

TAB E

Sustainable Fisheries Committee Report August 20, 2018 Dr. Paul Mickle – Chair

The agenda and the minutes of the June 18, 2018 Committee meeting were approved as written.

Draft Abbreviated Framework Action: Conversion of Historical Captain Endorsements to Federal For-Hire Permits (Tab E, No. 4)

Staff provided a summary of the document that would convert historical captain endorsements to federal for-hire permits. Staff noted that the draft document could affect approximately 25 historical captains with reef fish or coastal migratory pelagic endorsements. As of March 2018, there were 19 captains with valid endorsements and 6 captains with expired endorsements, but within the renewal period. The 19 active historical captain collectively possessed 19 reef fish and 18 CMP endorsements. If implemented, this action would extend the same rights and responsibilities of existing reef fish and CMP for-hire permits to captains with a historical captain endorsement. Each historical captain endorsement has an associated passenger capacity that was based on the vessel capacity at the time of issuance. In the current draft, the new federal for-hire permits would maintain the same passenger capacity as the existing historical captain endorsement. The Committee requested that staff add options to consider other passenger capacities including, the passenger capacity of the vessel that the historical captain currently operates, and an option using the mean permit capacity of all vessels in the for-hire fleet. Based on this discussion, the Committee passed the following motion:

The Committee recommends, and I so move: to add the alternatives related to passenger capacity as discussed by the committee.

The Committee also requested an additional analysis of the change in passenger capacity over time for captains with historical captain endorsements. Staff will prepare a revised draft and bring to the October 2018 Council meeting for Committee review.

Review of Senate Bill S.3138 – A Bill to Establish a Regulatory System for Marine Aquaculture in the United States Exclusive Economic Zone (Tab E, No. 5a) and Summary (Tab E, No. 5b)

Staff reviewed the Senate Bill S.3138. The bill contains many of the elements that are included in the Gulf Aquaculture FMP. Staff highlighted areas in the bill which varied substantially from the Gulf Aquaculture FMP. The Committee discussed several items that were concerning including: 1) the authority for aquaculture appears to be defined as extending into state waters and state lands, 2) the length of the permit was longer than the Council's Aquaculture permit and may result in the permit becoming outdated due to developing technology, 3) a waiver of fees for aquaculture established for stock enhancement might be worth considering, 4) a bonding procedure may be needed to facilitate removal of gear left in the water by companies that go out of business, 5) the level of involvement of regional management councils in the aquaculture process, and possible consideration of developing regionalized aquaculture subcommittees.

Madam chair, this concludes my report.