

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

Business Session of the Commission

*October 18, 2023
10:15 – 11:45 a.m.
Hybrid Meeting*

Draft Agenda

The times listed are approximate; the order in which these items will be taken is subject to change; other items may be added as necessary.

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|---|------------|
| 1. Welcome/Call to Order (<i>S. Woodward</i>) | 10:15 a.m. |
| 2. Board Consent | 10:20 a.m. |
| • Approval of Agenda | |
| • Approval of Proceedings from November 2022 | |
| 3. Public Comment | 10:20 a.m. |
| 4. Review and Consider Approval of 2024 Action Plan Final Action | 10:25 a.m. |
| 5. Review Draft 2024-2028 Strategic Plan | 11:15 a.m. |
| 6. Elect Commission Chair and Vice-Chair | 11:35 a.m. |
| 7. Review Noncompliance Findings, if necessary Final Action | 11:40 a.m. |
| 8. Other Business/Adjourn | 11:45 a.m. |

The meeting will be held at Beaufort Hotel (2440 Lennoxville Road, Beaufort, North Carolina; 252.728.3000) and via webinar; click [here](#) for details

**DRAFT PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
BUSINESS SESSION**

**The Westin Crystal City
Arlington, Virginia
Hybrid Meeting**

November 9, 2022

These minutes are draft and subject to approval.
The Business Session will review the minutes during its next meeting.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Call to Order, Chair Joe Cimino..... 1

Approval of Agenda 1

Approval of Proceedings from May 2022..... 1

Consider Approval of the 2023 Action Plan 1

Election of Commission Chair and Vice-Chair 10

Adjournment 11

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INDEX OF MOTIONS

1. **Approval of Agenda** by Consent (Page 1).
2. **Approval of Proceedings from May 2022** by Consent (Page 1).
3. **Move to approve the 2023 Action Plan as modified today** (Page 10). Motion by Tom Fote; second by John Clark. Motion carried without objection (Page 10).
4. **Move to re-elect Spud Woodward as Commission Chair and Joe Cimino as Commission Vice-Chair** (Page 10). Motion by Pat Keliher on behalf of the Nominating Committee. Motion approved without objection (Page 11).
5. **Move to adjourn** by Consent (Page 11).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Megan Ware, ME, proxy for P. Keliher (AA)	Loren Lustig, PA (GA)
Cheri Patterson, NH (AA)	John Clark, DE (AA)
Doug Grout, NH (GA)	Craig Pugh, DE, proxy for Rep. Carson (LA)
Dan McKiernan, MA (AA)	Lynn Fegley, MD (AA) (Acting)
Raymond Kane, MA (GA)	Pat Geer, VA, proxy for J. Green (AA)
Sarah Ferrara, MA, proxy for Rep. Peake (LA)	Chris Batsavage, NC, proxy for K. Rawls (AA)
Jason McNamee, RI (AA)	Jerry Mannen, NC (GA)
Eric Reid, RI, proxy for Sen. Sosnowski (LA)	Chris McDonough, SC, proxy for Sen. Cromer (LA)
Justin Davis, CT (AA)	Doug Haymans, GA (AA)
Bill Hyatt, CT (GA)	Spud Woodward, GA (GA)
Jim Gilmore, NY (AA)	Erika Burgess, FL, proxy for J. McCawley (AA)
Joe Cimino, NJ (AA)	Gary Jennings, FL (GA)
Tom Fote, NJ (GA)	Marty Gary, PRFC
Adam Nowalsky, NJ, proxy for Sen. Gopal (LA)	Mike Ruccio, NOAA
Kris Kuhn, PA, proxy for T. Schaeffer (AA)	Rick Jacobson, US FWS

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

Staff

Robert Beal	James Boyle	Jeff Kipp
Toni Kerns	Pat Campfield	Sarah Murray
Tina Berger	Emilie Franke	Caitlin Starks
Maya Drzewicki	Lisa Havel	Deke Tompkins
Kristen Anstead	Chris Jacobs	

Guests

Jason Avila	Adam Kenyon, VMRC	Somers Smott, VMRC
Alan Bianchi, NC DENR	John Kravchak	Bryan Sparrow, Fuji Film
Colleen Bouffard	Mike Luisi, MD DNR	Rene St. Armand, CT DEEP
Nicole Caudell, MD DNR	Tina Moore, NC DENR	Alex Su
Karson Cisneros, MAFMC	Brandon Muffley, MAFMC	Beth Versak, MD DNR
Heather Corbett, NJ DEP	Brian Neilan, NJ DEP	Eric Wallace
Jessica Daher, NJ DEP	Derek Orner, NOAA	Kate Wilke, TNC
Jeffrey Dobbs, NC DENR	Nicholas Popoff, US FWS	Angel Willey, MD DNR
Cynthia Ferrio, NOAA	Will Poston, SGA	Chris Wright, NOAA
Anthony Friedrich, SGA	Jill Ramsey, VMRC	Faith Zerbe, DE Riverkeepers
Alexa Galvan, VMRC	Jeff Renchen, FL FWC	Erik Zlokovitz, MD DNR
Lewis Gillingham, VMRC	Chris Scott, NYS DEC	
Jesse Hornstein, NYS DEC	McLean Seward, NC DENR	

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The Business Session of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in The Monmouth I Room in The Ocean Place Resort, a hybrid meeting, in-person and webinar; Wednesday, November 9, 2022, and was called to order at 10:15 a.m. by Vice-Chair Joe Cimino.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIR JOE CIMINO: Some of you are aware Chairman is trying to beat some weather here, and he headed out early, so I will be subbing for him. Joe Cimino; New Jersey DEP, Vice-Chair of the Commission. We have some agenda items to go through here. We're going to get some exciting presentations on the Action Plan.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIR CIMINO: I'll start with our call to order, and look for approval of the agenda. I see no hands in objection, so we'll approve by consent.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIR CIMINO: Approval of the proceedings from May, 2022. If no issues or objections we'll consider approved by consent. Public comment. You all look like you work here. I don't think we have any public comment.

CONSIDER APPROVAL OF THE 2023 ACTION PLAN

CHAIR CIMINO: Okay, so we'll get into the Approval of the 2023 Action Plan.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: Just really quickly before you jump into the details of the Action Plan. This will be very similar to how we've done it in the past. We'll go through each of the goals, and at the end of each goal we'll stop and you guys can ask any questions or make any recommendations for changes.

You know if there is anything really significant that will take a lot of staff time, we may need to talk about tradeoffs. But we think it is a pretty comprehensive plan so far. As you see, all the

staff is up here, and so we'll each go through sort of the goals that each department has in the Action Plan.

The first one is Goal Number 1 that's fishery management activities, and if you guys will remember that it's divided up into high priority species and what we call medium low priority species. The high priorities are just that. They're the ones that are, they're busy. There is a lot going on with those species next year.

The other ones, there still is a lot going on with some of those medium and low priorities, but they are not quite as high profile, and won't take quite as much staff time and Commissioner time to work through those. With that I'll turn it over to Toni to go through Goal Number 1, please.

MS. TONI KERNS: Thank you, Bob, and thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the high priority species, and just as a reminder, it's not that we think that these species are more important than another one, it's about staff workload and Board workload. For American eel, this moved up into the higher priority. The stock assessment peer review will be occurring in the coming months, and then we'll be able to report out to the Board, and if necessary, we'll take management action.

Under American lobster there is a couple things that are continuing from last year, but in particular we'll be working with all of our state and federal partners, as well as ACCSP on implementing and integrating the tracking device data collection as part of Addendum XXIV. In addition, the Board made it clear it's going to be moving forward on Addendum XXVII, which is the trigger mechanism for the protection of spawning stock biomass in the Gulf of Maine/Georges Bank stock.

Then scrolling on down to striped bass, the Board did approve Addendum I for public comment and this is for their voluntary transfers of commercial quota. Then for summer flounder, scup, black sea bass and bluefish, we have some very similar bullets, so I'm only going to go over it one time here under black sea bass.

That is to continue working with the Mid-Atlantic Council on some of the recreational measures, and this is one to do the recreational sector separation and catch accounting amendment. It could turn into some version of an addendum, just to be clear, and then as well as develop the recreational reform technical guidance document, and continue developing the harvest control rule options that did not get approved earlier this year.

This species will also, all the species will have a research track and a management track stock assessment and peer review. Then moving down to bluefish, the one difference is that we'll be working with the Council to develop a management uncertainty policy for that species. For horseshoe crab, we'll work with a workgroup that will review and update the best management practices for handling biomedical catch.

We'll move forward with conducting the ARM if it does get approved at the meeting tomorrow. For Jonah crab, we're going to work with same as lobster on the tracking device, as well as review the benchmark stock assessment and respond if necessary. I'm going to skip through scup, because that is the same bullet.

For shad and river herring we'll review the river herring benchmark stock assessment and peer review and respond as necessary, and there is still a couple of SFMPs and shad habitat plans that will come forward to the Board. Then scrolling down to our medium and low priority species. For Atlantic croaker and spot, we'll initiate a benchmark stock assessment that will be peer reviewed in 2024.

For Atlantic herring, we'll be exploring funding options for a biological sampling program. This week the Board did not take any action for Draft Addendum III, which is the allocation of the Area 1A quota. I think we'll probably pull this bullet out of the document, unless I hear otherwise today from the states. Scrolling down to Atlantic sturgeon, we'll be initiating the

benchmark stock assessment for review in 2024, and continue to monitor the federal activities in response to the action plan to reduce Atlantic sturgeon bycatch in federal large mesh gillnet fisheries, and respond to any actions that the Council may take if necessary. For black drum we'll be reviewing the benchmark stock assessment and peer review that will be coming out, and respond, if necessary, as well as updating the indicators of fishery performance and indices of abundance. For coastal shark, again we'll continue to monitor HMS activities, but specifically looking at what they are doing with Amendment 14.

Then also any proposed rules to consider the prohibition and retention of sharks listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. We've been told by HMS that that is a possibility for next year. For Atlantic cobia we will explore reactions to emerging harvest in the Mid-Atlantic. We heard a little bit about this yesterday.

We won't go into it for now, but if there are questions, answer them. Northern shrimp, we will develop the management triggers to indicate when the stock can support a commercial fishery, and that is through the workgroup that has been engaging on how to move forward with northern shrimp management.

For red drum we'll initiate a benchmark stock assessment, which would be peer reviewed in 2024. Then under Spanish mackerel we'll review the revised SEDAR stock assessment, in response to the South Atlantic Council's SSC recommendation, and then we'll respond, if necessary, in collaboration with our South Atlantic partners, and we'll consider development of a management action to address the differences in the state and federal management plan that we heard about yesterday at the Coastal Pelagics Board meeting, and we'll do that with the Council.

For spiny dogfish, if there are actions that get taken through the New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils for the reduction of sturgeon in the large mesh gillnet fisheries, we would respond in the spiny dogfish that is one of the species that is in that

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action plan from NOAA. I've already gone over spot, and we don't have any new tasks for weakfish or winter flounder or tautaug.

Under the crosscutting issues, a lot of these issues are carrying over from last year. We've been working on them, but work continues on them. But we did add to the scenario planning is to respond to the summit recommendations, to make sure any proposed actions that come out of there have a path forward.

Then we also added to the bulleted list, even though we have been working on these things this year to continue to develop and finalize the de minimis policy for use in Commission FMPs. Lastly, to explore the development or the guidance or policy level document on allocation and the use of mode splits, which has been discussions in the past, but not officially in the Action Plan. That is everything that I have, I'll take questions.

CHAIR CIMINO: Questions for Toni? Go ahead, Adam.

MR. ADAM NOWALSKY: At the Mid-Atlantic Council's meeting in October, the Executive Committee approved a draft 2023 Implementation Plan, which will be considered by the Full Council in December. That included under summer flounder, scup and black sea bass, initiate development of action to replace recreational harvest control rule after a sunset period. The question is, does the item we have here for those species that continue development of recreational harvest control rule options. I interpreted that as specifications on an annual basis, or was that really referring to the changes that would need to be made because of the sunset period on that action?

MS. KERNS: Adam, those are the changes or the work that needs to be done on the options that weren't approved that the Board asked staff to do. Then if that includes a management action because we're ready before the end of the year, we can roll that into that bullet.

CHAIR CIMINO: Adam, are you okay? Thank you, great question. Any others? No, okay. Bob.

EXECUTIVE DIRECT BEAL: Pat Campfield is going to run through Goal 2, which is the Science Program Activities.

MR. PATRICK A. CAMPFIELD: This includes all of the Commission's fisheries research, surveys and stock assessment activities. In the first category under the Science Committees, that includes Management Science Committee, Assessment Science Committee, Fisheries Socioeconomics.

New activity for 2023 is to update the Commission's research priorities. We do this across the board every five years, so the document was last updated in a comprehensive fashion in 2018, so we'll do that again here in 2023. Then any priority research that comes out of that we'll try to work with the science committees to develop proposals to fund that kind of research.

We'll also incorporate risk and uncertainty lessons learned for the next iteration of the tool. You may recall a lot of work done on risk and uncertainty for tautaug. The next candidate species is cobia, so we'll try to move that forward next year. Also, a bit down in the weeds, but for the stock assessment purposes, create a centralized repository for archiving assessment modeling code to enhance our ability to run models.

Under data collection, nothing really new under the SEAMAP program. Under the NEMAP Survey program, communicate with offshore wind energy developers on the use of the NEMAP brand, in terms of their pre and post construction surveys and monitoring. Under collection of new data to address stock assessment needs, support the states, South Atlantic Council and ACCSP with Citizen Science projects, to collect new recreational live release data.

Under the fisheries research category and under fish gauging, we plan to conduct age sample exchanges and workshops to compare protocols for both menhaden and Atlantic sturgeon. Then under

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ecosystem-based management and changing ocean conditions, nothing really new. Toni alluded to the Scenario Planning Initiative that we went through yesterday.

There is also a lot of strong science coming out of NMFS and their fishery science center, so we continue to stay plugged in with the science centers on latest and greatest, including products like their climate and vulnerability assessments. Then finally, under competing ocean uses, to determine the Commission's role in wind energy intersections with fisheries. I think those are the highlights in science.

CHAIR CIMINO: Thank you, Pat, questions for Pat? Seeing none; oh, we do. Go ahead, Jay, sorry.

DR. JASON McNAMEE: One question I had was that concept you have in there for the repository. I just wanted to mention. I think, I can't remember what the context was. I think it was like an ecosystem modeling workshop thing that I was at. But I think NOAA is thinking about something similar. It's just important to just be connected with that so we don't have like, I don't know, competing repositories.

Maybe that's okay to have that. But at least we'll know where the different tools are. I just wanted to mention that, and then just a quick question on the bullet on the enhanced. I can't remember exactly how it was written, but the enhanced computing power. I just wonder what that, you're talking about like a super computer or efficient code? I was just sort of wondering.

MR. CAMPFIELD: You all are very curious about the computational speed and code we used in the stock assessments, but really, I think we're on the same page that you're talking about with NMFS. This is stemming from the bluefish assessment that is just wrapping up, and Katie has been a major contributor to, using what's call GitHub, so a centralized repository for the code, but sort of on shared servers where you

can run the models a lot faster. Working with Tony Wood in Woods Hole and the Science Center on bluefish, but doing it more broadly for all Commission assessments.

CHAIR CIMINO: I was going to say that all Doug Adams fans chuckle when they see a bullet point like that, and then I'll turn it over to Dr. Drew.

DR. KATIE DREW: Just to add on to that. I think one of the things we did find with the bluefish assessment is that NOAA has very strict requirements about how they use GitHub, and we certainly wouldn't want to compete with them in any way, but we want to set up something to be more flexible for ASMFC purposes, and complement whatever NOAA is doing with their own repository.

CHAIR CIMINO: Go ahead, John.

MR. JOHN CLARK: Pat, did I miss it? Did you mention anything about the Economic and Social Sciences Committee in this one?

MR. CAMPFIELD: Thanks, John, so at the top of the goal there are a few bullet points there on the highlights of what we try to achieve each year with the SAS Committee, and providing input to the fishery management plans. There have been some one-off inquiries related to the menhaden, I think black sea bass, in the last couple of years. But again, the overall activity is to keep the Socioeconomic Committee engaged, and when requests come in from the Boards, if there are data to try to provide that advice.

MR. CLARK: Thanks, I was just curious, just because I noticed in a lot of the comments coming up about the horseshoe crab ARM is that so many of the commenters were saying the economic value of ecotourism for the crabs and the birds. I was just curious if that was something that was being considered to look at. I'm sure that is something that might come up with other species, as we move forward or those type of issues.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: John, in response. We don't have anything specific in there for horseshoe

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crab or your ecotourism type thing. But if that is something, a bullet we want to add to the action plan, and ask the SAS Committee to look at it, you know that is fair game for sure.

MR. CLARK: Right, I just meant that has been so highly scrutinized, I just figured it would be something that at least we could say, you know we are aware of that situation.

CHAIR CIMINO: Yes, and I think there is going to be some discussions during the Horseshoe Crab Board meeting about what is the future of the ARM, and what are we going to look at moving forward. We had the peer review of the ARM that suggested a management strategy evaluation, and so if something like that comes along, you know we'll certainly be looking at socioeconomics. I'll turn it over to Lynn, go ahead, please.

MS. LYNN FEGLEY: Just to pile on John's comment. I don't advocate adding this as a bullet to this plan yet. But in a couple hours we'll be tackling menhaden allocation. We have a lot of concerns in our state about what the impacts are when you do these reallocations to market, and also the impacts of transferring quota on markets in the state. Like when are you really disrupting how product is flowing up and down the coast, when you do these allocations?

I think it's something that we need to maybe for all of our species, think about considering, and maybe allowing the SAS to start doing some more. I know data are hard to come by in this regard, but it would be nice when we have these conversations, if we had a little ability to address some of these economic and market concerns. Like I said, I don't know the best for this plan, but maybe it's something we can put on our radar, and think about when we go around again.

CHAIR CIMINO: Yes, I agree, and you know sitting through the Climate Scenario Workshop yesterday, when you're thinking about the

future you also need to have a base line, right. I'm not sure we do for every species. I feel pretty comfortable saying we really don't. I agree, I think it's something that in some form or another we have to start to tackle. Any other comments or questions?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: All right, the next goal is Goal 3, fisheries statistics, and Geoff White will handle that one.

MR. GEOFF WHITE: Goal 3 is really focused on the fisheries dependent data collected through ACCSP. The items highlighted on a continuing basis take up a fair amount of the activities that are reliant by other departments and other agencies. We kind of tweaked a few items in that section to include an additional component of the MRIP surveys that we help support, as well as engaging and aligning with the Commission's Outreach and Communication Plan. Similar item on partnerships. I wanted to just continue highlighting the data approaches, and the partnerships with all the other agencies in data collection initiatives, and data dissemination to support other systems. Specifically, under fisheries dependent data collection, within SAFIS we're trying to highlight items that will really focus on accomplishing in 2023. The first item reads a little bit cryptically, but truthfully, we've been using the same species list across the dealer and the trip reporting applications for a long time as a choice, and it's necessary at this point to separate out the species unit, market grades that are available to selection lists in the dealer reports.

That those rows that are available for commercial trips or for-hire trips. That is shortening those lists, entities are selecting better records, it allows us to drive which questions are being asked in which application. This is kind of an initial step we're already working on, which should be rolling out early in 2023.

Another major item is to extend the one-stop reporting initiative, to expand that a bit more across more of the federal permits, and to begin gaining the requirements from the states by holding a workshop on what their requirements are for one-

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stop reporting. Also, we're supporting implementation of spatial data management.

As I have mentioned about the lobster trip locations, VMS, not just collecting the location data, but providing ways for the state agencies to visualize that and look into other means of support with it. Then more towards the end of the year and throughout the year, we're looking at applying designing and applying the updated participant and permit information database design.

Again, it's an item that helps to better show the history of a particular entity in the data warehouse, as well as which records should be visible to those through the confidentiality approaches. It may not be the exciting things that folks were thinking about when it comes to the action plan, but they are definitely necessary steps to move this forward.

Under recreational surveys we are sharing the infrastructure that we've developed with both the Gulf of Mexico and Hawaii, to kind of standardizes and extend the methodology for some of those staff and agency-based data collection activities. Under data standards, distribution and use, we will be convening a workshop to identify the best practices on data validation, reconciliation and documentation for improving data integrity.

This is a lot of the Coordinating Council's Accountability Workgroup, and how the different data streams do line up and connect for data quality and use by management. We'll continue to refine the for-hire program methodology with MRIP, to more fully incorporate logbooks and the math that goes along with that.

We'll be establishing policies and procedures for ACCSP Citizen Science data and data collection systems, including the SciFish project. Under data distribution, we're looking to expand the data warehouse contact, really looking at the updated MRIP standards and

presentation of the recreational estimates aligning with public presentation of the MRIP estimates that will be changing in April of 2023.

Also, establishing new biological data feeds to fulfill that section of the data warehouse. Of course, under data use, we do a lot to support the assessments that are going on. We'll be continuing to provide validated commercial landings data for the Commission assessments and the SEDAR assessments that were listed there, and responding to data requests. Thank you.

CHAIR CIMINO: Thank you, Geoff, any questions for Geoff? Go ahead, John.

MR. CLARK: Geoff, if you're going to be looking for volunteers to go to Hawaii, I'll mentor them on the tablets. I'm sure we have APAIS staff that would love to do that.

DR. McNAMEE: I was wondering about the large pelagic survey, so that item is about working with the states to transfer that program to states, or I was wondering like what you mean by that bullet.

MR. WHITE: It's a recognition of something that has been done by the states already. The large pelagic telephone survey add-on to the for-hire survey component, is an extension of that phone interview that is already occurring, and the states were already doing. But we hadn't captured a recognition of that in the Action Plan. It's not a new activity, it is more an explanation of what happens.

CHAIR CIMINO: Anyone else?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Moving on, Goal 4 is compliance LEC activities, and Toni is going to handle that, I believe.

MS. KERNS: I just have two updates for the Law Enforcement goal. The first is in concurrence with the goal for lobster and Jonah crab that will have the Law Enforcement Committee work with the states to incorporate or implement the vessel tracking devices consistent with the Addendum.

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In addition, the Committee has started this week working on making changes to the guidelines for resource managers, so I don't know if we should say newly revised guidelines. But I'll think of a way to edit that to show that this will be the third update to that document. It was last updated in 2015.

CHAIR CIMINO: Question?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: All right that was quick. Moving on, Goal 5 is habitat work, and Pat is going to cover that.

MR. CAMPFIELD: Goal 5 covers the Habitat Program as well as the Commission support of the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership. Not a lot of new activities, though continue to generate habitat management series publications, the Habitat Hotline Outreach Newsletter of state activities and federal partner activities.

They will also continue to work on fish habitats of concern. Under the leverage partnerships section, a couple of activities under the Atlantic Coastal Fish Habitat Partnership are to identify partners and support restoration, grant administration, and project management. That is an activity that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has supported for a number of years. Hopefully that will continue, but with some new federal legislation that may change, so we need to brainstorm and find a Plan B. Also work with partners to develop standardized SAV monitoring protocols for the coast. That has been working closely with PEW and other NGOs leading that effort.

Then finally, implement the new ACFHP five-year strategic plan, and the next annual action plan for the partnership, including new initiatives with climate resilience and DEJ. The ACFHP Steering Committee is meeting down the hall this week, to hopefully put the finishing touches on that next Strategic Plan.

CHAIR CIMINO: Thank, Pat, any questions for Pat?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Great, thanks, moving along, Goal 6 is Outreach efforts, and Tina Berger will cover that.

MS. TINA L. BERGER: Thank you. As Bob mentioned, this goal is about outreach and communication. As many of the other sections or goals, we do a lot of things on a continuing basis. I'll just highlight a few of the big things that we will be working on next year. We'll continue to keep on making our annual report a slim, sleek, concise overview of what we're accomplishing each year.

We're going to highlight our outreach efforts on some focused subjects and species, and those are identified under that first header under current and new technologies. We're going to be doing a lot of work on the website, not completely revising it, but certainly updating and upgrading it, making it HTTPS compliant, increasing its flow and user friendliness, and developing new content.

We will also be migrating three of the websites that we currently host in-office to an off-site host, to increase security of our own servers and internal structures. Under stakeholder participation, we'll continue to revitalize advisory panels for those species that will have major activities next year, and get our advisory panel primer up to date, including several new changes that have been made.

Under media relations and networking, as Geoff mentioned in his, we're going to be finalizing a communication plan that seeks to clarify our staff roles and responsibilities, and provide a vision for future outreach efforts for all the Commission programs. We will continue on a continuing effort, respond to factual inaccuracies that have been showing up in various news articles, in particular horseshoe crab, but other species as well. That is the major activities for Goal 6. Thank you.

CHAIR CIMINO: Thank you, Tina, any question? Yes, John.

MR. CLARK: Not a question, Joe, I just wanted to thank Tina for her phenomenal efforts in responding to all the false information coming out about the Horseshoe Crab ARM, and you know just seeing some of the things that we've already seen about the latest update of the menhaden assessment. It looks like it's going to be keeping your hands full, Tina, responding to these types of things. Thanks again.

CHAIR CIMINO: Loren.

MR. LOREN W. LUSTIG: Thank you for the report regarding outreach. I'm very familiar with some programs that have been developed in the past that take outreach into the classrooms. For example, there is a program that occurred in Maryland, when I was working there, called Grasses in Classes, that encouraged to actually have a hands-on, in terms of conservation. A similar program, Trout in the Classroom in Pennsylvania. Do we have any plans or hopes to develop similar programs that relate to marine fishes?

MS. BERGER: I'll answer this in this way. You know the Commission is centralized in Arlington. It is hard for us to get sort of programs out into nature, based on our accessibility to that. We can certainly work in greater effort to work with the state programs, and working with their education, to get into classrooms through the states.

That may be a more appropriate way to do that than at the Commission level. We have in the past participated in a lot of tradeshow and coast fests, as in the Georgia Coast Fest, where we hit a large number of young children with activities and information that is easily accessible. I agree with you, it's an important way to educate our youth, and get them familiar with the natural world. I'll seek ways to do that at the Commission level.

CHAIR CIMINO: Yes, I would just add that we had the State Directors meeting with all the other Commissions just last week, and we had a

pretty long discussion on equity and diversity. You know the general consensus was, the only way that we're going to see diversity around these tables, and in fisheries management, is to start getting people interested at a very early age. Any other questions?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Moving on to Goal 7. This is the Commission's legislative activity. A lot of this is care and feeding, but a couple of highlights. In fact, we started this work last night. Eric Reid opened up lines of communication with Congressman Pallone and his staff, so that's pretty nice, we were able to see them at their celebration party last night.

Moving on to some other specifics. Obviously, there was an election yesterday, and we will reach out to the new staff members and new officers, and committee structure may be changing and other things. We'll get to know those folks early in the new year, once the 118th Congress is set. Then a lot of the activities we work on through the legislative program is appropriations and support for the activities of the Commission, highlighting or adding SEAMAP, South Atlantic and trawl survey work there.

The other bills, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the Inflation Reduction Act have a ton of money in them, and we're trying to find ways to tap into that money for habitat work, survey work and other things. We just noted that in there. We need to add the RISEE Act to the last bullet under the topic of engaging Congress and the administration on legislation. We will add that. We already have Recovering Americas Wildlife Act in there, and we'll see where that goes. We may be able to take that off if that were to pass before the end of the calendar year. There are some conversations about fishery compensation and litigation legislation for offshore wind power, and we'll track that pending legislation as well. We'll work with NOAA leadership and Congressional folks for sort of the out fiscal years, '23 and '24, trying to get our priorities recognized there.

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Again, you know highlighting our budget priorities, SEAMAP, South Atlantic, Chesapeake Bay work for menhaden, and also there is a specific ask in here for helping South Carolina with their research vessel. That vessel is a little bit beyond the useful life of a survey vessel, we'll say. It's being held together by duct tape and bubblegum, but it's still working, and we're going to try to get that replaced and retrofit and help out South Carolina with that.

Then the last bullet here that's new is highlighting the USGS Commission partnership. ASMFC and the other three Commissions, including the Great Lakes, have new and cooperative programs and research work going on with USGS. I'm going to try to find some financial support for that in the year moving forward.

Those are the highlights of our legislative activity, and we're getting very close to hiring a new Legislative Coordinator, which will be great. Happy to answer any questions on that. Moving on, last but not least, Goal Number 8, right, is Laura's finance and administration activities.

MS. LAURA C. LEACH: As you are well aware, most of the activities in Goal 8 are ongoing every year, so I'm really going to only point out one that I'm really excited about. I mean I love them all, that's not how I meant that. But Geoff has been working very hard to develop a database, comprehensive database, that we can track everything of our incoming funds, as well as the contracts that go out from those funds.

Because, especially with the project cooperative agreement that we have that Derek Orner runs. We put out a lot of contracts on those. We have a lot of money in those, and it's been run by spreadsheets for a very long time, and Geoff and I have been working very hard to make a comprehensive database that will capture the complete life cycle. I'm very excited about that. Everything else is ongoing, so I'm not going to bore you. You can ask me any questions that

you would like, but otherwise that is the only one I'm going to highlight.

CHAIR CIMINO: Questions for Laura? Thank you, Laura. Erika, go ahead, please.

MR. ERIKA BURGESS: My question was back on the legislative item. Bob, I was wondering if work on streamlining the federal disaster funding is included in your legislative priorities? I know several states have run into issues with the amount of time it takes to get federal disaster declarations approved, and then funding through the OMB process.

More recently in Florida, we as many of you know, were devastated by Hurricane Ian, which wiped out much of our infrastructure in Southwest Florida, and our Southwest shrimping fleet. The response we have from NOAA is that, come back to us in a year, show us your losses, and then we'll consider a disaster request. In the meantime, we have people without homes, without businesses, without boats. This system just really seems to be broken. I would like to see it be an ASMFC priority.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Thanks for that comment. We do not have that included here. The question is, how much of that can we affect at ASMFC? In other words, you know it is a federal process, OMB is involved. For the herring disaster in the northeast, we're actually working with the states, and hopefully be able to move that money along pretty quickly once we get it.

But the bottlenecks are not on our end. We can put something in here, but there are conversations going on at the federal level to speed that up and make it more efficient. It's up to the group. We can put something in here, but I'm not sure we can affect a whole lot of change from the Commission side of things.

CHAIR CIMINO: Go ahead, Pat.

MR. PATRICK C. KELIHER: I don't disagree with anything that Bob said. But one thing that we may want to though consider around disaster declaration is the appropriations component,

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adding that as a priority to already appropriations requests. That is going to be an ongoing conversation.

Especially in light of what is happening on the west coast with the Alaskan crab fishery and the huge amount of money that is going to be requested there. You may want to think about it strictly from, I agree with all your comments, but strictly from an appropriations standpoint. I can see us wanting to add that to our asks going forward through that process.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Okay, we can add that if the group is comfortable with that. One other noteworthy thing here is that when we were at the State Directors meeting in San Diego last week, Sam Rauch reported out. They are going to hire a full-time staffer or two that is going to be available just to work on disaster. Some of the activity that happens within NOAA Fisheries, hopefully will be sped up, if that person is on staff full time. But we can add some language about appropriation and seeking funds for disasters.

CHAIR CIMINO: Yes, and part of that was Sam's recognition that this is happening a lot more often. I think that's a good idea. I mean it needs to be part of our bigger discussions.

MR. KELIHER: Yes, I think that's a good reminder. I had forgotten about that conversation, because those were some very key questions asked to NOAA leadership around streamlining the process. While it's not captured here, it certainly was captured by the State Directors in that meeting last week.

CHAIR CIMINO: Sorry, go ahead, Tom.

MR. THOMAS P. FOTE: Yes, we've been discussing the same problem at MAFAC, and how do we basically correct the problem. I'll work with you, because I'm still going to be on MAFAC until 2025, so we can work that way also.

CHAIR CIMINO: Great, thank you. Any other questions? **We're looking for a motion to approve as modified. I'm going to give it to Tom Fote, and I'm going to give a second to John Clark.** That is homefield advantage there.

ELECTION OF COMMISSION CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

CHAIR CIMINO: The next item is election of Chair and Vice-Chair, and for once I'm going to pass this over to Bob with no smart Alec remarks.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: You can save those remarks until after the election, Joe. I think everyone knows where we are. Spud Woodward has been Chair for a year and Joe Cimino has been Vice-Chair of the Commission. But the Guiding Documents of the Commission require an annual election of leadership at the Commission.

The Commission sets up a Nominations Committee every year, and the membership this year is Erika Burgess from Florida, John Clark from Delaware, and it's Chaired by Pat Keliher from Maine. With that I will call on Mr. Keliher for a report out from the Nominations Committee.

MR. KELIHER: The Nomination Committee did send an e-mail through Bob last week, asking for further nominations. After receiving countless requests for other names to be put forward, and considering that, as I was just reminded by my seatmate to my left that the current Chair decided to duck out of this meeting early.

We did have to have an emergency meeting of the Nominations Committee. But in light of all that, we did come to the conclusion, because of the fantastic work of our Chairman, Spud Woodward, and Vice-Chairman Joe Cimino, that we would move them forward as a slate for renomination, or for nomination.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Okay, thank you, Pat, for that report from the Nominations Committee, and since it is from a committee it does not need a second. The Commission always does allow

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nominations from the field, so are there any other nominations, outside of what the Nominations Committee has brought forward?

Seeing none; let's see if we can do this efficiently now. Bet we can. **Is there any opposition to reelecting Spud Woodward as the Commission's Chair and Joe Cimino as the Vice-Chair of the Commission? Seeing no hands; congratulations, Spud, wherever you are in your travels, and congratulations, Joe on another year.** (Applause)

CHAIR CIMINO: Yes, thanks. I wanted to say, Spud had some comments, and this kind of even goes to the Action Plan too. Hopefully, if all goes well, he'll be home safe and things will be all right there, and he'll be able to make those comments during Policy Board, which he'll be chairing virtually, and thank you all. Yes, any other business to come before us? Go ahead, Tom.

MR. FOTE: Yes, I was just thinking of the first time that I got a chance to vote as a commissioner, with the vote in the election in 1991. I remember that at that period of time, that was the only opportunity at the Business Meeting, we got Governor's Appointee and Legislative Appointee able to vote. The progress over the years has really been something. It gave me a warm feeling to basically do this vote again.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIR CIMINO: Okay, if nothing else, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 11:05 a.m. on Wednesday, November 9, 2022)