

**Outreach and Education Committee Report**  
**January 25, 2021**  
**Mr. Phil Dyskow – Chair**

The Committee adopted the agenda (*Tab O, No. 1*) and approved the minutes (*Tab O, No. 2*) of the October 22, 2019 meeting as written.

***Agenda Item IV: Presentation – Communications Analytics (Tab O, No. 4)***

Staff provided an overview of communications analytics for 2020. These analytics showed website use, email listserv, and blog engagement areas are tracking with previous years. The Fish Rules mobile recreational app use has increased since previous years. YouTube views are slower this year because the Council has taken less issues to public hearing than normal. Facebook engagement has decreased as staff efforts have focused more on outreach for specific regulatory content and less on generic positive content. Council Newsletter readership continues on a downward trend despite efforts to reinvigorate the platform. Staff suggested it makes more sense to focus efforts on creating individual blog articles that are more relevant and timelier than the quarterly newsletter. These articles would be published in the Gulf Currents blog and a quarterly digest could be sent out to the Council's listserv for those who still wish to receive content less frequently or on a quarterly basis.

The Committee supported transitioning away from the newsletter and suggested that staff put its efforts towards social media. The Committee said that short video clips are the future of communications and suggested that staff put efforts towards this as well.

***Agenda Item V: 2021 Communications Plan (Tab O, No. 5)***

Staff presented its 2021 Communications Improvement Plan developed by the Council staff "communications team" using the Council's communications analytics from recent years and guidance from the Outreach and Education Technical Committee from the October 2020 meeting. The plan highlights planned improvements to the Council blog, listserv, social media, Something's Fishy, website, and public comments. The plan also suggests new communication endeavors including production of more video content and development of comprehensive communication SOPPs (Standard Operating Policies and Procedures).

The Committee suggested that analytics might be down in some cases because controversy regarding current management is not as great as it has been. Meaning, the Council might be appeasing fishermen and managing the fisheries well, reducing negative interactions. The Committee supports staff efforts to take advantage of fishery management, academic, and industry experts to create videos, and anticipates that this will be a successful endeavor. The Committee noted that Facebook engagement has historically been negative and speculated that distribution of positive information could help mitigate that. The Committee also supports the idea of pursuing approval through the Paperwork Reduction Act to broaden the types of questions asked by its Something's Fishy tool. Further, the Committee also supports renaming the tool so it doesn't mislead potential respondents to question whether the tool is only asking for negative fishery impacts or observations. Finally, the Committee supports the idea of creating a

central repository for comments that is searchable. This would ensure that generic public comments that aren't specifically related to amendments don't get buried. The Committee stressed how important it is to continuously engage with the public and use analytics to guide constantly evolving outreach efforts.

***Agenda Item VI: "Fish Science" Webpages and State Data Collection Infographics (Tab O, No. 6)***

Staff presented a new area of the Council website where information on stock assessments, the Something's Fishy Tool, infographics, and species hot sheets are shared. The Committee stressed the importance of hosting the species-specific hot sheets. The Committee also emphasized that the recreational data collection infographics are incredibly useful in explaining what data each program is collecting. The Committee also requested that staff improve the website by archiving Scientific and Statistical Committee meeting materials in the same manner that Council meeting materials are archived.

***Agenda Item VII: Presentation – Next O&E Projects (Tab O, No. 7)***

Staff presented a summary of responses gathered from Council, Advisory Panel, and Scientific and Statistical Committee members regarding the effectiveness of the Outreach and Education Technical Committee and future projects that it should consider. Overall, results indicated the Committee was effectively improving awareness and understanding of Council management goals, strategies, activities, and processes, improving public participation in the fishery management process, and improving communications between the public and Council. Survey respondents suggested that Council staff and the Outreach and Education Committee increase communication efforts to recreational anglers, find ways to reduce user conflicts amongst sectors, increase communications about management successes, and the history and future of fisheries management.

The Committee asked staff to continue to work towards contacting and educating the entire federal for-hire fleet on new electronic reporting requirements for the Southeast For-Hire Electronic Reporting Program. It noted that many operators are not engaged because they have not yet started fishing this year and/or because they lease their permit from permit owners who aren't engaged. The Committee also suggested that staff find ways to communicate about the impact imports have on our fishery. It directed staff to resources provided by the Southern Shrimp Alliance and suggested that staff develop some ideas and present them to the Committee at a future meeting.

***Agenda Item VIII: Commercial Fish Rules***

Staff announced that the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils are working with the Fish Rules App developer to create Fish Rules Commercial. The interface for this app will populate regulations based on user permits. The app is in the final stages of development and almost ready for beta-testing. It is expected to be available after the first quarter of 2021.

***Agenda Item IX: Remaining Outreach and Education Technical Committee Report***

Staff and the Outreach and Education Technical Committee Chairman reviewed the remaining items on the Technical Committee report including for-hire electronic reporting outreach and the NRDA Fish Descend Project.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my report.