



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfc.org

Habitat Committee Virtual Meeting Summary December 2, 2021

ASMFC Staff: Lisa Havel, Toni Kerns

Members Present: Sharleen Johnson (SC), Jessica Coakley (MAFMC), Michelle Bachman (NEFMC), Dave Dippold (PA), Lou Chiarella (NOAA GARFO), Cindy Cooksey (NOAA SERO), Rachael Peabody (VA), Robert LaFrance (CT), Wilson Laney (NCCF), Claire Enterline (ME), Eric Schneider (RI), Josh Carloni (NH), Mark Rousseau (MA), Phil Colarusso (EPA Region 1), Marek Topolski (MD), Kate Wilke (TNC), Jimmy Johnson (NC, Chair), Alex Fournier (NY), Kent Smith (FL), Russ Babb (NJ, Vice Chair)

The ASMFC Habitat Committee reviewed updates on the Acoustics document, which now includes a paper emailed by Phil on December 2nd. The document, stored in Google Drive, contains extensive information on the impacts of sound on fish but avoids excessive citations per sentence. Gaps in the document were noted, including insufficient information on sound impacts on habitat recruitment, submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), and oyster recruitment to reefs. The need for text on sub-bottom profilers and potential research areas was highlighted. The document will also include a short section on local ecological knowledge from Monty Hawkins and mention recent mitigation efforts for hollow steel piles in Virginia. It was agreed that more research is needed on the effects of particle motion versus pressure from sound. Michelle will cross-check offshore wind mitigation letters, and the next steps involve incorporating comments and moving the document to an online platform for collaborative editing.

In the Offshore Wind section, Wilson informed the committee about ongoing discussions and suggested updating the offshore wind document, with a detailed discussion planned for the spring meeting. The committee acknowledged the example of fisheries liaison work from Kitty Hawk and discussed the involvement of Councils and NMFS in offshore wind projects. Action items include sharing relevant documents, working on mapping and monitoring guidance, and potentially sharing additional work from Chris Taylor at the Beaufort lab.

The SAV Policy Update has been finalized and sent to the committee. For species updates, the committee noted that USGS is assisting with the eel stock assessment, which will incorporate habitat information and undergo peer review in the summer. No habitat updates for FMPs are expected for 2022, but FHOCS can be included in upcoming amendments or addenda.

Vision: Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries