PROCEEDINGS OF THE

ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

BUSINESS SESSION

The Roosevelt Hotel
New York, New York
October 23, 2018

Approved February 7, 2019

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1. **Approval of Agenda** by consent (Page 1).

2. **Approval of Proceedings from October and November, 2017** by consent (Page 1).

3. **Move to adopt the 2019 Action Plan** (Page 12). Motion by David Borden; second by Robert Boyles. Motion adopted by consent (Page 12).

4. **Motion by the Nominating Committee to reelect Jim Gilmore as Chair and Pat Keliher as Vice-Chair of ASMFC** (Page 13). Motion approved by unanimous consent (Page 13).

5. **Move to Adjourn** by consent (Page 13).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Nick Popoff, ME, proxy for P. Keliher (AA)
Dennis Abbott, NH, proxy for Sen. Watters (LA)
Doug Grout, NH (AA)
Ritchie White, NH (GA)
Raymond Kane, MA (GA)
David Pierce, MA (AA)
Eric Reid, RI, proxy for Sen. Sosnowski (LA)
Jason McNamee, RI (AA)
David Borden, RI (GA)
Justin Davis, CT, proxy for P. Aarrestad (AA)
Bill Hyatt, CT (GA)
James Gilmore, NY (AA)
Emerson Hasbrouck, NY (GA)
Michael Falk, NY, proxy for Sen. Boyle (LA)
Joe Cimino, NJ, proxy for L. Herrighty (AA)
Tom Fote, NJ (GA)
Adam Nowalsky, NJ, proxy for Asm. Andrzejczak (LA)
Andy Shiels, PA, proxy for J. Arway (AA)
Roy Miller, DE (GA)
John Clark, DE, proxy for D. Saveikis (AA)
David Blazer, MD (AA)
Russell Dize, MD (GA)
Rob O'Reilly, VA, proxy for S. Bowman (AA)
Steve Murphey, NC (AA)
Robert Boyles, SC (AA)
Marcel Reichert, SC, proxy for M. Rhodes (GA)
Spud Woodward, GA (AA)
Doug Haymans, GA (GA)
Jim Estes, FL, proxy for J. McCawley (AA)
Martin Gary, PRFC
Mike Millard, USFWS
Rachel Baker, NMFS

(AA = Administrative Appointee; GA = Governor Appointee; LA = Legislative Appointee)

Staff

Bob Beal
Toni Kerns
Jessica Kuesel

Guests

(sign-in not available)

The Business Session of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Terrace Ballroom of the Roosevelt Hotel, New York, New York; Tuesday, October 23, 2018, and was called to order at 10:45 o'clock a.m. by Chairman James J. Gilmore.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIRMAN JAMES J. GILMORE: Welcome to the Business Session.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: We're going to get going first with approval of the agenda; which is in your briefing package. Does anybody have any changes to the agenda? Okay seeing none; we'll adopt those by unanimous consent.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: The next item is we have approval of the proceedings from the October and November, 2017.

Are there any additions, changes to that? Seeing none; we'll adopt those by consent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Item 3 is Public Comment. If there is anyone in the audience that would have a comment on any item not on the agenda, now is the time to come up to the public microphone.

REVIEW AND CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE 2019 ACTION PLAN

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Seeing none; we will move right along, and we'll go right into our first big item, which is to Review and Consider Approval of the 2019 Action Plan and Bob Beal is going to take us through that. Bob.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: I think most of you were at the Strategic Planning Session this morning. One of the things I mentioned there is that this draft Action Plan looks a lot different than the 2018 Action Plan and the previous year's Action Plan. In the past the document was about twice as long; it was 30 some pages of a lot of detail.

A lot of the tasks that were in there were ongoing activities that we did every year. For all the 27 species that we manage there was a task for each one of those that said, monitor compliance and develop an FMP review. Why write that 27 times? We do it for all the species and we do it every year; we have to do it.

When you went into all the other sections and goals there are a lot of things that we have to do every year; they are just part of the function of ASMFC. We decided there is no reason to spend 18 pages on those items. We'll pull most of those out; put them into sort of paragraph form. Let the Commissioners know and the public know what we're going to do from year-to-year; but really focus on the new activities and the big activities that we'll take on in 2019.

The other thing that we've done in here is highlight any tasks or projects that are going to roll over into next year, 2020. In the previous versions we would just say initiate a lobster stock assessment. That's kind of all it would say sometimes; and it wasn't clear. Obviously we were going to start it and not finish it; but when would it get finished wasn't included.

We tried to include details like that. Initiate the 2020 assessment, or initiate assessment for completion in 2020, or different ways to let the public and Commissioner know what the timeline is for some of these projects and what are the big ticket items that spill over into the subsequent year. That's the update on the format. The other format change that is fairly substantial is that a lot of information is captured in each of the species. For example, under lobster we'll see there is in Goal 1 for lobster there is management issues obviously, there are stock assessment issues, and there are data collection issues.

In the past those would have been scattered between Goal 1, Goal 2, and ACCSP Data Collection. Everything that's going on with lobster put it in one spot. That is one of the other formatting changes. Then the other big one is we've sort of binned all the species into two categories; high priority and medium-low priority.

The high priority ones are the ones that have a lot of activity during this year, and a lot of the big concerns and big issues that the Commission needs to work on. Medium and low priority does not mean that they are not ecologically important, economically important. It just means that the Commission is not going to put as much resources into those species this year as they might have in the past. We're going to focus on the high priority species.

We are going to take on some tasks for the medium and low priorities; but not as much, and really the focus will be on the high priority. I think the best way to go through this, Mr. Chairman, is I'll ask Toni to go through each of the species and the tasks associated with the species. Then I'll quickly go through the remaining seven goals; and just highlight some of the big work that will go on in the future. I think that will be an efficient way to do it; if you're okay with that.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Sounds good, Bob; so Toni, take it away.

MS. TONI KERNS: Starting with the high priority species is American lobster. We'll develop a strategy for management of the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank stock that acknowledges the effects of changing ocean conditions. I should lead with; in lobster the Board yesterday talked about a lot of different issues, and we added some additional items to the Action Plan that you will not see in your document that I will verbally express.

I think the Lobster Board and several species boards potentially, may grapple with prioritizing some of these issues. Just to note that if the Board does prioritize over the year some of these issues; that some may get dropped from this year, or pushed back to 2020. The Board will also implement Addendum XXVI data elements to improve the data collection and characterization of the lobster fishery; develop a strategy to address large whale issues, which will likely continue into 2020.

This issue is also listed in several other Commission species. I won't repeat it when we get to those species; but Jonah crab, northern shrimp if the fishery were to open, black sea bass, scup, most of our pot fisheries that deal with end lines. Something that is not in your document, but was discussed yesterday is; develop a strategy to identify bait sources and protocols; to address concerns regarding biohazards.

Continue to work with enforcement on offshore enforcement; and also continue the development of the benchmark stock assessment that will be peer reviewed in 2020. Moving on to Atlantic herring; we'll work in conjunction with the Council to consider management responses to the 2018 benchmark assessment, and the outcome of the Council's Amendment 8 as it gets considered for approval by NOAA Fisheries, set specs for 2020 and 2021.

Not in your documents; but discussed yesterday was evaluate the efficacy of management goals and objectives of Gulf of Maine spawning closures, and consider expanding spawning closures to Area 3. This would be through multiple addenda. Also not in your document would be to consider tools to expand flexibility in setting the specifications for Area 1A.
Atlantic menhaden complete the menhaden specific and the ERP benchmark stock assessments for SEDAR peer review in 2019. Then moving into 2020 and the Board would review those benchmarks and consider a management response; also this year, resolve the implementation of the Chesapeake Bay cap.
Atlantic striped bass –

MR. STEVEN G. BOWMAN: Mr. Chairman, not to interrupt Toni, but since we're on menhaden, can I make a comment if I could please? It may be of benefit as we proceed on through this.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Go ahead, Steve.

MR. BOWMAN: I'll be very brief. I note there; to resolve the implementation of the Chesapeake Bay cap as noted. Just as a heads up, this Commission has been very, very patient with the Commonwealth of Virginia; as far as the implementation of the Bay cap is concerned. There is no doubt about that. I just want to let you know that obviously the legislature did not take up the matter during the first leg of the continuance that you provided.

In talking with some members of the legislature it became very obvious to me that the legislature, and Senator Mason is here, and he may want to echo, again we won't belabor it. But there is some significant concern in the Virginia legislature about the science that is being provided in making their decision.

I believe that it's the feeling of a great number of members of the legislature that until the ecological reference point study is available, and has been provided to the public that the likelihood, by virtue of the fact that the science is not specific enough for them to make the decision that they may not take up the matter again in this legislative session, pending that science being made available. I just wanted to get that out there.

The other thing I just wanted to give you a head up as well; is we have continuously monitored as we promised, the fishery in the Chesapeake Bay. Without getting too specific, as far as the numbers, Omega Protein has not met the cap, the established cap that we have now, as a matter of fact they are well below that as far as the fishery is concerned. I'm not here to defend the fishery at all; I'm here to defend the process. Just to let you know that that is likely where I sit as Administrative Commissioner and the Marine Resources Commission sit; as far as this dilemma is concerned. I have that information; I wanted to get it out to members of the Commission, to let them know where we are and what's going on, and just to make sure that I keep you informed, because you all have been extremely patient, and I just want to give you the best information that I have at my avail at this time, Mr. Chairman, so thank you.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Thank you, Steve. Okay Toni, do you want to continue?

MS. KERNS: For Atlantic striped bass we'll work cooperatively with NOAA Fisheries to consider changes to striped bass fishing in the EEZ; including the Block Island Transit Zone, develop a long term strategy for collecting striped bass tagging data, including funding and the administration and at-sea support.

We'll also review the benchmark stock assessment and peer review in February; and consider a management response. For black sea bass we will complete an Operational Assessment; which will include the calibrated MRIP estimates. The Board and Council review that Operational Assessment and consider a management response; and possible changes to specifications in conjunction with the Council, if it were to be done early enough.

Then we will also set the 2020/2022 specifications. We will develop in coordination with the Council an addendum and amendment on reforming recreational management and commercial and recreational allocation. That activity would likely extend into 2020; and that action would also carry over to summer flounder as well as scup, and we'll consider changes to the commercial fishery management program.

For cobia we'll finalize and implement Amendment 1 to the cobia FMP; and work with the Council and NOAA Fisheries to ensure complementary regulations are put in federal waters. We'll also work through SEDAR to finalize the benchmark stock assessment;

review that assessment and consider a management response if necessary.

For horseshoe crab we'll have a benchmark stock assessment for peer review in March of 2019. We'll review that report and consider a management response if necessary; and set the specifications for Delaware Bay in 2020. The red drum, we'll continue to work with the Assessment Science Committee to develop a road map for the next benchmark stock assessment; including consideration of the calibrated MRIP data.

For summer flounder, we will work with the Council to review the benchmark stock assessment that is being completed this year; review that peer review report and consider a management response, and changes to the 2019 specifications. We will also set the 2020 through 2022 specifications with the Council. We will in coordination with the Council finalize the comprehensive summer flounder amendment for implementation in 2020.

We'll also have a working group meet with the Council's Research Steering Committee; to examine the possibility of reestablishing recreational set-aside programs. Now moving on to the medium to low priority species, American eel, we'll monitor and respond if necessary, to the classification of eel under the CITES; and we will also review data sources to determine the next assessment timeline, which is not in your document but was added yesterday through the Eel Board meeting. For Atlantic croaker as well as spot, we'll consider management alternatives to address stock conditions; based on the updated traffic light. For bluefish, we will continue the development of an allocation amendment in collaboration with the Mid-Atlantic Council. We'll complete an operational assessment; which will include the calibrated MRIP estimates, and we'll review that assessment and then consider management response and set the 2020 to 2022 specifications with the Council.

For northern shrimp, we will conduct a stock assessment update; and then set specifications for 2020, 2021 season, and also consider industry Test Tows to collect biological data if necessary as resources allow. For scup, we'll complete an operational assessment; which will also include the MRIP estimates, and then review that operational assessment with the Council, consider a management response, and set the 2020 to 2022 specifications.

For shad and river herring, we'll complete the shad benchmark stock assessment in 2019; and then in 2020 review that assessment and consider a management response. For Spanish mackerel, we'll work through SEDAR to prepare a benchmark assessment for peer review in 2020; and then review that and consider a management response in conjunction with the South Atlantic Council.

For spiny dogfish, depending on the direction that the Board takes next week, we may add a task to look at trip limits; but that will depend on the outcome of the Board. For tautaug, we'll finalize the commercial harvest tagging program; as required by Amendment 1 for implementation in 2020.

For weakfish, we will complete a stock assessment update in 2019; and then consider a management response and set the 2020 specifications. Looking at cost cutting issues, we'll monitor developments related to changing ocean conditions, ocean acidification and stock distributions, ecosystem services, ocean planning, and potential fishery reallocations.

We'll respond to MRIP estimates as needed across Commission species management plans; and examine allocation strategies and provide recommendations to the management boards if necessary. Are there any questions or concerns regarding the prioritization of the species as laid out; or additions to the Action Plan?

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: No comments for Toni on this? Okay, seeing none; I think Bob is going to take the next section. Bob.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Goal Number 2 is the science activities of the Commission. Toni hit a lot of the highlights with the stock assessments that are going to be completed and worked on next year. Just very quickly, the science program continues to have a really busy, busy schedule for next year; and in fact they've got a lot of stock assessment work going on.

In addition to the stock assessment activities, they're going to go through a number of new tasks that are highlighted in Goal 2. The Science Committee activities detail the Management Science Committee, Assessment Science Committee; the final bullet under Science Committee activities is the finalization of the Risk and Uncertainty Policy at the Commission. This is something that was started this year; well actually started a number of years ago, but we'll finalize that in 2019.

Under data collection there is a number of new tasks. SEAMAP and NEAMAP are obviously under there; but under collect new data to address data deficiencies, the second and third bullets there deal with lobster fishery and collecting more detailed effort and spatial information to address some of the Right Whale and gear interactions.

The SEAMAP and NEAMAP program are detailed lower in that; which is key data collection programs in the southeast and northeast. Under fisheries research, there are a number of new activities; but the final bullet there which is partner with USGS to identify shared research priorities. We've been working a lot with former Commissioner Tom O'Connell, he's in a new position over in West Virginia with USGS; and we've been trying to partner with him.

It seems very successful in highlighting some of the research capabilities that they have; to link up to ASMFC species and priorities. We're going to hopefully continue to foster that relationship and get some more needed research done for the Commission. Ecosystem-based management highlights a number of the activities; and the Ecosystem Status Reports and incorporating ASMFC species.

Under Competing Ocean Uses, this is where we highlight the aquaculture activity and the formation of a new Aquaculture Committee; that will be considered and approved tomorrow morning at the Executive Committee. There is a number of aquaculture activities going on that the Commission will be involved with. Those are the quick highlight, Mr. Chairman of the Goal Number 2; happy to answer any questions if there are any.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Any questions for Bob on Goal Number 2? Seeing none; we'll go right into Goal 3.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: We'll keep going. All right, Goal 3 is what we call Compliance. It has a lot to do with the Law Enforcement Committee and their activities from year-to-year. Under the compliance heading, you know I should have said this, there are paragraphs at the beginning that is sort of the form of a preamble, and those are the activities that are going to be repeated from year-to-year.

Get down into the compliance section; we talked about aquaculture again, and asked the Law Enforcement folks to provide some feedback on enforcement issues associated with the aquaculture issues, especially American eel and the interactions of wild caught product and aquaculture product, and how we track those differently, and how we can make sure we're not creating any legal loopholes by the aquaculture activities that the Commission is supporting.

We are also working toward enhancing traceability of fishery products across jurisdictional boundaries. There are a lot of questions about importing and exporting animals, and different size limits and seasons and other things up and down the east coast, and how can the Law Enforcement folks help

out with traceability to minimize those interactions across borders, and Partnerships, a couple bullets there highlighting JEAs and other important partnerships that we have to support Law Enforcement activities.

Stakeholder Awareness is the final category there; and it's just using different platforms to communicate real time information about laws and enforcement activities that are going on up and down the east coast. That is the quick summary of Goal Number 3; the Law Enforcement Activities.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Yes go ahead, Eric Reid.

MR. ERIC REID: Not that long ago there was a decision about who could and could not be involved in managing or enforcing aquaculture. Are we outside that loop as a Commission? There was a discussion about whether National Marine Fisheries or NOAA could actually manage aquaculture. Where are we; as far as that decision was made?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Eric, I think you're referring to a legal decision in the Gulf of Mexico that essentially said aquaculture activities could not be managed under the Magnuson Stevens Act. Interestingly, there is a court in California that said the exact opposite thing not too long ago; they said yes, you can absolutely manage aquaculture activities under Magnuson Stevens Act.

We've got two different District Court opinions on that. But regardless; ASMFC is a little bit outside that. ASMFC itself doesn't really have much authority in aquaculture. It's the individual states that have the authority. I think our role moving forward is not really clearly defined yet. But as it gets defined, I don't think it's going to be heavy on policy; but it will be much more focused on coordination and just bringing the states together to talk about their experiences.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Other questions for Bob. Emerson.

MR. EMERSON C. HASBROUCK: Actually, I did have a couple of questions under Goal 2; so with your permission I wonder if we could back up a little bit, back to Goal 2.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Yes, go ahead, Emerson.

MR. HASBROUCK: Under Data Collection. Collect new fishery dependent data using black sea bass research fleet. How is that going to be conducted? Who is doing that and how is it being conducted? That's my first question.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Pat will come up and answer that one if that's okay, Emerson.

MR. PATRICK A. CAMPFIELD: There is a project that CFRF has been supporting in collaboration with Jay's group in Rhode Island for the past couple of years; to simply get fishery dependent data using vessels that are out in the field. Last year it was funded through ACCSP; so that's a new initiative to improve some of the data gaps for black sea bass assessment.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Yes, go ahead, Emerson.

MR. HASBROUCK: My second question is the last bullet under that section; Collect New Data. Increased bycatch monitoring of sturgeon, shad and river herring and sciaenids in state waters as resources allow. How is that going to be accomplished if resources are available?

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Go ahead, Pat.

MR. CAMPFIELD: The "as resources allow" part is important. Those are science needs that have been identified for those listed species in the last several stock assessments; notably for sturgeon in the 2017 assessment. I think North Carolina is one state that has had a successful sort of inshore bycatch program, observer program. We would like to explore doing that in other estuaries, other state waters for additional states; because it is a major deficiency.

MR. HASBROUCK: It's going to be through an expansion of an observer program if funds are available; is that right?

MR. CAMPFIELD: Yes, potentially. But I think it's things that we need to work through our Science Committees, and of course the states, to see if it's feasible or not.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: All right, back to Goal 3. Are there any questions for Bob on Goal 3? Okay seeing none; we'll move on to Goal 4.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Goal 4 is Habitat. This encompasses ASMFC Habitat Committee activities, as well as the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership; and all this work is generally coordinated by Dr. Lisa Havel. Under education or educate, the final bullet there is to evaluate ecosystem health for consideration by Technical Committees and Boards; just looking at new ways to look at overall ecosystem health.

Integrate is the Habitat Committee is working on developing a list of fish habitats of concern, and describing those with the goal of incorporating those into the fishery management plans. Continuing on to leveraging partnerships, this is really the foundation of our Habitat Program, which is getting the state, local, and regional governments to work together to benefit the habitat protection for the species that we're trying to manage and restore.

Under ACFHP there are a number of important activities coming up for this year. They're going to continue to work on the Southeast Fish Habitat Mapping Project; and identify data gaps there, and initiate the northeast component of the fish mapping project and complete that in 2020. The third bullet is to adopt a business plan for the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Program; and implement action plans to network with the partners, and solicit donations from private sectors to support habitat recovery and restoration.

The final bullet is Restoring Habitats by Funding Fish Passage and non-fish passage projects; SAV, oyster reefs, and salt marshes. Pretty busy agenda for the Habitat Program, and ambitious, but hopefully we'll be able to find some funding and get some of that work done this year.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Questions on Goal 4. Wow, we're on a roll, Goal 5.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: All right, we'll keep going then. Goal 5 is outreach; primarily run through Tina's shop and the activities that she undertakes from year-to-year. A lot of her activities are ongoing. Obviously she's going to continue to do press releases and Fish Focus; and all the other things that we have to do and want to do to notify the public of what's going on.

There are some new activities and things to highlight in the portfolio of outreach activities; increased public understanding and support of the Commission. There is the 2019 and 2020 list of species that we're going to develop the stock assessment documents; and highlight the stock assessment results for a series of species this year.

As you can see, the 2019 list is pretty long. That goes back to what I said earlier about the busy Science Program; and then that translates into a busy outreach program, which translates into a busy management program, so a lot of species we're going to have stock assessment results in the next calendar year.

Maximizing use of current new technologies, as folks talked about in the earlier Strategic Planning Session, people are communicating differently. There is social media; there are all sorts of blogs and other things that folks are using to share information. How do we engage in that and what should we be doing a little bit differently to focus our outreach efforts on the kind of new world that we live in; given the new technology.

We use story mapping; which is kind of like pictures and words to work together to

describe an issue, short video clips, and the same thing to provide some information on what the Commission is up to. Stakeholder participation, obviously this was talked about a little bit earlier; as far as public hearings and other things.

But we're going to work outreach materials that highlight opportunities for public engagement. We're going to work with the Advisory Panels. Again, we've got the two years, 2019 and 2020 with the list of species; and we're going to get those advisory panels together and provide some input to the managers as we get the results of the new stock assessment for that long list of species.

Media relations and networking is ongoing activity obviously for the Outreach Program. But the very last bullet there on the bottom, the indented bullet, is exploring mechanisms to better inform fishing blogs and other external communication platforms. This is kind of going back to what I said earlier that the people are getting their information differently than they used to; and how should we be sort of positioned to deal with that and realize that people are communicating differently than they used to. That is the quick summary of Outreach Activities, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Questions on Goal 5. Everybody is awake, right? Okay good, just checking. Bob, Goal 6.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Goal 6 is Legislative Policy Agenda, Capitol Hill activities Deke and I engage in, and a number of Commissioners engage in. Primarily one of the things we're going to focus on next year. You may have heard, or you may not have heard there is going to be an election in about a week or so. There are going to be some new folks on Capitol Hill; and we're going to engage with those folks, and anytime Capitol Hill, a new Congress is put in place, committee structure changes. The Chairmanship and leadership of the committees that we're interested in may change. We'll engage those folks; and make sure they are aware of ASMFC and the activities of the Commission.

We'll continue to monitor all fishery related legislation. We don't' anticipate much action with Magnuson Stevens Act before the end of this Congress; next Congress may take that up and try to make some progress there. We'll monitor that; well obviously, any other fishery activity will make the Commissioners fully aware of that.

The second to final series of bullets there is funding. We're going to continue to highlight the priorities at ASMFC at the Congressional level; and with our federal partners, to make sure we have the resources needed to support all the activities that the Commission wants to engage in. There is a series of priorities; projects that are listed that we will highlight.

The continuing Regional Council and Fishery Commission line and trying to enhance the funding there as well as work on the allocation of the funding that is provided between the Councils and the three interstate commissions. We'll do that. Partnerships are the last bullet under Goal 6.

That is basically ASMFC working with the Great Lakes, the Pacific Commission and the Gulf States Commission to highlight mutual interstate issues, and bring those to Capitol Hill with sort of a collective voice of all the coastal states around the country. That has been very successful in the past; and we'll continue to do that as best we can. That is Goal 6, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Any questions on Goal 6? Okay, Goal 7.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Goal 7 is Administration of the Commission. This is Laura's shop; and all the activities within her staff. Obviously there is a whole lot going on to keep the lights on and keep these meetings happening, and reimbursing folks and

administering our grants, but there are a few, and those go on every year.

There are a couple areas worth highlighting; we're working on improving our job classifications and salary information for each of the positions at the Commission, working on sort of honing in the salary ranges that are available, to be more transparent there. The second bullet there is managing the Fishery Management, Science and Administration and Logistical Support Cooperative Agreement that we have with NOAA Fisheries.

This is the cooperative agreement; it's a multimillion dollar agreement where we move a lot of money to a number of different projects, and it takes a lot of administrative support to keep that going. It's been a great partnership between ASMFC and NOAA Fisheries; to tackle a number of shared projects and we're able to very efficiently move a lot of money around and get a lot of projects done. It highlights the current information technology, human resources activities within Laura's shop.

Human Resources have grown a lot in the recent years; with all the APAIS staff that we've hired. We've got folks in seven or eight different states up and down the coast; and that creates a lot of additional work to track all those different states and all the requirements that each state has, and payment schedules and other things.

Laura's shop will continue to do all those things. We'll look for training opportunities for Commission staff on the commonly used software programs that we use in our office. We'll work supporting new Commissioners; and then we'll also ensure legal compliance of Commission actions. In other words, if we get sued we will respond to that pretty quickly. Those are the administrative highlights for 2019.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Any Goal 7 questions? Ritchie.

MR. G. RITCHIE WHITE: I served on AOC some time ago; it was under a different Executive Director. At that time there was kind of a rule of thumb about the reserve fund, and how much should be in the reserve. At that time the rule of thumb was six months of operating expense; and then I think as excess money beyond that started to accumulate, we paid down the mortgage on the building, which I think was an excellent investment.

I guess I would ask if there is not written policy on the reserve fund that the AOC and Executive Committee, whoever you would think would be looking at that; maybe come up with something in writing, because obviously there are needs, scientific needs for funds and it's important to have a well adequate reserve fund. I'm not saying that what we have done is not correct; but I just think looking at that and having some written policy might be good.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Actually Laura, do you want to respond to that if you could?

MS. LAURA C. LEACH: Yes, we do have a written policy on the reserve fund. The good news is that our operating expenses will be going down. Two years from now we will be done with our mortgage; which is a great thing, so our operating expenses are going to be quite a bit less.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Just to drive Laura crazy, I say we're going to move into the new office in one year and six months; so we'll never get ahead of that. Goal 8?

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Goal 8.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Goal 8, all right.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Oh, sorry, Eric.

MR. REID: I suppose this is a good a time as any. I really appreciate what Robert has done for me as a Commissioner; and Laura and her shop, and Tina and her shop, and all the staff. When the circus is in town, especially in the big

city, you know the work that they do for us I think deserves at least a couple of applause in my opinion, so if it's okay with you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Please proceed. (Applause) Yes, and trust me, we all have conversations about how professionally speaking, screwed we would be if we didn't really have the staff. They just do an outstanding job, and really keep us moving forward, so yes well said. Go ahead, Bob.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Thank you all and the staff appreciate that. One of my primary jobs is to get out of the way a lot of times and let them do what they do. With that Goal 8 is Data Collection; it's ACCSP. As I mentioned earlier, the current Strategic Plan doesn't have a goal for ACCSP. We kind of slipped this one in and called it Goal 8.

We'll incorporate ACCSP into the new plan. But there are a number of paragraphs there that detail the ongoing activities for the data collection and data warehousing activities within ACCSP. They've got a lot going on over there. They've got a pretty big staff; and they're moving a whole lot of data up and down the east coast.

It's becoming more and more of a critical data program, and more and more the data program for stock assessment and management up and down the coast. That's the goal of the program; to be the one repository for all Atlantic coastal data. We're heading that way. It's just a pretty complex system to move fully in that direction. With that there are a couple activities that are worth highlighting.

Under Program Management on the last page, you know review and select funded projects for 2019 and 2020. It's worth noting that there is a policy within ACCSP that was approved by the Coordinating Council that all projects that have been what we call maintenance projects, which is ongoing projects. Once you get to year five of maintenance funding.

If you had a proposal submitted and funded for five years, your funding starts tapering off at 33 percent for the next three years, then you no longer can be funded through ACCSP. The 2019 funding will be full funding, and 2020 will be the first year where those projects were dropped by 33 percent.

That is worth noting that that is going to impact a number of projects up and down the coast. Under fishery dependent monitoring, the SAFIS activities expand mandatory trip reporting. There is a lot of mandatory trip reporting activities going on up and down the coast; some initiated by the Council, some potentially initiated by this Commission, and ACCSP is going to stay on top of that.

They are also going through a major redesign of the SAFIS database and all the interfaces, and the way folks will be able to get data out of SAFIS. Under APAIS, which is the Access Point Angler Intercept Survey, which is sort of half of the MRIP program that the states are now conducting through the Commission; you know a busy program.

One of the significant things that they're hoping to do this year, and they're well on their way to doing this, is transitioning from paper-based survey to electronic intercept software. Right now we get lots and lots of FedEx packages at our office with paper surveys. They're going to switch over; hopefully to tablet-based data collection, so that we don't have to scan all those documents in. It will go straight into the database, so it will be a big improvement. They'll work on developing and approving for-hire survey validation methodology; data distribution and use, expanded data warehouse, and start to include biological data. They're going to work to improve data integrity; which is consistency of data that is reported from the states, and make that improving the data integrity improves the usefulness and amount of use that the overall program will get.

Bycatch is another area that ACCSP is considering. The last bullet there is a security

audit of ACCSP. What this is, since ACCSP houses federal data, we have to go through an audit to make sure all the appropriate firewalls and security systems are in place; so that no one from the outside can access that data, and it's properly insulated from any Russian hacking or anything else that might go on. That is what the audit is all about; so happy to answer any questions on Goal 8, or anything else within the Action Plan.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Any questions on Goal 8? David.

DR. DAVID PIERCE: I was following on Bob's invite to comment on the Action Plan itself; so if I may. Going back to the high priority item of the task for summer flounder, the third bullet says; request an ASMFC Working Group meet with the Council's Research Steering Committee to examine the possibility of reestablishing the Research Set-Aside Program, so just a clarification.

Is the Council moving forward now? Should we establish that program, and we are requesting participation, or are we requesting the Council to start it up again? I asked the question, because this will be a key task for 2019, especially for New England states that are not part of Mid-Atlantic Council debates.

MS. KERNS: David, what we, I'm going to have Mike come to, Mike can either nod or not. But I believe, David that we may have tweaked the wording here to make this a little confusing. They have their Research Steering Committee is established, and are meeting. We are asking them to examine.

I don't know if it's to examine establishing the Research Set-Aside Program; because I think that Committee takes on other tasks as well these days, and so we're asking them to look at Research Set-Aside. I did bring it up at the August joint meeting; and Chris had said that they would take that back to the Council when they discussed priorities for 2019. I'm not sure the outcome of that discussion; and Mike could speak to that.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Go ahead, Mike.

MR. MICHAEL LUISI: To that point. That topic is on our list of priorities for 2019; which will be discussed and finalized at our December meeting. It is on there now. I assume it will go forward.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Thanks, Mike. David, are you good? David Borden.

MR. DAVID V. BORDEN: Two points, one under Item 1, winter flounder. I thought we had agreed to try to set up a dialogue with the New England Council on the issue of working on standardizing the winter flounder regulations; but somebody can correct that if that is incorrect. Then the second point is a minor point.

Under a lot of these tasks you've got this statement relative to whales about the need to respond to the large whale issues. That actually applies to every fishery where there is a fixed-gear fishery. In other words, potential regulations are going to be cross cutting. You may be better off putting that into the cross-cutting section. Thank you.

MS. KERNS: In response to the winter flounder portion of that issue. We agreed to have conversations with the Council. I don't believe we specifically said to have consistent regulations. But if that is something that the Commission wants us to do; we can add that task to that working group.

MR. BORDEN: I mean in my own case, I would be happy with setting up a dialogue about the problem, and working towards that as an eventual resolution of it. I think it's in the best interest of the stock to do that.

MS. KERNS: We can have that as a task then, David.

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Other questions. Personally that last table that Bob didn't go over, I love that thing, because it's kind of the good cheat sheet for seeing what's going on, in terms of the big priority issues. I think staff did a great job on this. **We are going to need a motion for the lean, mean action plan that we have in front of us; so if we could have that to adopt it.**

David Borden. I've got a second by Robert Boyles. Is there any discussion on the motion? Seeing none; is there any objection to the motion? We don't have a motion up there. But I think we're just adopting. I'll wait until we get it up there; just so we make sure we're not violating parliamentary procedures.

Move to adopt the 2019 Action Plan, was a motion by Mr. Borden and seconded by Mr. Boyles. Is there any objection to the motion? Seeing none; we will adopt that by unanimous consent.

ELECTION OF COMMISSION CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Thanks everybody, and thanks for the work for the Commission staff. Our next agenda item, I actually have to take a leave; and Bob is going to take the meeting over, because we're going to have an election. Bob, it's all yours.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: At this time I would like to call on Doug Grout as the Chairman of the Nominating Committee to report out on nominations for Chair of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. Doug.

MR. DOUGLAS E. GROUT: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I would also like to thank the members of the Nominating Committee; Dave Borden and Robert Boyles, along with myself. We contacted the various jurisdictions within the Commission, the states within the Commission looking for nominations for both Chair and Vice-Chair this year. I am pleased to announce for Chair, I would like to nominate Jim Gilmore from the host state of New York for Chair this year.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Thank you, Doug. **We have a nomination from the Nominating Committee to reelect Jim Gilmore as the Chair of ASMFC.** The Commission's election process allows any other nominations from the floor, before a vote is taken. Are there any other nominations from the floor for Chair of ASMFC? Yes, Robert.

MR. ROBERT H. BOYLES, JR.: **Mr. Chairman, I was going to ask if you wanted a motion to close nominations, and approve by acclamation Jim Gilmore, as presented by the Nominations Committee.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: That would be perfect if you're willing to do that.

MR. BOYLES: **Yes sir, so moved**.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: We've got a motion to close nominations; and approve Jim Gilmore as the Chair of ASMFC by proclamation. Is there a second to that? I see Loren Lustig. **Are there any objections to the motion, seeing none; congratulations, Jim for another year of being the Chair of ASMFC?** I would like to go back to Doug as the Chair of the Nominating Committee for nominations for Vice-Chair of the Commission.

MR. GROUT: Thank you, Bob. **We have one nomination and that is to nominate Pat Keliher, form the state of Maine as Vice-Chair of the Commission.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Thank you, Doug. Nomination from the Nominating Committee for Pat Keliher to serve another year as Vice-Chair, are there any other nominations from the floor? Seeing none; any motions? Robert Boyles.

MR. BOYLES: **I would move that we close the nominations for Vice-Chair; and that we would**

approve by acclamation Pat Keliher as Vice-Chair.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Thank you, Robert, is there a second? Emerson Hasbrouck, thank you. **Are there any objections to the motion of Pat Keliher staying as the Vice-Chair of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission for another year? Seeing none; congratulations, Pat.** I think that concludes the business of this session, Jim. Would you like to comment on closing this meeting?

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Thank you again for the honor of serving as Chairman; it's actually been a real eye opener. I must say, in terms of an Assistant Chair, Pat Keliher, I would probably be screwing up if it wasn't for him, so it's great having a great assistant chairman also. Thanks again, and I hope to continue on and do a good job with all the extraordinary issues we have facing us over the next year, so thank you, and Pat, do you have any comments you want to add?

MR. PATRICK C. KELIHER: I just received a text from an anonymous person around the table that just told me not to screw it up. I think that says it all. Thank you very much.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIRMAN GILMORE: Let me see; my first action for this coming year is to recess this meeting. Unless there is other business before the Business Session, we stand adjourned.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 11:40 o'clock a.m. on October 23, 2018)