

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

**The Harborside Hotel
Bar Harbor, Maine
October 26, 2016**

Approved February 1, 2017

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INDEX OF MOTIONS

1. **Approval of Agenda** by consent (Page 1).
2. **On behalf of the Nominating Committee, move to nominate Jim Gilmore as the ASMFC Vice-Chair for 2017 (Page 1).** Motion by Mr. Miller. Motion passes unanimously (Page 1).
3. **Move to add task 1.2.7 to work with the regional fishery management councils and NOAA Fisheries to review changes in national standard 1 guidelines and their implications for alignment of state and federal fishery management programs (Page 4).** Motion by David Pierce; second by Jason McNamee. Motion carries unanimously (Page 5).
4. **On behalf of the Administrative Oversight Committee, I move to recommend approval of the 2017 ASMFC Action Plan as amended today (Page 13).** Motion made by Mr. Grout. The motion passes unanimously (Page 13).
5. **Move to Adjourn** by consent (Page 13).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Patrick Keliher, ME (AA)	Loren Lustig, PA (GA)
Sen. Brian Langley, ME (LA)	John Clark, DE, proxy for D. Saveikis (AA)
Steve Train, ME (GA)	Roy Miller, DE (GA)
Dennis Abbott, NH, proxy for Sen. Watters (LA)	Craig Pugh, DE, proxy for Rep. Carson (LA)
Doug Grout, NH (AA)	David Blazer, MD (AA)
Ritchie White, NH (GA)	Rachel Dean, MD (GA)
Bill Adler, MA (GA)	Ed O'Brien, MD, proxy for Del. Stein (LA)
Dan McKiernan, MA, proxy for D. Pierce (AA)	John Bull, VA (AA)
Eric Reid, RI, proxy for Sen. Sosnowski (LA)	Michelle Duval, NC, proxy for B. Davis (AA)
Jason McNamee, RI, proxy for J. Coit (AA)	David Bush, NC, proxy for Rep. Steinburg (LA)
David Borden, RI (GA)	Robert Boyles, SC (AA)
Rep. Melissa Ziobron, CT, proxy for Rep. Miner (LA)	Malcolm Rhodes, SC (GA)
David Simpson, CT (AA)	Pat Geer, GA, proxy for Rep. Nimmer (LA)
Lance Stewart, CT (GA)	Spud Woodward, GA (AA)
James Gilmore, NY (AA)	Sen. Ronnie Cromer, SC (LA)
Emerson Hasbrouck, NY (GA)	Jim Estes, FL, proxy for J. McCawley (AA)
Brandon Muffley, NJ, proxy for D. Chanda (AA)	Martin Gary, PRFC
Tom Fote, NJ (GA)	Wilson Laney, USFWS
Adam Nowalsky, NJ, proxy for Asm. Andrzejczak (LA)	Kelly Denit, NMFS
Andy Shiels, PA, proxy for J. Arway (AA)	

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

Staff

Bob Beal	Laura Leach
Toni Kerns	Tina Berger
Mark Robson	Mike Cahall
Pat Campfield	

The Business Session Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Stotesbury Grand Ballroom of the Bar Harbor Club, Harborside Hotel, Bar Harbor, Maine, October 26, 2016, and was called to order at 11:52 o'clock p.m. by Chairman Douglas E. Grout.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIRMAN DOUGLAS E. GROUT: Welcome to the commission's Business Session.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

We have an agenda before us. Are there any changes to the agenda? Seeing none; is there any objection to approving the agenda as is? Seeing none; the agenda is approved.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIRMAN GROUT: We also have in our meeting packages, the proceedings from our August, 2016 meeting.

Are there any edits or changes to that meeting summary? Seeing none; is there any objection to approving the proceedings from the August, 2016 meeting? Seeing none; I see those proceedings approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: This is also the time for public comment. Is there anybody that would like to make public comment to the business session at this point?

ELECTION OF THE COMMISSION CHAIR AND

VICE-CHAIR

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Seeing none; we'll move on to the next agenda item. I'll turn it over to Bob Beal for election of the commission Chair and Vice-Chair.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: The nominating committee communicated with a number of commissioners, and I will call on Roy

Miller to provide a report from the Nominating Committee.

MR. ROY W. MILLER: The Nominating Committee this year consisted of Robert Boyles, David Borden and myself. I think Bob, you're putting up a motion that I would like to offer on behalf of the Nominating Committee. **On behalf of the Nominating Committee, I move to nominate Doug Grout as the ASMFC Chair for 2017.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Thank you, Roy. Since this is coming from a committee, it does not need a second. **Is there any objection to the nomination from the Nominating Committee to have Doug serve a second term as our Chair? Seeing none; congratulations, you are reinstated unanimously.** Mr. Miller, do you have a report on the Vice-Chair?

MR. MILLER: It would be my pleasure to do that. **On behalf of the Nominating Committee, I move to nominate Jim Gilmore as the ASMFC Vice-Chair for 2017.**

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: **Any objections to having Jim Gilmore serve a second term as Vice-Chair? Seeing none; congratulations, Jim, unanimously reelected.**

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Thank you all very much. I appreciate your trust in the Grout-Gilmore team.

REVIEW AND CONSIDER THE APPROVAL OF

THE 2017 ASMFC ACTION PLAN

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Next item on the agenda is Review and Consider the Approval of the 2017 ASMFC Action Plan, and I am going to turn this over to senior staff to go through it with us.

MS. TONI KERNS: Goal 1 is the goal to rebuild, maintain and fairly allocate Atlantic coastal fisheries, which falls mainly under the ISFMP department, and I am going to go through the strategies by each of the species; and just highlight those strategies that are either just

started recently or that are new for 2017, and I'll answer any questions at the end. American eel, we will complete the 2017 stock assessment update, and consider management response to the assessment findings.

For lobster, we will develop and implement an addendum to improve catch and biological reporting in the lobster fishery. We'll monitor the trap reductions from the southern New England lobster fishery, and implementation of the addenda that relates to trap reductions; and determine the need and extent of any further management action within the region.

We'll review analysis by a Technical Committee on the Gulf of Maine stock, and determine the need and extent of any management actions for that region. Moving on to Atlantic herring, we'll review the performance of the GSI-30 spawning based monitoring pilot program and consider its use for future years. We'll consider management action to meet the goals and objectives of the Area 1A fishery based on tomorrow morning's discussion of management for within those three states for 1A.

In Atlantic menhaden, under the first task that's looking at ecological-based reference points, there was a request to hold a workshop to discuss and review potential ERPs that might be included in Draft Amendment 3. For this task there was not sufficient funding in the budget to hold this workshop, so if this is something that we would like to occur, we would need to figure out a way to find funding for the workshop.

Also for menhaden, we'll finalize and implement Amendment 3, to revisit quota allocation and address ERPs. We'll complete the 2017 stock assessment update, and consider management response to the assessment findings. Under striped bass, we'll initiate the benchmark 2018 stock assessment, and this will include fleet and sex-specific analyses as well as regional models.

Under Atlantic sturgeon, we will be finalizing the 2017 benchmark stock assessment, and we'll consider management response to this assessment if necessary; as well as transmit the assessment findings to NOAA Fisheries for their consideration in the five-year ESA status review for sturgeon.

Under coastal sharks, we will monitor and engage in the development of Amendment 5 for dusky shark management and review and consider the dusky benchmark assessment management, and consider the management response to these findings. We did just hear about the assessment results from Karol yesterday.

We weren't sure if we were going to have all that information available yet or not, so we can alter this ever so slightly. For horseshoe crab, we'll engage the biomedical community towards finding the solution regarding confidential data in order to enhance the stock assessment and scientific advice for management.

Under northern shrimp, we will complete the 2017 benchmark stock assessment and consider management response to those findings; as well as establish specifications for the 2017/2018 season, and consider industry test tows to collect biological data as we have in the past couple years if necessary, and as resources allow. So far, we do not have money in the budget for those test tows, but it comes from a different funding source than ACFCMA, so if we can find that funding, we will do our best to help out in northern shrimp. For shad and river herring, we'll complete the 2017 river herring stock assessment update, and initiate the development of the 2018 shad stock assessment update. We'll review the updated Sustainable Fishery Management Plans and Habitat Plans, as required by Amendment 3 and 2.

For Atlantic croaker, we will complete the 2017 benchmark assessment and consider a management response, if necessary. Under

cobia, we will finalize the development of the FMP, and work with the South Atlantic Management Council and NOAA to insure complementary regulations between the state and federal waters.

Under red drum, we'll consider management response to the 2016 assessment finding, and the Technical Committee's Working Group responses to the board's tasks. For spot, we will complete the 2017 benchmark stock assessment and consider a management response to those assessment findings.

Under summer flounder, we will continue to work with the Mid-Atlantic Council on the Comprehensive Summer Flounder Amendment, as well as develop and implement an addendum to consider management approach which includes regional options for the 2017 fishery and potentially beyond.

For scup, we will collaborate with the council on a next amendment if initiated by the Mid-Atlantic in 2017. For black sea bass, we will collaborate with the council to consider the management response to the 2016 benchmark stock assessment findings, modify the 2017 specifications, as needed, based on the results of that assessment and set 2018 specifications.

We'll also consider developing and implementing an addendum to look at recreational fishing measures for 2018 and beyond. Then we will also convene the Climate Change Working Group to develop white papers addressing fishing impacted by climate change; and we'll have a little more about that tomorrow at the Policy Board.

Then we will also consider approval of the Risk and Uncertainty Work Group Draft Policy for management and implementation. Then the last two are establish a Policy Board Working Group to consider options to more effectively review progress in achieving the commission's vision.

This is sort of a question that we posed to the AFC as well as Doug and Jim about whether or not we are most effectively using the survey that we do at the beginning of the year to commissioners, and if that is providing good feedback to you all on how well we're performing, as well as the review of the annual performance of the stocks in August.

What we decided is that we would pull together a working group to best get at answers to those questions, so that staff can help the commissioners have the most effective feedback. Then lastly, we'll review advisory panel guiding documents to include Chair term limits for advisory panels.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: That is a very busy and ambitious action plan, at least for Goal 1, considering those are just the new things we're going to be doing. Are there any questions for Toni on this particular section? Yes, Adam.

MR. ADAM NOWALSKY: Would it be possible, under summer flounder, Toni, to look at combining 1.1.85 and 1.1.86 regarding the current stock status update and development of the sex-specific stock assessment to acknowledge the fact that that model development has been completed, and based on the discussion at the NRCC, we hope to actually see that translate into a benchmark in the near future.

MS. KERNS: We can do that, Adam.

MR. WILLIAM A. ADLER: On Page 4, where we have finalize and implement Amendment 3 to revisit quota allocations, and also, the Atlantic menhaden, basically. Do you anticipate that we would be able to get an Amendment 3 through its process, which is usually like the PID, then back and forth, all within 2017?

MS. KERNS: That is what the timeline is set up for currently, Bill. It would be final action at the annual meeting next year.

MR. ADLER: Okay, it just seems like to do all of that on menhaden in one year and get it implemented is a little bit -- but okay.

MS. KERNS: Implementation to the states would be 2018, but final action by this commission would be end of the year 2017.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Dave Pierce.

DR. DAVID PIERCE: Not a question but I have a suggestion for a task related to 1.2, so at the appropriate time, I would like to make that suggestion.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: It sounds like this would be an appropriate time.

DR PIERCE: This is an important part, well it's all important, but this one strikes me as especially important. Section 1.2 reads; strengthen state and federal partnerships to improve comprehensive management of shared fisheries resources. Then task 1.2.3 goes on to say; work with the regional fishery management councils and NOAA Fisheries to improve alignment between state and federal fishery management programs.

I would like to add another task that is related to that one. It is very specific to something that has just happened, and it is very relevant to ASMFC business and how we interact with our federal counterparts. That would be National Standard Number 1. I would suggest that another task be, work with the regional fishery management councils and NOAA Fisheries to review changes in National Standard Number 1 Guidelines and their implications for alignment of state and federal fishery management programs.

One might assume that National Standard Number 1 review implications for us would be under Task 1.2.3; but not necessarily so. I would like to make that very specific. The final guidelines have just come out. No one, I don't think, has really taken a close look at them to determine if anything has changed. If there

aren't implications for how we align with federal fisheries management programs, I would like to be very specific with regard to that. I don't think it would involve much work or expense, but it would be a valuable task for ASMFC; again, working with our federal partners. I can make that in the form of a motion, if you would like, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: I thought you were.

DR. PIERCE: No, I didn't say, I move. Well, I would move to add another task to Section 1.2 and it would read; work with the regional fishery management councils and NOAA Fisheries, to review changes in National Standard Number 1 Guidelines and their implications for alignment of states and federal fishery management programs. That is my motion, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: We'll get it up there, and once we get it up there, I'll see if we have a second to that motion.

DR. PIERCE: National Standard Number 1 Guidelines.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Does that wording capture your motion, David?

DR. PIERCE: Yes, that does. I make the motion, in part, because it follows up somewhat nicely with the plenary session at the beginning of this meeting, in that we spoke about the progress we have made, where we are right now, and what we need to do in the future. What we didn't highlight at that time was state directors notably are a bit of a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, in that we are federal fisheries managers. We are members of the federal councils, and we are ruled, therefore, by the National Standard Guidelines.

But then we take off that hat, if we can. We come to ASMFC board meetings, and now we are state directors that are not ruled by those guidelines or by that federal fisheries law. Therefore, the changes that have been made in

the National Standard Number 1 Guidelines have implications for how we do our business, and how we interact with other states and also with the federal government. This will help us better understand if there any implications. There may be none, but I think there might be.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there a second to this motion? Jay McNamee. Further discussion on this motion? Okay, do you need a time to caucus? **Does anybody need time to caucus on this? Seeing no heads nodding, all those in favor of this motion, raise your hand, all opposed: abstentions, null votes; the motion carries unanimously.** Representative Ziobron, excuse me, I mispronounced your name.

MS. MELISSA ZIOBRON: That's okay.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Welcome and you had a question.

MS. ZIOBRON: Yes. My question, especially as someone that is very new to this board, is I understand now that in this plan, the bold faced tasks are new tasks, so thank you for that. But I'm curious on how you prioritize these tasks. Are they prioritized based on the number sequence of how they appear, or are there any priorities within this plan?

MS. KERNS: They are not prioritized in any specific order; they are just all the tasks that we plan on getting done in 2017.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any other questions for Toni? Brandon and then John.

MR. BRANDON MUFFLEY: Just one under Jonah crab, and maybe I don't know what the final outcome of tomorrow's meeting will be in regard to Jonah crab, but it is specific to Addendum II. There are discussions about also addressing bycatch definitions there. I don't know if that needs to be added. Again, we don't know. That hasn't been specifically decided yet by the Lobster Board, but I'm assuming that it will get approve to be included in this addendum.

MS. KERNS: We can add bycatch to the task if the board includes it in there, since it hadn't been officially included, we did not align it in.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: John McMurray.

MR. JOHN McMURRAY: Just going back to menhaden for a minute. You mentioned the ERP Workshop and the lack of funding. Is that kind of off the table now? Are you looking for funding? The second part of my question is, was that part of the timeline for menhaden now, or was that something new that was introduced fairly lately?

MS. KERNS: It was not something that was in the original timeline when we first started developing Amendment 3; it was something that had come up a couple of months ago, I guess. Since the issue has come up, there have been some folks, who originally had asked us to do the workshop, said, oh we don't need a workshop any more, and then there are other folks that still are interested in a workshop. I think that there is mixed view on whether a workshop is necessary or not. If the board definitely wants to have a workshop then, we would need that direction, and then we would need to figure out a way to fund it.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any other questions for Toni? Seeing none; we'll go to Goal 2, Pat Campfield.

MR. PATRICK A. CAMPFIELD: Goal 2 covers the stock assessment activities for 2017, as well as all of the fishery science surveys underlying fisheries research that feed into the stock assessments. Starting with Task 2.1.2, the benchmark assessments that are planned for completion for 2017 include croaker, sturgeon, shrimp and spot.

In addition for assessment updates, we will do river herring, menhaden, eel, bluefish, scup, black sea bass and summer flounder. Again, a lot of stock assessment activity in 2017. Task 2.1.3 covers the peer reviews that the

commission will organize, again for benchmarks of sturgeon, shrimp and spot and croaker.

Also, a newer activity under Task 2.1.4 is related to southern flounder. As you may recall, last year in the action plan, there was a request for the commission to support some early data gathering and assessment feasibility coordination among the South Atlantic states, to see if a regional stock assessment could be done for southern flounder; and those states have asked the commission to support a couple more workshops in 2017. Again, this is another activity that we currently don't have funding for, and we would have to reprioritize activities in order to support southern flounder assessment work.

Then 2.1.7 is a new activity to work with the assessment science committee to conduct a data best practices workshop, as well as expand our fishery-independent survey database to promote more rapid completion of stock assessments and their reports. It would build off a very productive data best practices workshop that SEDAR had a year or two ago. Again, it would sort of streamline how data come into assessments and how decisions are made about which surveys and other data sources to use in assessments.

Sometimes that can slow down the process. Task 2.1.10 pertains to the risk and uncertainty policy that a workgroup has been developing, and we'll hear more about this at the Policy Board tomorrow. We hope to bring that draft policy forward to the board for consideration and approval in 2017, and tied to that, hold a commissioner workshop on management risk and uncertainty; to work through some examples and how the policy may work out.

All of the activities under Strategy 2.2 are related to the ASMFC Research Priorities. The commission has maintained a long and growing list of research priorities; both by species, across species, and some specific sections on habitat research as well as social and economic research. We will update that again in 2017.

It has been a few years since we've updated it from recommendations from individual assessments. In order to expand the network that those research priorities are provided to, we have a task 2.2.2 to organize a workshop with the Sea Grant research directors from all of the different states, to get that information to the Sea Grant programs, hopefully to promote more coordination and funding support through Sea Grant.

Again, in the parenthetical, we can see that that is currently not in the budget, but something that we would have to prioritize. Task 2.2.3.3 is to monitor and participate in the Mid-Atlantic Council's redesign of their research set-aside program. As you all know that was sort of turned off a couple years ago, due to some issues, and so we will continue to work with the Mid-Atlantic Council and its members to hopefully bring that program back online.

Moving down to 2.2.6 that pertains to the northeast area monitoring and assessment program, the new task there is to develop and implement a strategy to figure out future funding needs; in order to address some shortfalls that have been experienced, certainly this year and are anticipated for 2017. For both the Mid-Atlantic/southern New England trawl survey, as well as the Maine/New Hampshire trawl survey under the EMAP Program.

Also, we intend to have a NEMAP summit, which would bring together the NEMAP Operations Committee, the NEMAP Board, as well as the various technical groups under NEMAP; to reassess the program structure and committee functions, and determine the path forward. NEMAP is now about a decade old, and so we want to evaluate our future direction.

Task 2.2.7 covers the southeast area monitoring and assessment program, SEAMAP. That has been around for almost three decades, I think, and so, not a whole lot of new activities, but we do have a new five-year SEAMAP management plan that we will begin to implement next year.

Moving down to Task 2.2.10, this covers all activities under MRIP. We plan to participate in the development of an MRIP strategic plan, as well as track the MRIP new effort survey review and time series calibration. It has been touched on earlier this week, but that will have implications both for upcoming stock assessments, as well as tracking quotas and considering changes to management.

We experienced delays in some of the wave data this past year, and so the commission will continue to highlight our concerns related to those delays and final annual estimates. Task 2.2.11 covers the fish aging research and activities of the commission. The plans are to hold an aging workshop on American eel next year. Some of that work has already begun with an exchange that our staff has organized.

Moving down to economics and social sciences under 2.2.13, we plan to begin developing and providing basic socioeconomic information within the FMPs, amendments and addenda, and also the Atlantic menhaden socioeconomic study is due to wrap up early in 2017, and so the Economics Committee will provide guidance and translation of those results to the Menhaden Board and PDT during development of Amendment 3.

Task 2.3.4 is a new activity related to citizen science initiatives. There have been a number of new initiatives taking place up and down the coast. The Atlantic Communications Committee that Tina and others coordinate had a nice session on this about a month ago. We're going to track some of the activities that the South Atlantic Council has already had underway, as well as explore opportunities for citizen science to feed information into commission assessment and other processes. I think that concludes all the new activities under Goal 2.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any questions for Pat on this goal?

MS. JASON McNAMEE: Yes, quick question, Pat. I might be off, too, so the recalibration of MRIP

is going to trigger a set of assessment something updates, I'm not sure what they're calling them. I think it is slated for 2018, but I have to imagine there is going to be a set of tasks that are going to begin in 2017. I just offer that comment, and maybe you've already thought about it. But it might be something that needs to be considered, to work into the 2017 task.

MR. CAMPFIELD: There are a number of venues where both commission staff as well as folks on the Technical Committees are plugging in. For example, the MRIP Transition Team, which Toni serves on, they've got a timeline laid out, and I think many of us have seen it; but it includes as that male-based-fishing-effort survey moves into its third year in 2017.

Recalibrating, I think that is the recalibration work is being led by the Science Centers but other folks are involved, in terms of reviewing that work. I think it will be peer reviewed by the Center for Independent Experts. Then as we have discussed with the councils and at the NRCC table, we're setting aside time on those assessment schedules to dedicate towards the new MRIP numbers and perhaps, some candidate recreational species that we should address first. I think that's also true for the South Atlantic species under SEDAR.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Brandon and then John.

MR. MUFFLEY: Just a question or a clarification under Task 2.1.2 regarding striped bass is going to have an update assessment? It is not under the action plan for striped bass, and they just did one this past year, and they're getting ready for the peer review; so I'm just wondering if that is on the agenda for next year.

MR. CAMPFIELD: That is an error, and a holdover from last year, so there will not be a striped bass update next year.

MR. JOHN CLARK: Pat, I have a question about 2.2.131, develop and provide basic socioeconomic information for inclusion in the

FMPs. What exactly are you planning to put in there? Are we going to be looking at actual economic impacts of management decisions, or is it just going to be more of a description of whose fishing and what might happen?

MR. CAMPFIELD: More of the latter. It would be data that's readily at hand, dockside values, number of vessels participating in a fishery. We have done some preliminary work with ACCSP to see what they have on hand, in terms of economic and social data, including demographics of a fishing fleet or participants. It would really be that just basic level of information. It wouldn't be an analysis, but more a description of current status of the fishery.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Follow up.

MR. CLARK: Just briefly. I mean just using it as an example, we've heard this week again about the impact that the striped bass size limits have had in the Chesapeake. This would seem to be something that could be quantified fairly simply. We have people that want to give us their information on that. Could data like that be incorporated into this task?

MR. CAMPFIELD: As the task states, it could be folded into addenda to FMP, so it may be dependent on the timing of the next one for striped bass. But it sounds like that is the nature of those data is readily on hand, and so when the timing is right, they could be plugged in for each species.

MR. CLARK: I just wanted to check on it.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any other questions for Pat? Loren.

MR. LOREN W. LUSTIG: Considering what you said toward the end of your report, sir, regarding citizen science. In my own personal background, I've had experience with such science efforts in freshwater environments, in terms of management and assessment; sometimes by advanced placement high school students, sometimes by interested retired

scientists, et cetera. Would this be the kind of thing that we would anticipate for the marine system also, under what you described?

MR. CAMPFIELD: The current examples are like fish tagging efforts. South Carolina DNR, for example, has been very active in having angler groups in that state tag fish working closely with the state biologist to do it in a certified, correct manner. We've learned in the last couple weeks that there is a similar program up here in Maine, to have anglers take pictures of striped bass, and sometimes those data-like lengths can be used to supplement a stock assessment; and there are other examples up and down the coast. That is the nature of some of the citizen science activities that we're aware of now. But I don't think there is any limitation on what would be considered. We're just trying to get a better sense of what is going on up and down the coast, and sometimes the data are useful, sometimes they aren't. But I don't think it would be limited to some of the groups that you talked about.

MR. LUGSTIG: Just to add that sir, if I could, I certainly appreciate the opportunities that exist and the fact that such efforts enhance credibility of this organization in the eyes of the general public.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: We are at a hard stop right now, where we do need to go to our luncheon at this point. Roy, I know you have a question. Okay. If anybody has another question for Pat, we can take it up after the dinner, or the lunch. We'll be coming back here. We'll finish up the Business Session and then go into menhaden. Just so you all know, the luncheon will be at the same facility that we were at last night for the dinner. We'll see you all down at the Hart Award dinner.

(Whereupon a recess was taken.)

CHAIRMAN GROUT: All right, if commissioners could take their seats, and we'll finish up the business session here. The last one in, please close the back door. Keep all the heat we have

in here, there's not much. Just to check, were there any more questions for Pat on Goal Number 2? Seeing none; we'll turn it over to Toni and Goal Number 3.

MS. KERNS: Goal 3 is to promote the compliance with the fishery management plans to insure sustainable use of the Atlantic coastal fisheries; and this is our Law Enforcement goal. The Law Enforcement Committee will be focusing on evaluating and reporting out on compliance issues associated with newly implemented plans.

Some of those will focus on lobster, tautog, Jonah crab and any other species that have newly implemented programs that come up next year. We'll continue to work with the Tautog Enforcement Committee to review and evaluate the effectiveness of a commercial tagging program and user acceptance if that program were to be adopted.

The committee will advance the recommendations of the American Lobster Enforcement Subcommittee to enhance cooperative funding and enforcement activities for commercial fisheries and nearshore and offshore waters, as well as advance any recommendations from the Aerial Enforcement Subcommittee that would support or enhance existing state and federal enforcement for commission-managed species. Are there any questions?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Questions for Toni on this goal. Seeing none; we'll move on to Goal Number 4.

MS. KERNS: For Goal 4, it is to protect and enhance fish habitat and ecosystem health through partnership and education, and this goal focuses on the commissions Habitat Committee as well as the Atlantic Coast Fish Habitat Partnership. The Partnership as well as the Habitat Committee met last week down in Portland, and the Habitat Committee had made two changes to their strategies to achieve their goal, so I will note those. If you want to see

them we can change the screen over and I can show you the words for those, if needed. But highlighting their activities will be cosponsoring an artificial reef symposium at AFS in 2017 in Tampa, and we'll support participation by the commission staff being at the committee and Artificial Reef Subcommittee members if we have funding available for them.

We will have our new habitat management series, which will be Living Shorelines and Submerged Aquatic Vegetation. Then under Task 4.4.1, The Committee has asked to add two new words to this task, so it is provide information or comment on Atlantic Coast projects, plans policies and permits; in accordance with ASMFC project review protocols, so they added the words plans and policies to that.

They also asked to have a new task added under 4.5, and that is to communicate with the assessment science committee and other relative entities to better link habitat and stock productivity. This is a continuation on at the last annual meeting Jake had presented to the Policy Board about finding ways to include habitat in stock assessments.

We continued that conversation at this last Habitat Committee, which I'll report out on a little bit more at Policy Board. But this is just to further that recommendation that the Policy Board had last year. Lastly, in addition to identifying gaps in coastal regulatory planning, recording climate change impacts, we'll make recommendations to increase resiliency in state activities. Any questions?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Questions on this goal for Toni? Okay, we will move on to Goal Number 5, and this is Tina.

MS. TINA BERGER: Goal 5 is on strengthen stakeholder and public support for the commission. New activities for 2017 are under Task 519, prepare brief, simplified stock assessment overviews for posting on YouTube and the Fishery Science 101 Page, and our focus

will be on black sea bass and Atlantic sturgeon. Task 5.10 will be explore use of story mapping and photo journaling to better communicate science and management activities.

On the website you can find links to a couple of examples in case you have questions exactly on what story mapping and journaling is. Task 5.1.11 is to solicit outside sources, develop short video clips on fisheries management and science activities. Moving on to 5.2.1, we will continue to publish our annual report and focus on the 2016 activities; 5.2.2 will be preparing stock assessment overviews with the focal species that will be undergoing a benchmark and assessment updates.

Those are black sea bass, croaker, red drum, spot, sturgeon, shrimp, menhaden and river herring. Under Task 5.2.5, we will develop a fisheries management 101 page, very similar to the fisheries science 101 page. Under Task 5.3.2, we will conduct an annual training workshop for science and ISFMP staff on the very issue we talked about earlier, which is story mapping and photo journaling to expand staff's skill set and enhance communication tools. Those are the new activities for outreach.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Questions for Tina on this particular goal and the actions under this goal? Okay, seeing none; we'll move to Goal Number 6, Bob Beal.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Goal 6 is largely unchanged from last year. It is the legislative agenda for the commission and the activities on Capitol Hill and interacting with our elected officials. Overall, as I said, it is unchanged. We're going to continue the work that Deke and I do on the Hill relating to the offices there, and making the commissions' priority known, as well as tracking a number of legislative activities that are going on in Capitol Hill.

We'll continue to try to get the commissioners as engaged as you are willing to be on Capitol Hill. Any time you are in town, and you want us to help you go to meetings, we're more than

happy to set those up and bring you to Capitol Hill. There are a couple items in here that are in bold, 6.1.4.

Apparently, there is an election going on in a couple weeks. I haven't heard much about it, but I guess we've got to deal with that. Basically, this just says we're going to react to the new administration and the 115th Congress once they're seated, and reach out to the new folks, especially the folks on Appropriation Committees and committees that deal with natural resources and ocean and fishery issues.

We'll do that. And Item 6.2.3 the bold language includes – well, there is a long list of the priority activities for ASMFC, and the funding areas and fisheries information networks have been added to that list. This is a reflection of the governance change for ACCSP. Since ACCSP is now a program within the commission, the FIN will become a priority funding area for the commission.

We'll continue to work with the Pacific States Commission, the Great Lakes Commission and the Gulf Commission to highlight the priorities that go around the whole country and FINS and SEAMAP and NEMAP and council and commission lines and a number of other things that are always on that joint list. We'll keep doing that work, and the last bit of Goal 6 is tracking legislation on Capitol Hill. That is a quick summary of what's included in Goal 6, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Questions for Bob on this goal, any of the actions? Seeing none; we'll turn to Goal 7, Laura Leach.

MS. LAURA C. LEACH: As you know, Goal 7 is, basically the administration of the commission. Most of it is ongoing. We do have some new tasks, and I'm not going to read all of them; but I'm going to hit some highlights. We'll be launching our inventory module and our accounting software, just so we continue to get more and more equipment with APAIS and that.

We want to make sure we have perfect track of that.

We'll be fully incorporating ACCSP in the commission under the new governance structure. We're going to appoint an investment committee for the commission's retirement program; that is a formality, basically that our retirement broker asked us to do this year. Basically, the committee will be Bob and I, because we do it anyway, but he wants to formalize it.

We will be revising the commission's retirement plan documents to ensure qualifications for participation in the plans are clearly and accurately defined. Again, that is an outgrowth of the APAIS and the temporary and seasonal employees that we hire. We will be developing a commission compensation plan with updated job classifications and salaries based on location, again, because of APAIS. Developing SOPS that detail HR policies for Arlington-based and state-based employees. We will be conducting a comprehensive review and revision of our employee handbook. We'll be documenting our standards for electronic records retention, and develop a site map of the commission's electronic filing system. We will communicate our HR support available to state-based employees, and make sure the state-based employees know all of the services that we provide for them.

We will continue to update, obviously, we do it all the time now, on an ongoing basis, the commissioner manual, and making sure that we inform you all when the update is substantial; but no less than twice a year. We will continue to work with an HR attorney to ensure that all HR practices are consistent with state laws. That's my update.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any questions on these action item goals for Laura? Okay, ACCSP, Mike.

MR. MIKE CAHALL: I'm all excited. I'm making my debut before the entire commission. The

FY17 Action Plan for ACCSP is essentially taken from, those of you who are members of the ACCSP Coordinating Council. This is essentially the plan that you just approved a few hours ago as part of the funding requests for ACCSP, and it is based on the ACCSP Strategic Plan.

As you may recall from our Transition Plan, we will be folding the Strategic Plans together. ACCSPs happen to renew at the same times that the ASMFCs does, and it is at that point we'll merge them together. This is a little bit different in the sense that it was created in a little bit of a different way, and I'm not going to go through every single one, since to many of you this will be new.

Goal 8.1 is essentially to pull together the best available data that we can. We'll continue to maintain our data warehouse feeds and work to populate the newer modules in our data warehouse. We also have just deployed a new query interface, and we're going to be monitoring that to make sure that it provides services that we expect it to, and to continue to make adjustments to it, as needed, based on a feedback that we get from our end users.

We'll keep working with our partners. In 8.2 we will work with our partners to improve the data collection programs, either ones that are managed by ACCSP or potentially to provide technical assistance to folks who are working on their own systems. We'll be working on upgrades to SAFIS as I articulated to the council a little while ago.

We'll continue to manage the APAIS and the other data related tools. We built a suite of tools to help support APAIS as part of the work that we've been doing. We're going to be working on the SAFIS redevelopment process, and many of those of you who are fisheries managers, your staff people will be directly working with us.

The lobster system that we built a couple of years ago for the Lobster Technical Committee will continue to be operated. We are gradually

enhancing that as we get lessons learned about how to best utilize it. Every year we get together and talk about how did it work well and what does it need, and where didn't things work as well as they could?

That system will continue to be managed. We'll keep working on the tablet, and now soon I hope, phone-based systems of SAFIS. We've had a lot of demand for folks to build phone-based applications. The tricky bit is we're asking for a lot of data, and so we have to find some way to stuff all that into a phone. In 8.3, we're going to continue to work to look for additional funds. ACCSP has the opportunity to pursue funding through the FIS and other ways. We'll continue to track the performance of our funded projects, and we'll be making some adjustments to the funding decision process.

For those of you who aren't familiar, ACCSP has an independent process that determines the allocation of the funds that were given to it through both ACFCMA and through the FIN line at the NMFS budget, and we'll continue to make revisions on our processes as needed; based on input that we get from our constituents.

We'll continue to maintain executive leadership and collaborative involvement with our partners through our various committees, which means that we'll continue to have our Coordinating Council meet at the regular commission meeting weeks. This will help keep folks informed, and keep folks plugged into the processes that we're working on.

Our technical and policy level committees, and there are several, will continue to meet regularly and, in fact, will probably be a little bit busier next year, because we're looking at some adjustments to our standards as well as a new systems development. Then 8.5 monitor and improve the usefulness of our products.

We do have metrics that we manage. We look at how well our systems perform, how many times they are being used, where we're cited in

publications and those kinds of things, so that we can tell whether our data are being used, and of course, we request feedback from our end users all the time. Our systems actually have methods to provide comments or questions directly to us.

We'll continue to work hard to maintain clear lines of communications between staff and our constituents, and we'll also make sure that we have clear feedback loops in place; so that we're aware of issues as they happen, or problems and conundrums that folks run into, especially as the role of ACCSP continues to expand.

In 8.6 we'll work with our program partners to provide materials and outreach to help them in looking out for funding. Our processes that we already have for outreach, so many of you have been receiving our annual reports, our fisheries files, and our various different publications. Those are going to continue.

We are going to be looking towards merging some of those in with existing commission documents. Most likely, the annual report will be folded into the commission's report and that kind of thing. But those certainly will continue to be published. We'll also participate in fisheries-related events where they're appropriate, and send our staff or others to them to help represent the program.

We'll also work – we, a lot of times, have found that sometimes the best plan is to just show up, so we keep track of who is doing what and where we might be able to at least listen in on processes, so sometimes, we may just go to a conference or sit by the side and listen or participate, so we continue to keep track of all that stuff. We, also in 8.7, directly participate in the nationwide systems that are part of Magnuson-Stevens. Those right now are FIS and MRIP primarily. I sit on one of the governing boards of FIS, and also MRIP. We're going to be transitioning that MRIP work most likely to Geoff. Then we'll continue to provide data for the Atlantic coast to the fisheries

information system, and also, therefore, to fisheries of the U.S. annually, as we have been in prior years. That covers us.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any questions for Mike on the goals of ACCSP and the action plan? Seeing none; **we have a motion from the Administrative Oversight Committee to approve the 2017 Action Plan as presented. It doesn't need a second, but I would like to add one little phrase to it; as amended today, because of the amendment we did.**

Is there any objection to that friendly amendment being added on to the motion? **Seeing none; is there any objection to approving the motion as amended? Seeing no objection, the motion passes unanimously.** Thank you very much, staff for putting this together. I appreciate that.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Is there any other business to come before the Business Session today? Seeing none; I see this meeting adjourned.

(Whereupon the meeting adjourned at 2:28 o'clock p.m. on October 26, 2016.)