the ABC control rule. The SSC
16 formed a special working group to develop that.

17
18 **MS. BOSARGE:** One more question, because I'm not sure I
19 understand all of the dynamics here. Will we actually be losing
20 -- That's almost taking thirty-five of these members and cutting
21 it in half, just about, when you cut it down to eighteen or
22 nineteen maybe now on that motion, but are we losing half of
23 that expertise? Are we really doing away with it and those
24 people are going away or are they somewhere else in these little
25 special SSCs down here somewhere?

26
27 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** No, they will be going away. The
28 group that's going to not have as much representation, given the
29 proposals I have here, is so many people on the Ecosystem SSC,
30 but we've got three on the Standing that we will incorporate
31 from the existing Ecosystem SSC and so yes, you're right that
32 we're going to have half as many SSC members, not counting the
33 specials, as we do now and I would urge you to go back to the
34 beginning of the document I wrote to tell you a little history
35 of how these other SSCs got formed. They weren't formed by a
36 specific motion or action by the council. They came into
37 existence in a more round-about way.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Doug, we had some discussion obviously during
40 the Administrative Policy Committee and kind of following up to
41 David's concern regarding the number of economists that are
42 available relative to other SSCs, was it mentioned or do you
43 know how that, if this proposal were to go through, how it would
44 compare as far as economists on other SSCs? Would it be
45 equivalent or do they have two times as many economists as we
46 would have? Do you have a sense of that?

47
48 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** No, I don't. That was a question

1 that was asked in the committee and I was going to research that
2 and provide it to the council after this meeting.

3
4 **MR. PERRET:** Doug, having been around when we initially set it
5 up, the council was in the process of developing fishery
6 management plans and we had the Standing S&S and that committee
7 was primarily made up of biologists and we had a department
8 management representative and we had an attorney and we had a
9 sociologist and economist and so on, but the special committees
10 were set up because we were developing a shrimp plan and we were
11 developing a reef fish plan and we were developing a mackerel
12 plan and we were developing a groundfish plan and spiny lobster
13 and so on. That's how those special committees were set up,
14 because those were the plans that were being developed.

15
16 **MR. GREENE:** If we had a situation going on and we wanted to
17 send something specifically to the economic group, do we have to
18 -- Does everything go through the Standing SSC and then is
19 relegated out? Would we get reports of the findings of each
20 working group back or is it everything goes to the Standing and
21 they delegate it out and receive it back in and make a decision
22 and give it to back to us?

23
24 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Right. The request would go to the
25 SSC and then we would convene the Socioeconomic Special SSC in
26 conjunction with the Standing and then they -- If they felt a
27 special working group was needed to explore something in more
28 detail, they would make that request of us.

29
30 Now, this structure is pretty much what we have in our SOPPs and
31 I will point out that we have not been following our SOPPs. Our
32 SOPPs very clearly say that the Socioeconomic Panel is a subunit
33 of the Standing SSC, but we have never treated them as such. We
34 have always treated them as an independent SSC and so this is an
35 attempt to -- I wasn't using the SOPPs as my rationale for this,
36 but -- That's kind of the way the original Socioeconomic
37 Advisory Panel was set up. They were designed to take the
38 output from the stock assessment scientists and apply the
39 economic data to the relative ABCs so the councils could see
40 what the relative economic impacts of different management
41 styles were or management actions.

42
43 It was difficult to make that happen, because of just the way
44 the process works with the stock assessments, but that was the
45 original purpose of the Socioeconomic Advisory Panel and they
46 became an SSC when Congress said that the council could pay SSCs
47 and the staff, at the time, said we've got these scientists over
48 here and let's make them an SSC, so we can pay them too. That's

1 how they became an SSC, but our SOPPs clearly say they are
2 supposed to be a subunit of the Standing and this proposal would
3 make that more functional.

4
5 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think I would like a little more information on
6 how many economists, because of what you just said, because it's
7 such a priority for Congress right now. We have to take it into
8 effect and I want to make sure that we have all the assets that
9 we need to take it into account and I mean I want to make sure
10 we have the assets we need to take it into account and so if we
11 could get -- I don't really feel comfortable making a decision
12 on this without knowing where we stand relative to the other
13 councils on that, simply because these are very specialized,
14 high-level career paths that we're looking at and I don't want
15 to see us let this go before we realize that we might need it,
16 people.

17
18 **MR. WILLIAMS:** I think both Corky and David have made good
19 points and I am starting to think that those special SSCs may
20 have outlived their usefulness. He's right that they were set
21 up to help create the original fishery management plans and I
22 don't know what their utility is anymore.

23
24 I mean one of our objections here is we've got so many members,
25 seventy, but if we dropped the thirty-two special SSCs, we are
26 dropping the eleven Ecosystem SSCs and if we retained our
27 Standing and retained the Socioeconomic SSC, we would be down to
28 twenty-seven members and I am looking and that's actually
29 exactly what the South Atlantic Council has. They have eighteen
30 members on their SSC and nine members on their Socioeconomic
31 Panel.

32
33 I am not prepared to make a motion, but I don't know. This
34 whole thing seems a little clumsy with this Special
35 Socioeconomic SSC. If I have to vote on it, I will probably
36 vote against it, because I don't know, but it just seems real
37 clumsy to me, but I question whether we really need those
38 special SSCs anymore and if we need to cut back, maybe that's
39 the place to cut back.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a motion specific to the Standing SSC
42 and I understand the linkage of the special SSCs or these extra
43 SSCs and the membership, but this one pertains particularly to
44 the Standing SSC and so any other discussion on this motion?
45 **All those in favor of the motion signify by saying aye; all**
46 **those opposed like sign. The motion carries.** That was the
47 substitute motion. All right, Mr. Boyd.

48

1 **MR. BOYD:** I have a question. Did we pass the substitute
2 motion?

3

4 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Yes, that's what we were voting on, yes.

5

6 **MR. BOYD:** All right. Let me find where I was. Staff was asked
7 to provide the council with a similar breakdown of the
8 scientists that currently serve on the Standing SSC. That was
9 discussed just a minute ago. I am going to go to the next
10 motion, which we've talked about briefly.

11

12 **The committee approved and, on behalf of the committee, I so**
13 **move to create a Special Socioeconomic SSC to be comprised of**
14 **two economists and two anthropologists/sociologists.** That's a
15 committee motion.

16

17 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** There is a motion from the committee to create
18 a Special Socioeconomic SSC to be comprised of two economists
19 and two anthropologists/sociologists. Any discussion on the
20 motion?

21

22 **MR. BOYD:** I just have a comment. I looked back at the makeup
23 of the Socioeconomic SSC and there is about ten active members,
24 ten to twelve active members, on there and we have six on this
25 newly-created SSC.

26

27 We have three economists and three quantitative
28 anthropologists/sociologists and so we've carried over at least
29 50 percent of the expertise into this and so, from my point of
30 view, we don't really need to have a Special Socioeconomic SSC.
31 We have that expertise that we've brought over and this body
32 will be able to appoint those people that are going to be on
33 that committee when we redo the SSC. Thank you.

34

35 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other discussion?

36

37 **MR. WALKER:** I am going to vote in favor of the motion. I keep
38 trying to get through that I think it's important to the nation
39 and its fisheries to have some social on it. We need the
40 special social and economic and we've removed the SESSC and I
41 think this is the only other option left and so I would support
42 this.

43

44 **DR. LUCAS:** I just have a general question for descriptive
45 sakes. In the SSC that we just stood up, we have the
46 quantitative anthropologists/sociologists and are you just
47 specifying that -- There is no qualifier, I guess, in front of
48 the Special Socioeconomic SSC and is there a reason for that?

1 Are you all just separating quantitative from --

2
3 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Not particularly. When I discussed
4 this with the Standing SSC at their last meeting, as some of the
5 discussion here, the concern was about the efficiency of the
6 meetings. Having people that are not familiar with stock
7 assessments is sometimes -- They can't really contribute to the
8 discussion and so the SSC was saying if we can track
9 quantitative anthropologists to do so, but there was no other
10 real intent with putting it there and leaving it off of here.
11 We are pretty much going to be at the whim of who actually
12 applies.

13
14 **MS. BOSARGE:** I will just repeat what I said earlier about the
15 fact that this is such a concern when it comes to Congress and
16 to the politicians and they have made that clear to us, I
17 believe, as a council. It's clear in the Act that this is very
18 important, that the economics of the situation must be
19 considered and not by itself and make a decision on it, but it
20 has to be a big contributing factor.

21
22 Now, in my mind, somebody that has a business background that
23 has both a bachelors in accounting and in finance and an MBA --
24 I don't have an economics degree, but I have had a lot of
25 economics classes and I would never put economics and then the
26 rest of these sciences, your biologists and things like that,
27 they're totally different, completely different, fields.

28
29 To say that we really don't know how many economists are on
30 these other SSCs throughout the rest of the nation and then to
31 get rid of this too and so we're back to we have three
32 economists and that's it and that's what we have, I think this
33 has to be a focus for us and I think it is a very specialized
34 science that a lot of those other people that are on that
35 Standing SSC have no background in whatsoever and so I think
36 this is very important to have this here as an option for us to
37 go to and pull in when the SSC feels necessary.

38
39 **MR. PERRET:** I want to support this motion for a number of
40 reasons. One, historically I think the region had one economist
41 and we developed all these fishery management plans and we had a
42 tremendous lack of economic data and social data, boy, we were
43 really lacking.

44
45 The Act, Magnuson, was reauthorized sometime later and the
46 biology and the maximum sustainable yield, as modified by
47 relative social and economic and ecological factors, and so
48 sociology and economics are extremely important in what we're

1 dealing with today.

2
3 Early on, it was one group of commercial fishermen versus
4 another and who gets this share or that share and so on and so
5 forth and now we've got it where it's a little more complicated
6 with various constituencies within each user group, headboats
7 and six-packs and true recs and commercial net and commercial
8 this and commercial that.

9
10 I think it's extremely important we keep social and economic
11 scientists in this mix and I think this motion certainly helps
12 us to do that. Thank you.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other --

15
16 **MR. GREENE:** The paragraph before this motion is a little
17 concerning. It says the SSC expressed some concern about the
18 potential loss of the existing socioeconomic expertise and staff
19 suggested creation of a Special Socioeconomic SSC and my
20 question is what was their concern about that? I sat through
21 the committee and the whole deal and I must have missed it, but
22 what was their concern that they were expressing?

23
24 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** At the Standing SSC, I gave a
25 summary like I did in the committee here about the discussions
26 I've had with the Ecosystem SSC and the Socioeconomic SSC and it
27 was the Socioeconomic SSC that was most resistant to being
28 integrated and I think we have two economists on our Standing
29 SSC and one anthropologist now and I think in the discussion
30 with them at the Standing meeting, I threw out the option and I
31 said, well, you know we can always create a Special
32 Socioeconomic SSC to capture more expertise if we need it and
33 they thought that was a good idea.

34
35 I actually developed that idea while talking to the Standing SSC
36 about this restructuring and they were very particular about
37 wanting more stock assessment people, because I think at the
38 time I had four or six proposed. They wanted more, because
39 there is a lot of work to be done with stock assessments.

40
41 Each workshop has to have SSC representatives and some of the
42 same people go to all of these workshops and they are getting
43 tired.

44
45 The discussion was -- The reason the quantitative come up with
46 the anthropologists is economists are quantitative. Economists
47 do understand models and modeling and particularly the ones that
48 have been working in fisheries management, they are familiar

1 with stock assessments and they've even gone the next step and
2 developed bioeconomic models.

3
4 For a long time, it was thought that was the direction that
5 management analysis would go, is bioeconomics integrated into a
6 model. It just hasn't proved to be effective, for one reason or
7 the other, and so that's where that came from, in an attempt to
8 try to maintain some of that structure that we have now, but not
9 have it as a formal stand-alone group independent, but have it
10 more of a subunit.

11
12 **MR. WALKER:** It's the social part that concerns me. Not
13 everyone lives on the Gulf Coast. I live up in inland Alabama a
14 little ways and I can remember as a kid that we used to come
15 down and I was too young to go fishing and my dad would bring us
16 down or mom and they did not go fishing, but we all got an
17 opportunity to go out and go to a seafood restaurant and have
18 something to eat and have a social time and we had seafood and
19 we had shrimp and we had crab and we had snapper and we had
20 grouper.

21
22 They all didn't come down here to go fishing. They all came
23 down to the beach and enjoyed the sunshine and get out in the
24 water and swim and go to amusement parks or golfing or whatever.
25 Not everybody comes down here to -- I just think it's important
26 for the rest of the nation that comes down here and when it's
27 things like allocation and the access for the rest of the nation
28 that comes down here, I think you've got to have something and
29 social is a very important part for everyone in this nation, to
30 have the opportunity to get out and enjoy the Gulf Coast when
31 they come down here to.

32
33 **MR. PERRET:** Mr. Chairman, I would like to call the question on
34 the motion.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** The question has been called on the motion and
37 the motion is to create a Special Socioeconomic SSC to be
38 comprised of two economists and two
39 anthropologists/sociologists. **All those in favor of the motion**
40 **signify by saying aye; all those opposed like sign. The motion**
41 **carries.** Mr. Boyd.

42
43 **MR. BOYD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have another motion. **The**
44 **committee approved, and I so move on behalf of the committee, to**
45 **limit the size of the Special SSCs to no more than five members**
46 **each.** That's a committee motion.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a committee motion.

1
2 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Doug Gregory, do you think the -- Do the members
3 of the Special SSCs still come and contribute? Are they still a
4 useful portion of the SSC or have they -- They have certainly
5 outlived what they were created for originally, but I haven't
6 been to an SSC meeting in over a decade and so I don't have any
7 feeling for it.

8
9 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** It varies. Clearly the Reef Fish
10 Special SSC has been more active than the others, but it depends
11 on the individual. I think, like Mr. Perret said, the original
12 purpose was to bring in species-specific expertise to the
13 general discussion and some of them, I think by definition, are
14 not quantitative or stock assessment types and so they tend not
15 to participate in the stock assessment discussions as much.

16
17 **MR. WILLIAMS:** Do we pay them the way we pay the SSC?

18
19 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Yes.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any other discussion on the motion? **Any**
22 **opposition to the motion? The motion carries.**

23
24 **MR. BOYD:** Staff expressed that it would helpful to separate the
25 appointment of the APs and SSCs, with the APs being appointed at
26 the next council meeting and the SSC appointed in June,
27 especially since the SSC applicants have to provide a Statement
28 of Financial Interest forty-five days before they are appointed.

29
30 **The committee approved, and I so move on behalf of the**
31 **committee, to postpone selection of the SSC appointments until**
32 **June of 2015, due to the forty-five-day lead time needed for**
33 **SOFI's to be submitted and to reduce potential confusion and**
34 **workload during the transition to staggered terms and the online**
35 **application process. That's a committee motion.**

36
37 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** We have a motion on the board. Is there any
38 discussion on the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? Seeing**
39 **none, the motion carries.**

40
41 **MR. BOYD:** There was considerable discussion about the utility
42 of term limits and staggered terms as proposed by staff. Staff
43 was requested to determine if the other councils had similar
44 measures for their APs and so this discussion was postponed till
45 the next council meeting.

46
47 Staff noted that the future efforts of the Ad Hoc Private
48 Recreational Data Collection AP are similar enough to our

1 Standing Data Collection AP that consolidation of the two would
2 be a reasonable way forward. You have the other two processes
3 in front of you and so I'm just going to skip to the next
4 motion.

5
6 **The committee approved, and I so move, to discontinue the**
7 **Private Recreational Data Collection AP and integrate function**
8 **into the Data Collection AP. That's a committee motion.**

9
10 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** It's a committee motion and is there any
11 discussion on the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? The**
12 **motion carries.**

13
14 **MR. BOYD:** The next motion that the committee considered and
15 approved, and I so move, is that in the first council meeting of
16 each year, the council evaluate each Ad Hoc Advisory Panel and
17 if they deem the panel has completed its assignment, that the
18 panel will be disbanded. That's a committee motion.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right. Any discussion on the motion? **Any**
21 **opposition to the motion? The motion carries.**

22
23 **MR. BOYD:** The committee approved, and so I move, to eliminate
24 the three state habitat APs. Again, that's a committee motion.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Any discussion on the motion? **Any opposition**
27 **to the motion? The motion carries.**

28
29 **MR. BOYD:** During the rest of the meeting, Mr. Gregory reviewed
30 the NMFS and NOAA comments on the 2012 SOPPs. Mr. Chairman,
31 that completes my report.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mr. Boyd. That puts us to Other
34 Business and, Mara, it's you and are you ready?

35
36 **OTHER BUSINESS**
37 **FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS**

38
39 **MS. LEVY:** Yes and I know you've all been waiting until the very
40 end of the council meeting for this exciting presentation on
41 Magnuson-Stevens Act Financial Disclosures and Recusals.

42
43 **MR. BOYD:** I have one question for Dr. Crabtree that we may want
44 to do before that, but I can wait until after and it's not
45 relevant to Mara.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** If it's not relevant, then maybe we might want
48 to wait. Will this be about ten minutes?

1
2 **MS. LEVY:** Yes, not very long.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Okay.

5
6 **MS. LEVY:** This is just a very brief presentation, like I said,
7 on the Magnuson Act Financial Disclosure and Recusal Provisions.
8 First, I just wanted to go over -- This is essentially just to
9 give you all some information about what's required, very basic,
10 and when reporting is due, so that we know that everybody is on
11 the same page.

12
13 This is a presentation and it's not specifically directed at you
14 for any particular reason. The General Counsel Office for each
15 region is going to do this at the first council meeting of each
16 year, just to sort of make sure that everyone is refreshed and
17 knows the requirements.

18
19 What does the Magnuson-Stevens Act require? Each affected
20 individual must disclose any relevant financial interest in any
21 harvesting, processing, lobbying, advocacy, or marketing
22 activity that is being or will be undertaken within any fishery
23 over which the council concerned has jurisdiction or with
24 respect to an individual or organization with a financial
25 interest in such activity. I will talk a little bit more about
26 where you can find out what the harvesting, processing, and all
27 of that activity means.

28
29 The important thing to note here is who is an affected
30 individual. This applies to all council members nominated by a
31 Governor or appointed by the Secretary of Commerce and SSC
32 members and so if you're actually nominated, you have to fill
33 this out and then if you're appointed by the Secretary of
34 Commerce, this applies to you. It doesn't apply to state
35 directors or the Regional Administrator, those people that are
36 automatically on the council. If anyone has any questions, you
37 can feel free to ask now, during, or at the end.

38
39 The next slide, where can I find more information on what
40 interests must be disclosed, descriptions on activities
41 considered to be harvesting, processing, lobbying, advocacy, or
42 marketing can be found -- There is the regulatory site and so if
43 you go to 50 CFR Section 600.235(a), it has a definition and a
44 description of all the types of activities that this includes
45 and that should be disclosed.

46
47 I think the big thing here is when in doubt, disclose it. If
48 it's questionable, just put it on the form. This is all about

1 transparency and so my recommendation is if you have a question
2 and you really don't know, people in my office are always
3 available to talk to you, but if you think it might be, then
4 just disclose it.

5
6 When do these disclosures have to be made? You make them
7 annually and no later than February 1 of each year and this is
8 regardless of whether you've had any changes and so if you have
9 the exact same things to disclose each year, that's fine, but
10 you have to fill out a new form each year.

11
12 Then if anything changes during that year, then you need to fill
13 an updated form within thirty days of that information and so if
14 you have a new activity that requires disclosure, please go and
15 get yourself a new form and fill it out and submit it so that we
16 have it on record.

17
18 Is the financial disclosure requirement confined to the
19 interests of the affected individual? The answer is no. You
20 are supposed to disclose things that are related to you, the
21 affected individual, your spouse, minor child, or partner or any
22 organization, other than the council, in which the individual is
23 serving as an officer, director, trustee, partner, or employee.

24
25 **MR. PERRET:** Even if it's a non-profit and it costs you money to
26 attend the non-profit board activities and there is certainly no
27 financial remuneration, but it should be disclosed?

28
29 **MS. LEVY:** Correct. There is employment with, but then there is
30 also just serving as an officer, director, trustee, or partner
31 and so if you serve in any of those capacities, then you need to
32 disclose that. It's not linked directly to your financial
33 remuneration, but it's linked to the organization and what that
34 organization does.

35
36 **MR. PERRET:** It seems to me the whole title of "Financial
37 Disclosure" should be just "Disclosure", because there sure is
38 heck no finances involved in my case.

39
40 **MS. LEVY:** Noted. What happens if an affected individual has a
41 potential financial interest in a specific council matter? If
42 that happens, that individual is not permitted to vote on a
43 council decision that would have a significant and predictable
44 effect on any financial interest held by the individual.

45
46 There are also -- There is a description and definition of what
47 significant and predictable effect on financial interest means
48 and that's also in the regulations and if anybody has any

1 questions about whether that applies to them, again, you can
2 always contact my office, Department of Commerce Ethics. We
3 don't expect you to sort of go this alone, but if there is a
4 question in your mind, please reach out and ask.

5
6 What steps must an affected individual take if he or she finds
7 that a council decision could have a significant and predictable
8 effect on any financial interest held by that individual?
9 That's sort of what I was saying. Notify the NOAA General
10 Counsel Attorney assigned to your council immediately to begin
11 the process for determining whether a recusal is required.

12
13 If you think this might apply to you, please reach out and let
14 someone in my office know or me know and we can start looking
15 into whether it actually is going to require some sort of
16 recusal on a vote.

17
18 Then, briefly, this just outlines the consequences for failing
19 to comply with the Financial Disclosure Requirements. There are
20 criminal and civil procedures in another statute related to
21 conflict of interest and there is also prohibitions in the
22 Magnuson Act if there's a knowing and willful failure to
23 disclose and if there's a knowing vote on a council decision in
24 violation of those provisions. It can also lead to removal from
25 a council or SSC, as provided by the regulations.

26
27 The last slide just has some websites where you can go find some
28 more information about the Financial Disclosure Form and the
29 requirement and, like I said before, my office is always
30 available to answer questions and so please don't hesitate to
31 contact me. The Department of Commerce Ethics has a hotline and
32 an email address and they would also answer questions for you
33 about this. Thanks for your time.

34
35 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Mara, for the presentation. Any
36 questions to Mara? There is one other item that I didn't bring
37 up earlier and I apologize and if I don't get too many dirty
38 looks, Zack Bowen, our liaison representative from the South
39 Atlantic Council, I had just asked him -- It's something that
40 the South Atlantic Council does for the other liaisons, the
41 federal agency liaisons, that attend their meeting, as well as
42 the Gulf Council liaison.

43
44 They provide an opportunity and make it known that they
45 certainly would like a report of sorts and so the times that I
46 have been there, I have supplied a report, with council staff's
47 help, and I do appreciate that. I asked the same of Zack and
48 so, Zack, if you have some big things going on at the South

1 Atlantic Council that you just want to pass on to the group and
2 we certainly hope that your experience here was worth the trip
3 and that you can take some ideas back to your respective
4 council.

5
6 **SAFMC LIAISON REPORT**
7

8 **MR. BOWEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It has been enjoyable and
9 educational and I really appreciate the hospitality that I have
10 received from being here. It's my first chance to come, but I
11 hope it's not my last.

12
13 With that, I have sent Mr. Gregory the amendments overview and
14 you can get them from there. I am going to go over a few and I
15 know it's the end of the week and everybody is tired, but there
16 is a couple that I have heard some topics on gag grouper this
17 week and we have an amendment or had an amendment that I would
18 like to review the overview on and just give everybody a verbal
19 heads-up on it.

20
21 Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 22, gag and wreckfish, at
22 our June 2014 meeting, the council approved development of
23 Regulatory Amendment 22 to address adjustments to the ABC, ACL,
24 and OY for gag and wreckfish, based on the results of the stock
25 assessment for those two species.

26
27 The amendment also contained an action to consider modifying the
28 recreational bag limit. However, the council chose to take no
29 action at this time and, just for your knowledge, the
30 recreational bag limit for gag grouper is one per person at
31 twenty-four inches minimum size length.

32
33 The council reviewed the amendment at our September meeting and
34 approved it for public hearings, which were held via webinar in
35 fall of 2014. The council reviewed public hearing comments at
36 our December 2014 meeting and approved the amendment for
37 submission to the Secretary of Commerce.

38
39 The second one I would like to verbally go over with you is
40 Snapper Grouper Amendment 36, which is the spawning special
41 management zones. Amendment 36 would specify a process for
42 identifying spawning sites, aggregations for snapper grouper
43 species, including speckled hind and warsaw grouper, based on
44 the characteristics of sites important for spawning.

45
46 Spawning SMZs would only consider prohibiting fishing for and/or
47 possession of snapper grouper species. Fishing for all other
48 species would be allowed. The amendment would also revise the

1 boundary of the Charleston Deepwater Reef MPA and include an
2 action to address transit and anchoring provisions within newly-
3 designed spawning SMZs.

4
5 The spawning SMZ approach would not make any changes to the
6 existing MPAs in the South Atlantic. The council is developing
7 a system management plan to specify the outreach, law
8 enforcement, and monitoring and research projects necessary to
9 effectively monitor and evaluate the existing MPAs.

10
11 Then, of course, we have several joint amendments that you all
12 are definitely fully aware of and that's about the two that I
13 wanted to really go over. Thank you.

14
15 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** Thank you, Zack. With that, is there any other
16 -- Yes, Doug.

17
18 **MR. BOYD:** I have a question for Dr. Crabtree and just if you
19 can help me. I read the two bulletins that came out and one
20 says it seeks public comment on Amendment 40 and the other one
21 says revised seeks public comment on Amendment 40 and I tried to
22 correlate the two, to understand them, and really the only thing
23 I can find is that it shortens the comment period and is that --
24 Can you explain those to me? I have had several people ask me
25 and I can't explain it. One is dated January 20 and says the
26 comment period ends March 17 and one is dated January 23 and
27 says the comment period ends March 9.

28
29 **DR. CRABTREE:** On plan amendments that have rules that are
30 associated with them, there are always two different comment
31 periods. The sixty-day comment period that started first is the
32 comment period on the Notice of Availability and that's the
33 comment period on the amendment itself and that's where you
34 would logically comment as to whether you think the amendment
35 should be approved or disapproved.

36
37 The second comment period, which is a forty-five-day comment
38 period, is a comment period on the proposed rule and on that,
39 you would comment on does the proposed rule adequately implement
40 what's in the amendment.

41
42 We always have separate comment periods on the NOA and the
43 proposed rule and that's required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act
44 that you have a sixty-day comment period on the amendment and
45 that is I think the Administrative Procedure Act that requires
46 comment periods on proposed rules and so that's standard
47 practice. We want to normally have those comment periods
48 running concurrently and that doesn't always happen, but usually

1 it does.

2
3 **SETTING OF COUNCIL CONFERENCE CALL**
4

5 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** I have got an announcement. The
6 doodle poll is in and the conference call for the council will
7 be the afternoon of Tuesday, March 3, from 1:00 to 4:00 P.M.
8 Eastern Standard Time. We have twelve members that can attend
9 and that's the most and that's counting Dr. Crabtree, who will
10 be at the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, but he
11 assured me he or his designee can attend. It will be from 1:00
12 to 4:00 P.M. Eastern Standard Time on Tuesday, March 3. It's
13 12:00 to 3:00 Central Time.
14

15 I have a question. Contact our office. We're going to do this
16 by webinar and the easiest way for people to participate in that
17 is to call up the webinar and register for it, but communicate
18 only through the telephone and don't try to communicate through
19 your computer, because you can get feedback from your speaker
20 and your microphone. It would be easiest if you do it by
21 telephone and there will be a telephone number with the webinar
22 information that you can call in.
23

24 Now, if you have a headphone system, then that would work okay
25 with your computer, but if you don't have a headphone system,
26 you start getting feedback and it messes up the webinar and we
27 want this to go as smoothly as possible.
28

29 **CHAIRMAN ANSON:** All right and thank you, everyone. Have a safe
30 trip back and this concludes the council. Thank you.
31

32 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned at 3:28 p.m., January 29,
33 2015.)
34

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36

TABLE OF MOTIONS

1
2
3 PAGE 92: Motion to ask staff to prepare a framework action to
4 increase the ACL for red snapper based on the ABC
5 recommendations by the SSC, using the provisional 2014
6 estimates. The motion carried on page 93.
7
8 PAGE 93: Motion to direct staff to begin a framework amendment
9 to adjust ACL/ACT and the season options for gag. The motion
10 carried on page 93.
11
12 PAGE 93: Motion in Action 1 to remove suboptions 2(a) and 3(a)
13 to considered but rejected. Suboption a is no ACT buffer, i.e.,
14 ABC equals ACL equals ACT; note this option would require
15 modification of the accountability measures. The motion carried
16 on page 94.
17
18 PAGE 97: Motion in Action 3 to specify trip limit in pounds
19 gutted weight and include whole weight in parentheses for each
20 option. The motion carried on page 97.
21
22 PAGE 101: Motion to write a thank-you letter to Rear Admiral
23 Kevin Cook of the Coast Guard, copying the Secretary of Commerce
24 and Executive Director of Texas Parks and Wildlife, thanking
25 them for the enforcement actions relative to foreign fisheries
26 off of Texas. The motion carried on page 102.
27
28 PAGE 103: Motion to make Alternative 3 the preferred
29 alternative. The motion carried on page 113.
30
31 PAGE 118: Motion that Option b in Alternatives 3 and 4 that the
32 recreational bag limit be set zero to four fish. The motion
33 carried on page 119.
34
35 PAGE 119: Motion that Option c in Alternatives 3 and 4 must
36 establish a uniform minimum size limit of fifteen inches. The
37 motion carried on page 123.
38
39 PAGE 123: Motion to remove Option d, eliminating a maximum size
40 limit, in Alternatives 2, 3, and 4. The motion carried on page
41 125.
42
43 PAGE 141: The motion is in Action 1 of Amendment 28 to add two
44 alternatives and they would be Alternative 8 is the increase in
45 allowable harvest (due to the changes in recreational data) from
46 the updated assessment will be allocated to the recreational
47 sector. The percentage increase for the recreational fishery
48 should be that amount attributable to recalibration of MRIP

1 catch estimates. This would result in an increase of XX pounds
2 to the recreational fishery. Then Alternative 9 is the increase
3 in allowable harvest (due to changes in recreational data) from
4 the updated assessment will be allocated to the recreational
5 sector. The percentage increase in the recreational fishery
6 should be that amount attributable to the recalibration of MRIP
7 catch estimates and the change in size selectivity. This would
8 result in an increase of XX number of pounds. The motion
9 carried on page 151.

10
11 PAGE 151: Motion to revise the purpose and need in Amendment 28
12 to read: The purpose of this action is to evaluate reallocating
13 in a fair and equitable manner red snapper resources between the
14 commercial and recreational sector to increase the net benefits
15 from red snapper fishing. The need for the proposed action is
16 to base sector allocations on the best scientific information
17 available and use the most appropriate allocation method to
18 determine sector allocations while achieving optimum yield,
19 particularly with respect to food production and recreational
20 opportunities and rebuilding the red snapper stock. The motion
21 carried on page 155.

22
23 PAGE 156: Motion to convene the Ad Hoc Red Snapper For-Hire AP
24 to provide recommendations to the council. The motion carried
25 on page 158.

26
27 PAGE 161: Motion that the council create an Ad Hoc Reef Fish
28 Headboat AP. The charge will be determined after the headboat
29 EFP report is presented. The motion carried on page 165.

30
31 PAGE 165: Motion to begin the development of an amendment
32 considering a wide range of management approaches to improve
33 flexibility and accountability in the federal for-hire
34 component. The motion carried on page 170.

35
36 PAGE 170: Motion to begin the development of an amendment
37 considering a wide range of management approaches to improve
38 flexibility and accountability in the federal headboat
39 component. The motion carried on page 172.

40
41 PAGE 173: Motion to remove red snapper SPR consideration from
42 the status determination criteria document and request council
43 staff develop a plan amendment to adjust the FSPR levels for red
44 snapper to alternatives for: FSPR 40 percent, FSPR 30 percent,
45 status quo, FSPR 24 percent, FSPR 22 percent, FMAX (FSPR 20
46 percent). The plan amendment should also determine the timeline
47 for F Rebuild at each FSPR. The motion carried on page 175.

1 PAGE 177: Motion to recommend that CMP Amendment 26 go out to
2 scoping. The motion carried on page 178.
3
4 PAGE 178: Motion to hold scoping hearings for CMP Amendment 26
5 in Galveston, Port Aransas, and San Antonio, Texas; Mobile,
6 Alabama; Biloxi, Mississippi; Grand Isle, Louisiana; Key West,
7 Tampa Bay, and Panama City, Florida. The motion carried on page
8 179.
9
10 PAGE 180: Motion to move forward with scoping hearings on CMP
11 Amendment 28 at the same meetings as CMP Amendment 26. The
12 motion carried on page 180.
13
14 PAGE 181: Motion to recommend that the council create a
15 framework action plan to evaluate alternative gillnet trip
16 limits and accountability measures and elimination of latent
17 permits to minimize the potential for enforcement action due to
18 accidental trip limit overages. The motion carried on page 181.
19
20 PAGE 181: Motion that the Data Committee direct staff to begin
21 developing a plan amendment that would require electronic
22 logbooks for the charter for-hire vessels in the Gulf and South
23 Atlantic that considers the use of VMS and other recommendations
24 from the joint council technical subcommittee report. The
25 motion carried on page 183.
26
27 PAGE 187: Motion to integrate the three SSCs, which currently
28 total thirty-five members, into a single Standing SSC of
29 eighteen individuals with the following approximate
30 multidisciplinary structure: not less than seven stock
31 assessment or quantitative biologists/ecologists; three
32 ecosystem scientists; three economists; three quantitative
33 anthropologists/sociologists; one environmentalist scientist;
34 and two other scientists. The motion carried on page 193.
35
36 PAGE 194: Motion to create a Special Socioeconomic SSC to be
37 comprised of two economists and two
38 anthropologists/sociologists. The motion carried on page 197.
39
40 PAGE 197: Motion to limit the size of the Special SSCs to no
41 more than five members each. The motion carried on page 198.
42
43 PAGE 198: Motion to postpone selection of the SSC appointments
44 until June of 2015, due to the forty-five-day lead time needed
45 for SOFI's to be submitted and to reduce potential confusion and
46 workload during the transition to staggered terms and the online
47 application process. The motion carried on page 198.
48

1 PAGE 199: Motion to discontinue the Private Recreational Data
2 Collection AP and integrate function into the Data Collection
3 AP. The motion carried on page 199.

4

5 PAGE 199: Motion that in the first council meeting of each
6 year, the council evaluate each Ad Hoc Advisory Panel and if
7 they deem the panel has completed its assignment, that the panel
8 will be disbanded. The motion carried on page 199.

9

10 PAGE 199: Motion to eliminate the three state habitat APs. The
11 motion carried on page 199.

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