

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
 OUTREACH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Tremont House Galveston, Texas

OCTOBER 22, 2019

VOTING MEMBERS

Phil Dyskow.....Florida
 Susan Boggs.....Alabama
 Roy Crabtree.....NMFS
 Bob Shipp.....Alabama
 Joe Spraggins.....Mississippi
 Greg Stunz.....Texas
 Ed Swindell.....Louisiana
 Lt. Mark Zanowicz.....USCG

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....Alabama
 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
 Jonathan Dugas.....Louisiana
 Tom Frazer.....Florida
 Martha Guyas (designee for Jessica McCawley).....Florida
 Lance Robinson (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas
 John Sanchez.....Florida
 Chris Schieble (designee for Patrick Banks).....Louisiana
 Troy Williamson.....Texas

STAFF

Zeenatul Basher.....Coral and Habitat Biologist
 Assane Diagne.....Economist
 John Froeschke.....Deputy Director
 Lisa Hollensead.....Fishery Biologist
 Ava Lasseter.....Anthropologist
 Mara Levy.....NOAA General Counsel
 Jessica Matos.....Document Editor & Administrative Assistant
 Natasha Mendez-Ferrer.....Fishery Biologist
 Emily Muehlstein.....Public Information Officer
 Ryan Rindone.....Fishery Biologist & SEDAR Liaison
 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
 Carrie Simmons.....Executive Director

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

LuiZ Barbieri.....GMFMC SSC
 Charles Bergman.....MS

1 Donna Brooks.....FL
2 Glen Brooks.....FL
3 Richard Cody.....NOAA
4 Chris Conklin.....SAFMC
5 Troy Frady.....AL
6 Benny Gallaway.....LGL Ecological, Galveston, TX
7 Jamie Gaspard.....
8 Susan Gerhart.....NMFS
9 Sepp Haukebo.....EDF
10 Scott Hickman.....Galveston, TX
11 Chris Horton.....Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
12 Gary Jarvis.....Destin, FL
13 Mark Kelley.....Panama City, FL
14 Bill Kelly.....FKCFA
15 Max Lee.....Mote Marine Lab, Bradenton, FL
16 Tad Mask.....SFA
17 Larry Mullins.....
18 John O'Keefe.....
19 Alicia Paul.....Panama City Beach, FL
20 Laura Picariello.....Texas Sea Grant, TX
21 Clay Porch.....SEFSC
22 Marcia Amick Sawyer.....Graceville, FL
23 Bob Zales.....Panama City, FL

24
25
26

- - -

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1
2
3 Table of Contents.....3
4
5 Table of Motions.....4
6
7 Adoption of Agenda and Approval of Minutes.....5
8
9 Action Guide and Next Steps.....5
10
11 Presentation - Communication Analytics.....7
12
13 Release Mortality Symposium Summary.....12
14
15 Review of "Fishing for our Future" Webpage.....24
16
17 Remaining Items from the Outreach and Education Technical
18 Committee Summary.....29
19
20 Adjournment.....29
21
22 - - -
23

TABLE OF MOTIONS

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12

[PAGE 22](#): Motion to approve the Release Mortality Workshop Summary with committee recommendations and distribute to NRDA. [The motion carried on page 24.](#)

[PAGE 26](#): Motion to publish the Gulf Council's "Fishing for Our Future" website pages. [The motion carried on page 29.](#)

- - -

1 The Outreach and Education Committee of the Gulf of Mexico
2 Fishery Management Council convened at the Tremont House,
3 Galveston, Texas, Tuesday morning, October 22, 2019, and was
4 called to order by Chairman Phil Dyskow.

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

10 **CHAIRMAN PHIL DYSKOW:** I would like to call this committee
11 meeting of the Outreach and Education Committee to order. The
12 newly-appointed members of this committee are myself as Chair,
13 Ed Swindell as Vice Chair, Susan Boggs, Dr. Crabtree and/or Ms.
14 Gerhart, Dr. Bob Shipp, General Spraggins, Dr. Stunz, and
15 Lieutenant Zanowicz.

16
17 To start the meeting, I would like to entertain a motion to
18 adopt the agenda as written. We have a motion. Do we have a
19 second? We have a second. If there are no nays, that is
20 passed. The next thing we need to do is to approve the minutes
21 of the January meeting, which should be pretty easy, because
22 there wasn't much there, and that was the last time we had a
23 report, and that's why it goes back so far. I would entertain a
24 motion to approve the minutes.

25
26 **DR. GREG STUNZ:** So moved.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Do we have a second from anybody? All right.
29 With no opposition, that is passed. We have a number of
30 activities to go through, because we just had two important
31 meetings. We had the release mortality workshop in St. Pete
32 Beach, which was a two-day event, heavily attended, and then we
33 had our annual Outreach and Education Committee meeting, and
34 that was also well attended, and we had a lot of constructive
35 comments come out of that, and so I'm going to pass the mic to
36 Emily, who is going to go through the Action Guide and Next
37 Steps and then walk us through some other topics that you may be
38 interested in.

39
40 **MS. EMILY MUEHLSTEIN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. We have three sort
41 of main action items for today's agenda. The first one is a
42 presentation of our Gulf Council communication analytics, and
43 this has sort of become an annual tradition, and it's just sort
44 of give you guys an update on how we're doing with our council
45 communications. There is really no action required for this
46 committee on this one, unless you find anything in that
47 presentation that you think requires action.

1 Next, we will look over the summary of the release mortality
2 symposium that we just hosted. You may remember, the last time
3 this committee met, which was in January, you asked the council
4 to host a workshop that consisted of scientists, managers, and
5 fishermen, and the main objective of that workshop, from the
6 council perspective at the time, was to promote its descending
7 and venting policy and make sure that that policy and its
8 objectives were actually measurable and successful.

9
10 As we sort of got into planning that workshop, we also started
11 talking to the folks at NRDA, at the Natural Resource Damage
12 Assessment, and found that the meeting would also be an
13 appropriate place for us to try and distill some recommendations
14 for how they could most efficiently use the funding that they
15 have available for your open ocean restoration projects.

16
17 What I would like from the committee today is for you guys to go
18 through that release mortality symposium report with me and
19 suggest any improvements to that report and then ultimately
20 approve it both for distribution to NRDA and sort of just the
21 general public.

22
23 Then the last thing we'll do is go over the Fishing for our
24 Future webpage. At your January meeting, you also recommended
25 that we, as the council, sort of become the central voice to
26 communicate the problem of barotrauma and release mortality in
27 general and really host all of our partner outreach materials
28 and try and sort of culminate all of that information in one
29 place, and so we have done that, and we would like you to review
30 that website and go through that with us, and, ultimately, we're
31 looking for any suggestions of improvements you have and
32 approval for publication.

33
34 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Dr. Stunz.

35
36 **DR. STUNZ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before we get too far into
37 the details of this, I just want to make a comment about the
38 workshop that you put on Emily, and I thought it was really,
39 really good, and thanks for doing that. Carrie, your staff and
40 everyone I thought did a good job.

41
42 As we've been talking around this table and trying to push
43 through getting these devices in the hands of fishermen, I
44 obviously wanted to have that in place, but, in retrospect, I
45 think you made the right decision, in terms of educating and
46 getting the word out there first and kind of laying the
47 groundwork ahead of time.

48

1 I thought the meeting was really productive, and a lot of good
2 information is going to come out of that. A lot of the right
3 people were there, I think, to make this happen broadly. That
4 doesn't mean that I don't think you're going to see a motion in
5 the future to actually implement this officially, but I think
6 we're headed down the right path, and I just wanted to tell you
7 guys that I thought you all did a great job with the workshop,
8 and so thanks.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Before Emily goes on, I would like to add that
11 this was a unique experience, because we had a broad base of
12 stakeholder groups at this seminar, and many of them were
13 educators, and it's a different discipline than I come from, and
14 it's kind of like -- It's kind of akin to herding cats, and
15 Emily did a great job of keeping everybody on point, and she
16 used facilitators, where it was necessary, and we actually had
17 some great outcomes from a very diverse group, and that's not
18 easy to do, and so, again, my compliments to Emily and staff for
19 accomplishing something of this magnitude.

20 21 **PRESENTATION - COMMUNICATION ANALYTICS**

22
23 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Okay. Thank you, guys. I think, with that, we
24 can move on to talking about our general council communication
25 analytics. We give this presentation to the Outreach and
26 Education Technical Committee, and, as you guys know, that is
27 populated with communicators from all over the Gulf coast, from
28 the states as well as from the Sea Grant community, and then we
29 also have a media representative and some other fishermen
30 representatives that are sprinkled in there.

31
32 We give this presentation to them, sort of looking for and
33 seeking advice on maybe how we can improve our communications
34 analytics each year, and then we find it productive to give it
35 to you guy as well, just so you have an idea of what's
36 happening.

37
38 There is a lot of information on this slide. This is our
39 website and the analytics on our website. Now, each one of
40 these graphs, as we go through this presentation, the graphs are
41 based on quarterly information, and then the tables are annual,
42 and so it's different pieces of information here.

43
44 What you will notice is that, if you look at the graph for
45 quarterly website use, it shows that we usually have a spike in
46 the second quarter, and you will notice that that is pretty
47 absent this year, and that's interesting, because it kind of
48 speaks to the fact that we always have a communications spike in

1 the second quarter, and that precedes the announcement of the
2 red snapper fishing season, and so, now that the council is not
3 sort of the main body in charge of announcing that fishing
4 season, we have sort of lost that typical spike.

5
6 The good news is we are still generally on track, for the first
7 half of this year, to have the same analytics, and so you can
8 see that down in the table, where it looks at our annual
9 sessions and our annual page views on our websites. We have
10 about half -- The first half of the year, we had about half of
11 the engagements that we normally have in a calendar year, and so
12 we're still on track somehow, even though we're losing that red
13 snapper announcement.

14
15 This table will show you the top ten pages that are accessed on
16 our website. It's important to note that -- Obviously, our home
17 page, which is our landing page, would be the most popular, but
18 our federal fishing regulations are always very popular, and
19 then, also, as you drill down a little bit deeper, specific
20 council meetings, and those meeting materials, are often
21 accessed.

22
23 Now, if you look at that in comparison to this pie graph, which
24 shows the number of unique users that we have, you will see that
25 we have a pretty good rate of new users versus returning users,
26 and so only 16 percent of us come back to this website over and
27 over again, and then the remaining eighty-some percent is users
28 that are unique users that come to our website for the first
29 time.

30
31 Moving on to social media, these are our Facebook analytics.
32 Our number of followers is steadily increasing. Our number of
33 engagements is on track this year to meet last year's, and the
34 number of impressions, which is the amount of times your content
35 is put in front of somebody's face, also seems to be on track
36 with some typical years.

37
38 You will notice that, in 2017, the number of impressions really
39 spiked up, to over two-million. That was when the Secretary of
40 Commerce extended the red snapper season, and that sort of drove
41 social media insane, and so we're kind of falling back down a
42 little bit, but it seems like it's to regular levels, and then
43 reach, which is a new analytic as of last year, is a little bit
44 different than impressions.

45
46 Impressions means that it was put in front of your face. Reach
47 means that you actually looked at it, and so it's just a little
48 bit of a minor difference there, and, quarterly, we're sort of

1 on track now, like we always have been, and so that tends to
2 remain pretty steady.

3
4 Our email listserv, that's our Constant Contact press release
5 mailing. You will notice that, over time, we have just had a
6 very steady increase. We don't have a huge base of subscribers.
7 There is only 4,600 people that subscribe to our listserv.
8 However, if you look at our open rate, which is about 35
9 percent, and stays at about 35 percent, comparatively, that's a
10 reasonably good open rate, and so, while we don't have a whole
11 ton of people that subscribe to our listserv, those people are
12 relatively well engaged, and they open the emails that they do
13 see.

14
15 Next, we go on to YouTube. You know, we have been producing
16 those amendment videos, tutorial videos, and, as you can see,
17 the views of our YouTube videos have steadily increased. I
18 think that's in part due to the increasing popularity of YouTube
19 as well as, the more content we have, the more likely it is that
20 people are going to find our content.

21
22 This one shows our blog, which is really a place where it's a
23 repository for articles that we then sort of will send out to
24 people. Typically, this blog answers questions that we hear a
25 lot, and it's a way for us to be more efficient in our
26 communications, and so, rather than answer the same question a
27 hundred times, I can say, hey, read this quick article.

28
29 You will notice that there is a slight drop in that blog in the
30 recent months, and that is mostly content driven. It's due to
31 the fact that I haven't written much that was titillating
32 recently, and so this one is really a factor of you get out of
33 it what you put into it, and it's been kind of going by the
34 wayside in the last couple of months.

35
36 Next is our newsletter, and you will see those major drops.
37 Those signify months that we didn't have newsletters, and so
38 it's not because nobody read them, but it's because we didn't
39 have them available, but you will notice a recent uptick in
40 popularity of that newsletter.

41
42 Following the last meeting of our Outreach and Education
43 Technical Committee, they sort of advised that we start to write
44 our newsletter with a different voice and audience in mind, and
45 the idea here is that the newsletter might be more appropriately
46 aimed towards interagency type of folks.

47
48 In other words, maybe your average fisherman isn't reading the

1 Gulf Council newsletter, and, so with that in mind, Camilla has
2 worked really hard to help us change the tone of that
3 newsletter, so that it's more agency appropriate, so that folks
4 like me, who open up their email in the morning, will look at
5 this and actually read it, because it might be relevant to them
6 as agency folks, and you can actually see that that's improving
7 our analytics from that change.

8
9 Last, but not least, you might remember that one of the big
10 things that we did last year was migrate from our regulations
11 app that we had developed on our own, or with a contractor, to
12 Fish Rules, which was an existing platform.

13
14 We did talk a little bit about that yesterday. As you can see,
15 as of 2017, we were using our old app, and we did have over
16 70,000 downloads of that app. However, if you look at the use
17 sessions over time, from 2015 to 2017, it began to steadily
18 drop, and that was in part because the app was pretty
19 antiquated, and it wasn't very user friendly, and Fish Rules
20 sort of came in and was becoming the standard for use.

21
22 I don't have the analytics for 2018, but I started getting our
23 analytics in 2019, and you can see that our use sessions,
24 compared to what they were in the last year that we had our own
25 app, have just magnified intensely, and so 60,000 uses in the
26 first half of this year, compared to 14,000 in all of 2017 with
27 our old app, and so we are sort of handling that as a major
28 success so far.

29
30 Also, part of the analytics we get is really interesting, and
31 you can see this map on the bottom left-hand part of your
32 screen, and that -- Fish Rules is based on location, and so,
33 when you open up your app, it will give you regulations for
34 where you are, and it does work offshore, and so it's really
35 neat to see this heat map, because you can see where people are
36 accessing the Gulf regulations, and it's pretty indicative
37 there. Then you can also see, by species in the Gulf of Mexico,
38 which regulations were viewed most frequently for which species,
39 and that's it for our communications.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Yes, sir.

42
43 **MR. DALE DIAZ:** Ms. Muehlstein, now that we've got the states
44 managing the snapper seasons, and, towards the end of the
45 fishing year, states are opening up short seasons to use the
46 last of their ACL, and is there any way on Fish Rules where it
47 shows the seasons, when they're opened and closed and closing
48 announcements, maybe, that are coming out by the states?

1
2 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** I would have to talk to the developer directly
3 about how we can make that more efficient, but it's a good
4 point. I do know that, since the states have been opening their
5 supplementary seasons, especially because Fish Rules sort of
6 changes state versus federal, depending on location, there might
7 be a more efficient way for us to approach that.

8
9 **MR. DIAZ:** I do want to mention that this was something that
10 came up in the Law Enforcement Committee, and so they were
11 trying to make sure that the word gets out to everybody when
12 these seasons change, but especially other law enforcement
13 agencies, and so it was brought up by the committee, and I am
14 just relating something that was brought up by the enforcement
15 officers. Thank you.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Ms. Boggs.

18
19 **MS. SUSAN BOGGS:** Emily, while you were talking, I logged into
20 Fish Rules, and, because I'm in the State of Texas, it shows the
21 open, and it's not real clear that there's the federal versus
22 state button up here, which I finally found, but I don't know if
23 there's a way that that can be more prominent, so that people
24 can see. Especially with red snapper, that could be confusing.

25
26 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** That's great feedback. When we started our
27 relationship with Fish Rules, that button didn't exist, and you
28 actually had to change manually your location, so that you could
29 manually set yourself to be in federal waters, in order to see
30 the federal regulations, and so the existence of that button
31 came from feedback that we provided the developer.

32
33 However, I will happily sort of return back to him and ask him
34 if there is a way that we can make it that much more apparent,
35 because, with the understanding that most people like to access
36 the regulations before they leave the dock, so that they can
37 sort of prepare and know what they are looking for, and I
38 recognize that that is a really important feature, and I'm happy
39 to ask him if there's a way that we can call that out even more.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Was there another hand up earlier? Mr.
42 Swindell.

43
44 **MR. ED SWINDELL:** Your map that you have here with all the red
45 dots on it there in the Gulf, what does the red dots represent?
46 Is that where the people are responding from?

47
48 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Yes. Those red dots indicate where people are

1 when they access the regulations from Fish Rules.

2
3 **MR. SWINDELL:** So they're at-sea?

4
5 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** It does work at-sea, and that's part of the
6 special feature of this, and that's why those analytics are
7 pretty neat.

8
9 **MR. SWINDELL:** But nothing is showing that people on-land are
10 asking about this stuff before they go fishing?

11
12 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** That's a good question, actually, and I don't
13 know. I think the land-based analytics are probably separate
14 from these ones.

15
16 **MR. SWINDELL:** Okay. Thank you.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Emily, let's go on and talk about the release
19 mortality symposium. I'm sorry, Dr. Simmons. I didn't see your
20 hand.

21
22 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CARRIE SIMMONS:** Just really quickly, I think
23 this just drives home the point about the state supplemental
24 seasons. If we could have a point of contact when we're
25 developing the commercial rules app, and then, as we move
26 forward with improving the recreational app, that we have a good
27 point of contact at all the state agencies, so that we can try
28 to get the best app out there that we can and that we can get
29 the regulations and keep them up-to-date, and so I think that's
30 really important, if we could work towards that.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** If there are no more questions, we will move
33 on to the release mortality symposium summary.

34
35 **RELEASE MORTALITY SYMPOSIUM SUMMARY**

36
37 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Okay. This is kind of a mini summary, and I
38 think maybe the best way for us to approach this today is really
39 to just focus mostly on the executive summary, and I apologize
40 that we didn't get the summary in the briefing book until
41 Friday, and so I know that you probably haven't had a whole lot
42 of lead time in looking at this, and so I'll do the best I can
43 to guide you through it.

44
45 The meeting that we hosted was actually a two-part meeting, and
46 the first part was a meeting of scientists, fishermen, and
47 managers, and it was really focused on the science, and then the
48 second part was a meeting of our Outreach and Education

1 Technical Committee, and they focused more on the
2 communications, and the whole goal of the meeting was to come up
3 with an action plan to recommend how we can, one, most
4 effectively communicate the need for the use of these barotrauma
5 mitigation devices as well as enhance our data collection
6 efforts and incorporate those results into the stock assessment.

7
8 It became pretty immediately clear, during our meeting, that we
9 needed to shift our discussion away from just sort of the
10 singular conversation about barotrauma mitigation, and it really
11 shifted the conversation to release mortality as a whole, and
12 so, in other words, the folks that were at the table were not
13 incredibly satisfied with just talking about barotrauma, because
14 they understood that a smaller proportion of fish die upon
15 release because of barotrauma than sometimes other factors, and
16 that's different across different regions and different seasons
17 and things like that, but it's pretty important to note that it
18 really became a release mortality conversation that incorporated
19 barotrauma rather than a barotrauma-focused conversation.

20
21 One of the first things that we did at the symposium was have
22 private, charter, and headboat groups break out and try and make
23 some recommendations on best practices. Uniformly, all three of
24 those different portions of the recreational sector recommended
25 that anglers should be allowed flexibility to choose which
26 release mortality mitigation technique that should be used.

27
28 They also indicated that anglers should be provided with best
29 practice recommendations that prepare them to make their best
30 decision on how to handle fish under differing conditions, and
31 so we developed this risk matrix and basically asked the panel
32 to come up with the different factors that would increase or
33 decrease the risk that a fish would experience barotrauma, and
34 then, after that, we had the group sort of break out, with that
35 risk matrix in hand, and make fleet-specific best practice
36 recommendations.

37
38 I guess maybe it's appropriate -- Just really quickly, the
39 private anglers reported that they wanted -- As their best
40 practices, anglers should have a plan, they should identify
41 target species and depth and things like that before they leave,
42 and make sure they have the right tools onboard to handle the
43 situations that they'll be fishing in.

44
45 They also suggested that private anglers follow best practice
46 guidance, things like keeping fish in the water, minimizing
47 handling time, and then, finally, one of the major
48 recommendations that came out of the private anglers was, if you

1 see something, do something, and so assess the situation, and
2 knowing that different conditions at-sea, or different species,
3 are going to be affected differently by fishing, they recognized
4 that descending is ideal, when it's possible, but that might not
5 always be practical, and so you should do something to mitigate
6 the issue, but that's going to vary, based on your situation.

7
8 The private angler group also identified that it was of critical
9 importance that we create consistent messaging across the
10 different spectrum of communications and that, if we have some
11 sort of universal research-based best practices that we can
12 deliver to private anglers, that we want them to be informed
13 fishermen. We want to give them the ability to make the right
14 decision, because a blanket recommendation to do one thing or
15 another might not actually be most effective in mitigating
16 release mortality.

17
18 The charter group did reiterate the circle hooks should be used
19 at all times, and they also discussed that it would be ideal if
20 fight time is minimized, with the idea that sometimes heavy
21 tackle should be provided, but in recognition of the fact that
22 some trips actually are sold based on light tackle offshore
23 fishing, and so they didn't want that to be a restriction, but
24 they wanted it to be a guideline, if it was appropriate, to use
25 heavier tackle and minimize fight time.

26
27 The charter group also recognized the descending is the gold
28 standard, in the proper conditions, but it's not always
29 feasible. For example, if you have six customers onboard and
30 one mate, and you are in a spot where the bite is really good,
31 and multiple fish are hitting the deck, maybe it's not great for
32 those fish to wait in line to be descended, and the best thing
33 you could do is either vent them or minimize handling time and
34 just dehook them before they even come over the gunnel.

35
36 Then, finally, that group, the charter group, recommended to do
37 what you can, because best practices are situational, and so
38 you'll notice there is sort of this thematic idea that we should
39 be doing something, but maybe it's not the same thing every
40 time.

41
42 That charter group also discussed that there are charter groups
43 that are headquartered actually in this part of the Gulf, in the
44 western Gulf, and those associations are actually requiring the
45 use of specific descending devices as a barrier to membership,
46 and so you actually have to sign a conservation covenant that is
47 going to guide how you handle release of undersized or out-of-
48 season fish in order to be part of that association, and so

1 that's kind of an interesting thing to note.

2
3 Then, finally, the headboat guys noted that venting is actually
4 recommended in this venue as a primary means of mitigating
5 barotrauma. Most of those headboat trips are in relatively
6 shallow water, and so they reasoned that maybe descending wasn't
7 critical.

8
9 They did say that proper dehooking is just as important as
10 mitigating barotrauma, and they also noted that undersized or
11 out-of-season fish should be thrown back as quickly as possible
12 and that, if you do bring up a fish that is obviously going to
13 die, and it is a legal fish, even if it's not a trophy fish,
14 that that fish should be retained and counted against your bag
15 limit. Then it was also said that anglers should be allowed to
16 select their own method of release mortality mitigation.

17
18 The headboat group also emphasized the importance of angler
19 education, and it suggested that the captain and crew should
20 take responsibility for educating their anglers on how to best
21 mitigate release mortality and that those crew members should
22 lead by example, and so I think that might be a good part to
23 stop and see if maybe the committee has anything to say before
24 we move to the next section.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Thank you, Emily. I think the most important
27 factor that came out of this is, previously, we had somewhat of
28 a focus on venting tools as the preferred method, and, in our
29 materials that were developed, through Sea Grant and others,
30 there was a real focus on venting, and we have a much larger
31 scope of options now.

32
33 We had a presentation from the SeaQualizer folks, and everybody
34 came away thinking that descending tool was in fact the gold
35 standard, and it's easily available, and it's reasonably cost
36 effective, and some of the fish handling devices were important,
37 as were dehooking devices and fish handling in general, and so
38 we have to broaden the scope of our communication to encompass
39 all of these different factors, where, previously, we were
40 focusing a lot of resource, as an industry, on venting tools.
41 Are there any questions from the council for Emily? Mr.
42 Swindell.

43
44 **MR. SWINDELL:** I want to commend Emily and you, Phil, for all
45 the work that's been done lately. I think it's a big benefit to
46 the council and to the people that are doing the fishing in
47 general. The outreach has come a long way in the last year or
48 so, and so congratulations on what you've done to this point.

1
2 What are we doing to get this information more out to other
3 people? Are we having any meetings across the Gulf, from time
4 to time, to give people opportunity to come to the meetings,
5 and, if so, can you give us a notification of what you're doing?
6

7 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** One of the major things that we're doing, and
8 that is based on the guidance that we got from our Outreach and
9 Education Technical Committee, is the next agenda item, is we've
10 created sort of a central website, where we can drive people to
11 get information about release mortality, and so we'll look at
12 that next.
13

14 The other thing is most of the states, and a lot of the Sea
15 Grant agencies, are already doing a lot of work, and so the
16 guidance that we got from our technical committee was that those
17 agencies should still be doing that work, because they do it
18 really well, and that maybe the council's best role in this is
19 to help provide the guidance and sort of set the tone and the
20 messaging that can then be pushed out by all of those different
21 agencies, and so we'll talk about that as we move forward.
22

23 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Another point that we should probably mention
24 here is the Outreach and Education Technical Committee has a new
25 chair, as of 2019, and that's Captain Dylan Hubbard, and he is
26 very passionate and very up-to-speed on all of these different
27 mitigation tools, and I think the focus of the technical
28 committee is going to be laser sharp on how to do this type of
29 communication in the future. Ms. Boggs.
30

31 **MS. BOGGS:** Thank you. I was looking at the council policy on
32 the use of venting tools and descending devices, and that was in
33 2017. Is this to be used to complement that and just give some
34 more information about not just barotrauma, but the release of
35 fish, and is this something that the council will be taking like
36 an action on, to say we adopt this, or what is the next action
37 with this? Then I have a follow-up question.
38

39 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Thank you for that question. Currently, the
40 council, as you know, recommends enhanced release techniques. I
41 think, as we get more options, more flexibility, and more
42 interest and passion built around this issue, at some point it
43 will probably be appropriate for this council to consider
44 whether we want to make the use of these materials a requirement
45 for fishing in federal waters for recreational anglers. That is
46 an option, and I think, if you listen to the audience at a
47 meeting like the one we just attended, or a symposium like we
48 just attended, there is some interest in that, and there is some

1 support for that.

2

3 If you're asking me what the endgame is, there are next steps
4 that we can take, and our policy, our recommendation, may shift
5 more to a regulation for recreational anglers, because the
6 flexibility is there, and the different tools are there, and it
7 makes good sense, and, if we did this, it would be much broader
8 than our current recommendation, because we would want to
9 include the proper use of dehooking devices. There has been
10 some new technology in that area that makes them much more
11 efficient, and certainly circle hooks.

12

13 Descending devices have an important role in this, because many
14 recreational anglers are unsure how to properly vent fish, and
15 certainly people on charter boats and headboats know how to vent
16 fish, but the average angler, private anglers, sometimes is
17 unclear on how to properly vent fish, whereas the descending
18 devices are very easy, and, in an environment where there is
19 two, three, or four anglers, they are actually fairly efficient.
20 It takes time to descend a fish, and so, for the private angler,
21 it may be a better tool.

22

23 With all the new information we have, it is probably
24 appropriate, at some point in the future, for the council to
25 readdress this and to see if we want to take it to the next
26 step. Does that answer your question? Do you have a follow-up
27 question?

28

29 **MS. BOGGS:** I do, and so I was looking -- I did listen to the
30 majority of the symposium online. I was unable to attend in
31 person, but I noticed that you all, and I was listening at the
32 time that you created this list of recreational influencers
33 across the Gulf. You have created this list, and what is the
34 next step? I see names associated with some, and others not,
35 and is this --

36

37 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** I don't think that list has been completed
38 yet, because we have these names, and we have to get the
39 appropriate contact information. Emily is raising her hand, and
40 so she's probably going to tell me that, yes, it is complete.

41

42 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** No, it's not, but, sort of to broadly answer
43 your question, we did this symposium, and there was -- It's kind
44 of tricky, because we were wearing two hats while we were doing
45 it. The first one is the council motion in January asking for
46 us to host this symposium so that we could figure out how to
47 better actualize the goals of the venting and descending policy
48 that we created the year before.

1
2 Part of this symposium was to inform the council and sort of to
3 help the council then have a jumping-off spot to figure out what
4 we need to do next in order to make our policy more effective.

5
6 The second hat that we were wearing was the one that was hoping
7 to help guide the NRDA restoration funding that is available,
8 and so, just sort of to give you a brief overview or history of
9 why we're here, we had that venting tool requirement in place,
10 and the council removed it, in hopes of broadening the
11 regulation to allow for descending devices, and then the council
12 initiated an amendment, and we started working on it, that would
13 require -- It would consider requiring the use of descending
14 devices, but, once we figured out that that oil spill money
15 might be available, we sort of stopped work on that, based on
16 the fact that, if there was a regulation, that money could not
17 be used for that reason.

18
19 There is a \$30 million chunk that is sort of slated, or
20 relegated, for barotrauma mitigation in the recreational sector
21 in the Gulf, and so we can't really talk about it like it's
22 ours, but we also hosted the release mortality symposium in
23 hopes of developing an action plan to guide that group as they
24 distribute those funds, and so the questions of sort of where
25 does this go is still a little bit nebulous, right, because
26 we're kind of waiting for that money to be distributed.

27
28 What I'm hoping to do is give this executive report, or this
29 summary report, to that group, and that will help them decide
30 how to distribute their funds. They were actually at the table.
31 Two folks from NOAA came to the meeting with the express purpose
32 of listening through that filter of how they were going to spend
33 that money, and so that was a really positive thing, for them to
34 be at the table.

35
36 We as a council really have to decide what we're going to do
37 next, as far as taking control of this, as well as balance the
38 idea that this needs to go to that group to recommend what to do
39 with their money. Does that give you a broader overview of what
40 we're doing here?

41
42 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** To add to that, they were very active and
43 vocal in guiding us down a path that met their criteria for
44 awarding those funds, and so, whenever we went too far afield
45 one way or the other, they helped us down a path, so that we
46 could make sure that we have the potential to secure those
47 funds.

48

1 **MS. BOGGS:** My last comment is I would hope that, if the council
2 -- I am going to say goes down this path, with the guidance with
3 the NRDA funding, I understand that this core group made these
4 recommendations, or this list, but somehow it's opened up for
5 other potential influencers that might be interested, and it's
6 not just restricted to this list of names.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Duly noted. Thank you. Let's move on, Emily.

9
10 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** All right. Let's move on to talk a little bit
11 about the science portion. One of the things that we wanted to
12 do was look at ways that we could improve the current science
13 and also maybe suggest what data gaps exist that needed to be
14 addressed in order to improve our stock assessments and our
15 understanding of release mortality and how that affects our fish
16 stocks.

17
18 The first thing we did, as a panel, is go through the current
19 monitoring programs that are relevant to release mortality
20 estimates or just release estimates in general, discards, and so
21 they did that, and the panel really -- The main thing that I got
22 out of this one is that they suggested that all of the current
23 monitoring programs, and there is a list of those programs that
24 was generated on page 10, but the suggestion was that all of
25 those current monitoring programs be consistent and that each
26 one ask for the same information on discards, including the
27 number, the species, the mitigation technique that was used, the
28 condition upon release, and the depth at capture.

29
30 The idea here is that, if we can get all of those existing
31 monitoring programs to collect the same information, then some
32 of the current data gaps that exist won't exist any longer. It
33 also noted that, if there was going to be money available, that
34 putting money towards improving current surveys, rather than
35 creating new ones, might improve data collection on discards
36 most effectively. I don't know if there's any discussion on
37 that recommendation.

38
39 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Emily, I think, at this point -- Do some of
40 the state agencies want to weigh-in on this? Is this something
41 you are willing to help us with, to enhance the data on release
42 mortality? Do you have any overriding comments you would like
43 to make? I guess not. All right. Let's go on.

44
45 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Okay. I will mention that one of the
46 recommendations was that maybe this would be appropriately
47 addressed at the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, and so
48 we've been talking with those folks, and that might be an

1 appropriate venue.

2

3 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Kevin.

4

5 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** Well, you asked for some comment from the
6 state agencies, and I will just comment for Alabama. At least
7 as it pertains to recreational fishing, we rely upon the APAIS
8 survey for recreational data, primarily, and to get any
9 questions added to that survey is a process, and, in that
10 process, they have to go through NOAA Fisheries staff, APAIS
11 survey staff, and then they have to get the OMB involved and
12 such, and so there is a process that's involved, and, the more
13 questions you ask, the more complex it becomes, and the more
14 involved that process is.

15

16 The states, I guess, are willing to do that, but it's just that,
17 at least from Alabama's perspective, on the recreational side of
18 the house, currently, we have to go through NOAA, and so a NOAA
19 rep is here to address that, and then, commercially, there is
20 some issues related to that.

21

22 Currently, as a state agency, we don't directly reach out or
23 have any surveys that interact on a trip-level basis with the
24 fishermen, except through a trip interview program that
25 encounters them as they come back to the seafood dealer and
26 provide their catch, and so it's doable, but it's just something
27 that we don't currently do, but, again, that would involve the
28 feds to ask for permission, if you will, to add any questions
29 like that and get that data.

30

31 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** The state representatives that were at the
32 symposium made that same point, and they made it clear that this
33 isn't going to happen overnight, and it's going to be a journey,
34 but our vision is that we can enhance the accuracy of the
35 release mortality data, because, right now, if there's a big
36 question that everybody has -- Certainly at the symposium, it
37 was that we're developing tools, and the tools are wonderful,
38 but how accurate is the data that we're using to make these
39 decisions?

40

41 A key element to this, going forward, is we need to enhance the
42 accuracy of the data on release mortality, realizing it's a
43 journey, realizing it's going to take time, realizing that it's
44 not going to be easy, but that was probably the overriding
45 concern that people had, is, once we do all of this, if we use
46 bad data to make decisions, we're going to be less effective
47 than we would like to be, and so that's the only reason that I
48 brought it up. It's going to be a journey, and it's going to

1 take time, and I am fully with you, and your representatives at
2 the meeting, at the symposium, said the same thing. Dr. Stunz.

3
4 **DR. STUNZ:** I don't want to speak for my state agency, and Lance
5 can chime in, but we're engaged with them, through iSnapper, and
6 iSnapper in Texas -- Well, Gulf-wide, in fact, has been
7 collecting discard data for a long time, as it relates to
8 particularly the recreational, but the for-hire fishery too, and
9 just other projects that are ongoing with the state in our
10 region related to this whole reducing discard mortality in
11 general.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Thank you, Dr. Stunz. Emily, would you like
14 to go on?

15
16 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Sure. Okay. We will move on. The next thing
17 that the panel did was identify and prioritize some of the gaps
18 in discard and release mortality-related data. Across all of
19 the categories -- One of the things that we did was sort of
20 break it up into different -- Categorize those data gaps into
21 three separate bins.

22
23 There were biological data gaps, and so that's information to
24 learn a little bit more about species, morphology and sort of
25 some of those biological indicators. There was also fisheries-
26 dependent data gaps, which were considered to be related to
27 fishermen behavior and action, and then there were human
28 decision-making, or human dimension type, data gaps that were
29 identified.

30
31 Across all of those, informing best fishing practices was a top
32 priority. For the biological data gaps, the panel prioritized
33 improving estimates on current discards by species and also
34 gaining a better understanding of predation across the Gulf, and
35 so those are the two biological ones that were highlighted.

36
37 The fisheries-dependent type data gaps that were identified as
38 priorities were optimizing current fisheries-dependent surveys,
39 as well as collecting that consistent data on discards, which we
40 already discussed, and then, finally, that human dimensions, or
41 that human decision-making, category, and it was recognized that
42 there needed to be more research on understanding novel ways to
43 incentivize angler behavior and also knowing more about
44 predation and how anglers react to it, and so there's some
45 themes that sort of emerged from that, for sure. Before I move
46 on to the communications part, I guess maybe it's appropriate to
47 see if there's any thoughts about those data gaps and the
48 prioritization therein.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Seeing none, we'll go on, but I would like to
3 mention that we have twenty minutes left, and Reef Fish is up
4 next, and they're going to need every minute of their time.
5
6 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Well, we'll spin right through this then.
7 Finally, the Outreach and Education Technical Committee met, and
8 they decided that achieving consistent messaging to anglers
9 across the Gulf of Mexico was sort of the major recommendation.
10
11 It suggested that one central voice should assemble research-
12 based fishing practice recommendations and message them for
13 dissemination. The panel suggested that control of that project
14 would most appropriately be housed by an agency, to ensure that
15 the updates to research, recommendations, and messaging on best
16 fishing practices to mitigate release mortality persist beyond
17 some sort of single opportunity or project-based funding.
18
19 The panel actually recommended that the council remain the point
20 agency in control to do the work that has -- Due to the work
21 that we've already done with our website and some of the other
22 things, and also because it's best positioned with the different
23 state and federal agencies across the region, and so that was
24 the communications recommendation that came out of this
25 symposium.
26
27 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Okay. Let's move on.
28
29 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Okay, and so that actually completes the
30 release mortality symposium summary, and so I guess, from the
31 council, I wonder if there are any improvements, beyond Susan's
32 recommendation to open up this list of influences, so that we
33 can really make it more robust, but, if you guys have any
34 suggested improvements, and, if not, I think maybe it's
35 appropriate then for us to entertain conversation about whether
36 we are ready to send this, or deliver this, to the NRDA folks.
37
38 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Any questions or comments from the council?
39 Hearing none, I would entertain a motion to approve this and
40 pass it on to NRDA, because the clock is ticking.
41
42 **MR. JOE SPRAGGINS:** Motion.
43
44 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Motion by General Spraggins. Dr. Stunz
45 seconded the motion. Emily will help us wordsmith this, so it's
46 in the language that you are needing.
47
48 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** I think if it's just the motion to approve the

1 release mortality symposium report and distribute it to NRDA, or
2 provide, either one.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** While that's getting put up on the screen,
5 Emily, what's the timing of this>

6
7 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** My understanding, from them, is that
8 distribution of funds won't start until next calendar year, and
9 so we will have it done in the coming weeks, and it will be
10 timed perfectly.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** So the decision timeframe for them is the end
13 of this year?

14
15 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** I don't know. I'm not really sure how their
16 interworking is arranged, but what I have been told is that the
17 distribution of funds won't start until next year, and so we
18 should be okay.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** One last question, while we're getting that up
21 on the board. Do you anticipate other asks from them, or is
22 this the final ask?

23
24 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** I don't, and I also have had a hard time
25 understanding how their distribution of funds is going to work.
26 I don't know if they're going to call for proposals or how that
27 goes, but what I can do is, once that becomes more clear, I
28 would be happy to give the council an update, because, at this
29 point, it's not clear to me or the folks that I have asked.

30
31 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Okay.

32
33 **MS. BOGGS:** I know you're trying to wrap this up, and I think
34 Emily just kind of alluded and answered the question, and so,
35 with the monitoring recommendations that are here, is it
36 possible that NRDA funding could be used to distribute to the
37 states and the federal government, in order to make these
38 updates?

39
40 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Yes, and so it's my understanding that it is
41 possible that the NRDA funding could be distributed to the
42 different states agencies, based on the recommendations in here,
43 to get their questions more consistent and to really bolster
44 their current projects.

45
46 It's also possible, if you look at the outreach recommendations,
47 that the money could be distributed to the council or another
48 agency to sort of be that central voice to communicate this, and

1 so I haven't heard from them that there is any restrictions on
2 who is going to get the money, but I also have not gotten any
3 clarification on how that money will be distributed or how
4 they're going to make those decisions.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Mr. Donaldson.

7
8 **MR. DAVE DONALDSON:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not on your
9 committee, but, Susan, we've been talking with the NRDA folks,
10 to work with them to get money to the states to do exactly that,
11 but, as Emily pointed out, it's still all up in the air, and
12 there's not really any concrete timelines or exactly how that's
13 going to happen, but, in my mind, that would be the most
14 efficient way to do that.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Ms. Boggs.

17
18 **MS. BOGGS:** To that point, the reason I ask is we don't want to
19 recommend something that's going to place an undue burden, or
20 another burden, upon the states and the federal government, when
21 we can't even get federal funding for data collection, and
22 that's kind of where I'm headed with all of this.

23
24 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Duly noted. Dr. Stunz.

25
26 **DR. STUNZ:** I will make this quick, but, just to be clear, what
27 we're voting on -- Emily, you need to make some edits to this,
28 right, based on what discussed here, and so do we need to
29 reflect that in the motion, that we're not voting as-is or
30 something? I don't know if it's -- It's not that big of a deal,
31 but I just wanted to make sure that it's clear, and are you good
32 on that?

33
34 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Sure, and so we can say to approve the release
35 mortality workshop summary with committee recommendations and
36 distribute to NRDA.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Okay. With that modification --

39
40 **MR. SPRAGGINS:** I will modify my motion to that.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Thank you. Okay. To keep us on track, we
43 have a motion that has a second. **Is there any opposition to**
44 **this motion? If no opposition, the motion carries.** Emily, I
45 will pass it back to you.

46
47 **REVIEW OF "FISHING FOR OUR FUTURE" WEBPAGE**

1 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Okay. Great. That will bring us to our next
2 agenda item, which is reviewing the Fishing for our Future
3 website. Just to sort of tee you guys up, as Bernie is bringing
4 that up, you may remember that, the last time that this
5 committee met, you made the recommendation that the Gulf Council
6 become the sort of central voice that messages the need to use
7 some sort of release mortality mitigation, and so, in order to
8 achieve that, what we decided to do was put together a website
9 that had sort of three overarching goals.

10
11 The first goal was to present the data that showed the magnitude
12 of the discard mortality issue, and the second goal was to house
13 some best practice recommendations and sort of curate our
14 different partner agencies outreach materials, and the idea here
15 was that there were tons of different agencies that already had
16 created these materials, and the best role that the council
17 could take was to put them all in one place, and then the third
18 goal was to house and warehouse all of the research that's been
19 done on barotrauma and release mortality across the Gulf.

20
21 We'll just sort of spin through this website really quickly, and
22 so Fishing for our Future is the name that we've branded it
23 with, and there is just a brief introduction, as well as a
24 button that brings you to the Gulf Council's venting and
25 descending policy.

26
27 Then, if you scroll down, the next thing is this item of how big
28 of a problem is release mortality of fish, and the Science
29 Center has provided us with the data to build this tool, and Dr.
30 John Froeschke put this together, and this tool will allow you
31 to change some different inputs. You can select years, or you
32 can select sector.

33
34 Right now, it is built for red snapper, gag grouper, and greater
35 amberjack, because that is -- Those are the three species we had
36 time to get the information for from the Science Center. We do
37 expect that we will expand this tool to include most of our
38 managed species, as time allows, but, at this point, you can
39 sort of select different fish modes and fishing gears, and you
40 can change the years, and it will show you the discard mortality
41 rates over time.

42
43 Then there is those two bottom boxes at the bottom, which gives
44 you a summary of the percentage of discards as well as the
45 number of fish, and so that's what that tool does.

46
47 Then the next part of the website is some best practice
48 recommendations, and then, if you scroll down to this map, and,

1 if you click on Florida -- It asks you to click where you're
2 from, and then the page behind it is populated with all of the
3 outreach materials that have been completed in that area, and
4 the idea is -- We broke it up by area because grouper messaging
5 wouldn't be that germane here, but it would be great for the
6 eastern Gulf folks, and so we just wanted to house the different
7 information regionally, so that an angler in a specific region
8 can sort of go and consume the materials that are relevant to
9 them.

10
11 If you go back to the main page, the last part is to house all
12 the research that's been done. We have been housing our council
13 research materials in a program called Mendeleev, and this is
14 framed in -- This is a list of all of the studies that we have
15 that are relevant to release mortality and barotrauma, and so
16 that allows anglers to access that.

17
18 The Outreach and Education Committee took a look at this
19 website, and they did suggest a couple of improvements. They
20 would like us to improve some of the narrative content, so it's
21 more of an information from fishermen for fishermen, and they
22 also recommended some ways to improve how we're housing our
23 research. In other words, sort of making it more accessible to
24 the general fishing public, rather than sort of more agency
25 folks, who are used to looking at scientific studies, but the
26 committee ultimately did recommend that -- They made a motion to
27 publish the Gulf Council's Fishing for our Future website pages
28 as-is.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Thank you, Emily. I think one comment that
31 the technical committee made is this website gives us an
32 opportunity to use what they term as peer pressure, and so they
33 would like to get endorsements from opinion leaders in the
34 headboat community, charter community, private rec anglers, and
35 use peer pressure to enhance the use of mitigation tools to
36 decrease mortality, and so I think that's what they really meant
37 by giving it a different look and a different image, is use
38 anglers to influence anglers, as opposed to using the Gulf
39 Council to influence anglers. Let's go on to the next issue.

40
41 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** There is a motion from the technical committee,
42 and so maybe it's appropriate to have a motion.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Emily is suggesting that we would entertain a
45 motion to approve the website as it current exists, and maybe
46 you could wordsmith that to exactly what you need it to be.

47
48 **DR. STUNZ:** I would be happy to make that motion, Phil. I

1 think, in that committee report, there's a nice motion that we
2 could go from.

3
4 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Yes, and it simply reads, "to publish the Gulf
5 Council's Fishing for our Future website pages".

6
7 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** While she is doing that, we have a question
8 from Susan Boggs.

9
10 **MS. BOGGS:** Where is this going to be housed? Is it going to be
11 housed on the council website, or is it going to be independent?

12
13 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** That's a great question, and so, currently,
14 we're going to house it on the Gulf Council website, because
15 that's sort of where we went from a Gulf Council effort.

16
17 Now, based on the recommendations that we got during the
18 symposium, there might be some opportunity for some funding that
19 would allow us to host it separately, sort of de-brand it as a
20 council thing, add some of those narrative materials, and they
21 also suggested adding some like stock footage and create
22 messaging and stuff, and so, as-is, what we as a council are
23 doing are recommending to keep it on our website and have it
24 where it is at the moment. However, we do have the idea, based
25 on the recommendations that we got from the group during the
26 symposium, on how we can improve that in the future if funding
27 does become available to do so.

28
29 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Do we have a second? Seconded by Dr. Shipp.
30 I just have one comment, based on what you just said, Emily. Do
31 we want to add to this motion to publish the Gulf Council's
32 Fishing for our Future webpages on the Gulf Council site, or do
33 we want to just leave it not specific?

34
35 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** I think leaving it not specific gives us better
36 leeway in the future, if something does become available.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Good point. Any discussion on this motion?
39 Dr. Stunz.

40
41 **DR. STUNZ:** Not specifically to the motion, but just in general.
42 Emily, I think the website is great, and I particularly like the
43 interface of the data and getting that, and I just want to
44 encourage that I think we should strive to improve the data
45 that's driving that behind the scenes.

46
47 There is nothing wrong with what you all have done, and I think
48 it's great, but I do have some questions about the output of

1 that, in terms of the data that's behind it, and so I think, as
2 we move forward, in years even down the line, we can go a long
3 way in improving this discard data by fleet and region and whole
4 bit, and so I don't want anyone to think that this is like the
5 end and this is it and this if the final thing, because there is
6 some issues that I see behind the scenes there on the data.

7
8 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Thank you for bringing that up, Dr. Stunz.
9 That was pretty much a universal comment from the symposium,
10 that we need to constantly work to enhance the accuracy and the
11 volume of the data, and so thank you for that. Ms. Boggs.

12
13 **MS. BOGGS:** Just based on the comments that were made about this
14 motion and leaving it kind of generic, if the funding becomes
15 available, and if -- You said de-brand from the council, and who
16 is responsible for it, from that point?

17
18 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Based on the recommendations that came out of
19 the symposium, and I apologize that I didn't do a great job of
20 explaining this, the idea is that somebody, maybe under an
21 agency or the council umbrella, would continue to be the driver
22 behind it, but that de-branding it, although letting it remain
23 under agency control, might make it more consumable for our
24 anglers.

25
26 That's why we're talking about sort of bolstering the narrative
27 content, so that it does become sort of a fishermen-driven
28 initiative. However, in order to keep the lights on and to keep
29 it running and to keep it going and updated, it seems more
30 appropriate to be housed within an agency, even if it's not
31 communicated like it is.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Ms. Boggs.

34
35 **MS. BOGGS:** As long as it doesn't lose its integrity.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Duly noted.

38
39 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Absolutely.

40
41 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** This was a strong suggestion from the
42 technical committee and the technical committee chair, because
43 they want to give this a fishermen's face, so to speak, as
44 opposed to an agency face, and that idea has merit, but that
45 comment that you made was supported by both council staff and by
46 the technical committee themselves. They share that concern.
47 If there are no more questions, I would like to entertain a vote
48 on this motion. **Is there any opposition to this motion? If**

1 not, the motion carries. We have one remaining issue. Go
2 ahead.

3
4 **REMAINING ITEMS FROM THE OUTREACH AND EDUCATION TECHNICAL**
5 **COMMITTEE SUMMARY**
6

7 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** We have just one final issue, and this came out
8 of the Outreach and Education Technical Committee. That is they
9 discussed that the committee could probably benefit from a
10 little bit of direction and guidance in the future, and it
11 passed the following motion.

12
13 The motion was that the council survey knowledgeable
14 stakeholders to determine their recommendation for the next best
15 project or goal for the Outreach Technical Committee. In other
16 words, the technical committee was hoping that maybe we could
17 ask a group of informed fishermen and managers and the like what
18 they think that the council technical committee, the
19 Communications Technical Committee, should be working on next.

20
21 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Realizing of course that they're not even
22 finished with what they are currently doing.

23
24 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** They are eager to keep working.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** General Spraggins.

27
28 **MR. SPRAGGINS:** Emily, once again, I'm going to keep throwing
29 arrows until I hit the target, but if you could possibly look at
30 that and maybe entertain the fact of, when you're looking at
31 your next projects, look at the safety, the seafood safety
32 itself, of the Gulf, if you don't mind looking at that, and
33 that's just a thought of, while you all are doing your projects
34 and everything, look at that. That would be something we could
35 possibly look at.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN DYSKOW:** Thank you for that. Any other comments? I
38 think this is the last item on the agenda for us, and we're
39 eating into Martha's time. If there is any other business, you
40 could bring it up now. If not, I would call for adjournment.
41 Seeing no other business, I would adjourn the committee.

42
43 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on October 22, 2019.)

44
45 - - -