

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE
ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
ISFMP POLICY BOARD**

**The Westin Alexandria
Alexandria, Virginia
May 4, 2016**

Approved August 2016

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1. **Approval of Agenda by Consent** (Page 1).
2. **Approval of Proceedings of February 2016 by Consent** (Page 1).
3. **Move for the ISFMP Policy Board to direct the South Atlantic Board to develop the alternatives for a fishery management plan for joint, complementary, and exclusive jurisdiction for the Commission** (Page 8). Motion by Robert Boyles; second by Jim Gilmore. Motion amended.
4. **Motion to amend: Move for the South Atlantic Board to bring a recommendation to the Commission through the ISFMP Policy Board (Page 13)** Motion by Spud Woodward; second by Tom Fote. Motion carried (Page 15).
5. **Main motion as amended: Move the ISFMP Policy Board direct the South Atlantic Board to develop the alternatives for a fishery management plan for joint, complementary, and exclusive jurisdiction for the Commission. The South Atlantic Board will bring a recommendation to the Commission through the ISFMP Policy Board.** Motion carried (Page 15).
6. **Move to approve the assessment schedule as modified today** (Page 20). Motion by Roy Miller; second by Emerson Hasbrouck. Motion carried by consensus (Page 20).
7. **Motion on behalf of the American Lobster Board (Page 24): Move the Commission to send a letter to the President of the United States of America regarding the following: The preference of the Commission would be for the current New England Council Coral Management Process to continue, without presidential use of the Antiquities Act, to protect deep sea corals. Should the President/CEQ decide to designate a New England deep water monument prior to the end of his presidency, the Commission requests that any area so designated, be limited to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected; as required by the Antiquities Act.**

Further, the area be limited to depths greater than approximately 900 meters, and encompass any and all of the regions seaward of this line out to the outer limit of the EEZ. That only bottom tending fishing effort be prohibited in the area, and that all other mid water/surface fishing methods, recreational and commercial be allowed to continue to use the area. That the public and effected user groups be allowed to review and comment on any specific proposal prior to its implementation. Motion carried (Page 26).
8. **Motion to adjourn** by Consent (Page 26).

ATTENDANCE

Board Members

Patrick Keliher, ME (AA)	Tom Moore, PA, proxy for Rep. Vereb (LA)
Terry Stockwell, ME, Administrative proxy	David Saveikis, DE (AA)
Sen. Brian Langley, ME (LA)	John Clark, DE, Administrative proxy
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)	Bill Goldsborough, MD (GA)
Rep. Sarah Peake, MA (LA)	Ed O'Brien, MD, proxy for Del. Stein (LA)
Bill Adler, MA (GA)	John Bull, VA (AA)
Dan McKiernan, MA, proxy for D. Pierce (AA)	Rob O'Reilly, VA, Administrative proxy
Eric Reid, RI, proxy for Sen. Sosnowski (LA)	Rep. Bob Steinburg, NC (LA)
Jason McNamee, RI, proxy for J. Coit (AA)	Doug Brady, NC (GA)
David Borden, RI (GA)	Chris Batsavage, NC, proxy for B. Davis (AA)
David Simpson, CT (AA)	Mel Bell, SC, proxy for M. Rhodes (GA)
Mike Falk, NY, proxy for Sen. Boyle (LA)	Robert Boyles, SC (AA)
Jim Gilmore, NY (AA)	Pat Geer, GA, proxy for Rep. Nimmer (LA)
Emerson Hasbrouck, NY (GA)	Nancy Addison, GA (GA)
Brandon Muffley, NJ, proxy for D. Chanda (AA)	Spud Woodward, GA (AA)
Tom Fote, NJ (GA)	Jim Estes, FL, proxy for J. McCawley (AA)
Adam Nowalsky, NJ, proxy for Asm. Andrzejczak (LA)	Martin Gary, PRFC
Andy Shiels, PA, proxy for J. Arway (AA)	Mike Millard, USFWS
Loren Lustig, PA (GA)	Kelly Denit, NMFS

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

Ex-Officio Members

Staff

Bob Beal	Ashton Harp
Toni Kerns	

Guests

Chuck Lynch, NOAA	Bob Ballou, RI DEM
Wilson Laney, USFWS	Brian Hooker, BOEM
Roy Crabtree, NMFS	Bob Vanasse, Saving Seafood
Jack Travelstead, CCA	Jonathan French, Falls Church, VA
Mike Armstrong, MA DMF	Gregg Waugh, SAFMC
Nichola Meserve, MA DMR	Arnold Leo, E. Hampton, NY
Jeff Deem, VMRC	

The ISFMP Policy Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Edison Ballroom of the Westin Hotel, Alexandria, Virginia, May 4, 2016, and was called to order at 11:02 o'clock a.m. by Chairman Douglas E. Grout.

CALL TO ORDER

CHAIRMAN DOUGLAS E. GROUT: Good morning, we would like to convene the policy board here. We have a lot to do on our agenda. Welcome to the policy board. We have quite a number of items on the agenda, but before we start what I would appreciate; we had a couple of members of our ASMFC family pass away this past month.

The first one is former commissioner from Maine, Pat White, and former Heart award. He was the first governor's appointee to ever receive the Heart award. He passed away suddenly while in Florida. Also, our long time meeting minute's recorder and stenographer, Joe Graham, passed away this month. I would like to take just a minute to remember these fine young men; fine men. Yes, they were young, young at heart. Just take a moment of silence here.

Okay thank you very much, we will miss them both.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIRMAN GROUT: I have an agenda here. There is one item under other business that I have as a change, and that is there is a request from the Lobster Board for a letter to be written, regarding a position on monuments. We'll take that up under other business. Are there other?

SENATOR BRIAN LANGLEY: Brian Langley from Maine; I wish you would put me on under other business, if you would.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: So done, Brian; thank you. Any other changes to the agenda, seeing none;

is there any objection to approving the agenda as modified? I see that as a unanimous consent.

APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Also we have in our binders, under meeting materials, a proceeding from our February Policy Board meeting.

Are there any changes or modifications to those meeting minutes? Seeing none; is there any objection to approving the minutes as written? The minutes are approved by consent.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Under public comment I have one person, Brian Hooker from BOEM; if you would like to come up to the public microphone there, Brian.

MR. BRIAN HOOKER: I just wanted to take this opportunity to just quickly update the board on activities in BOEMs renewable energy in the Atlantic, Offshore Renewable Energy Program in the Atlantic, and also simultaneously offer if at any future meetings you would like a more full presentation, I am available to do that as well. But just quickly I wanted to give you an update on where we are, kind of working from the north, south. The two lease areas just west of Nantucket Shoals are still in their site assessment phase. They are beginning site characterization surveys. In the vicinity of Cox Ledge, we're still in the early phase. They will likely be deploying a meteorological buoy this summer. Also near that same area, there is the state waters Block Island Wind Facility Project, and the cable to shore, which BOEM has some jurisdiction over, is beginning work this summer. They've already started some of the state waters work, with the transmission cable between Block Island and Scarborough Beach.

Also moving further to the west and New York Byte, we have recently issued area identification for an area in offshore New York, for lease. We hope by the end of this month,

early June, we'll have an environmental assessment that will be available for 30 day public comment. The proposed sale notice will be released simultaneously; which has a public comment period on that as well.

We definitely welcome comments, not only on the proposed sale notice, but on the environmental assessment for site characterization and site assessment activities, and any alternatives that may be appropriate for that environmental assessment. Again that will be released probably by the end of this month, early June.

Moving further down into the Mid-Atlantic Bay, we did have a successful lease sale offshore New Jersey recently. There are two lease areas. There will be an intergovernmental task force meeting on May 19, where I believe we'll have the developers give kind of an idea, present where they are and what their thinking is for what their schedules will be for any activities offshore New Jersey.

Moving on to Virginia, we have issued a research activity plan for one demonstration project involving two turbines, offshore Virginia; that is in partnership with the Virginia Department of Mines, Minerals and Energy, and Dominion Power. Then I accidentally skipped over Maryland. Offshore Maryland we do have an active lease site, where they hope to build a meteorological tower offshore Maryland this summer.

They completed their site assessment site characterization activities, mostly last summer; but they will be continuing just a few additional surveys this summer offshore Maryland, to look at the potential cable route for the commercial facility. Moving down to the South Atlantic Bay, we have decided to defer.

Offshore North Carolina we have three wind energy areas defined. We are deferring the two lease areas south of Cape Hatteras until a further sale notice, but the sites north of

Oregon Inlet, and south of the Virginia, North Carolina border, known as the Kitty Hawk Lease Area, is moving forward with a proposed sale notice. That will likely occur in early 2017.

As I said, the two wind energy areas south of Cape Hatteras are being now evaluated as a part of the areas that are being evaluated as far as the South Carolina area. There is a Grand Strand area, which we are still analyzing that we published in the Federal Register on November 25th, this past year.

Offshore Georgia, they are still in the planning phases for a potential meteorological tower. That particular lease does not have the ability to grow into a commercial scale facility; it is just a site assessment type of lease. That is really it. I don't want to take any more of the Policy Board's time, but I just wanted to take this opportunity to give you an update of where we are, and invite you to e-mail me or check out our website if you would like further information on these areas. Again, I am always open to coming to present more fully to this board at a future meeting.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Dennis Abbott.

MR. DENNIS ABBOTT: I would like to speak as personal privilege to the commission members here today. Last night we had an awards ceremony. During the awards ceremony I was very embarrassed by the actions of the commission, not just the folks in this room, and probably not most of the folks in this room.

But I'm an old man, and I'm the oldest guy in this room, I know. I grew up knowing that respect was a very important thing. When I go to ceremonies, when the National Anthem is played, I stand at attention and listen. When somebody is being recognized for an award, I listen. I thought that last night showed a lack of common courtesy to the people who were being recognized.

I apologize to the Awards Committee, particularly to Spud Woodward, who under what I consider difficult circumstances; I had trouble hearing him. I apologize to our Chairman, and I apologize to our Executive Director. Mostly I apologize for the staff members, who work hard to put this all together.

I think we're better than we showed last night. I am not just addressing the people in this room, because there are other folks who are meeting in this building too, part of our group, who I thought did not exercise the proper common courtesy, and did not comport themselves in a manner that is reflective of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

I'm sorry if I offend anybody, but anyway I just felt after I left last night's ceremonies, I could not help but keep thinking about what I thought was our lack of comportment. It would be my suggestion that we go back to the old days, where there is no food, no drinks; until we do our award ceremony. I'm sorry, but I felt it was necessary for me to say this. Thank you very much.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Thank you, Dennis, I will move on now to our next agenda item, and that is a report from me of the Executive Committee work yesterday. We received a report from our Chair of the AOC regarding the FY17 budget. We seem to be in fairly good standings here with our budget.

As a result the decision was made to keep our dues at level funding from last year. I'll make a note that this is the second year in a row; that through the fine work of Laura Leach, and our administrative staff that we've been able to hold our dues to level funding, which has been very helpful to many of our states that are facing budget shortfalls.

We also discussed some potential funding opportunities via some Saltonstall-Kennedy funds we'll be putting forward, and developed a motion to fund some shortfalls in fisheries independent survey funding work with that. That would include the Maine/New Hampshire Inshore Trawl Survey, the Horseshoe Crab Survey, SEAMAP, and then also some striped bass research that is being done in the Chesapeake Bay and Delaware Bay area. We also are going to have staff develop a white paper on Plan Development Team membership by commissioners. There has been some concern expressed by some commissioners about having commissioners both on the PDT and serving on the commission at board levels. But we're going to come up with a variety of options. One of the major things brought up is potentially having the Chair and Vice-Chair of a board sit on the PDT as nonvoting members.

We also began discussion on revisions to the Conservation Equivalency document, but had to move those things on to our August meeting, because we didn't have enough time to complete the review of the document that has been put together by staff, and reviewed by the Management and Science Committee, and the ASC. We'll bring that up in August.

Finally, we discussed ACCSP governance and we'll be bringing a motion forward at the full business session immediately after this. Those are the things we talked about at the Executive Committee. Are there any questions? Seeing none; we'll move on, one question oh yes, two questions, Dave Borden.

MR. DAVID V. BORDEN: Ritchie was trying to get your attention. This is just a question; this is on the issue of the funding priorities for those projects that were listed; horseshoe crabs and so forth. It is my understanding since the meeting that there may be an opportunity, and maybe Bob Beal can comment on this, to fund some of those activities through a different source; which would free up some of that money to be used for some of the other

projects that were submitted. I just want to ask Bob if you could confirm that or just state what your understanding is.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ROBERT E. BEAL: Yes there have been a number of discussions following the Executive Committee yesterday morning, and there is an indication that the Maine/New Hampshire portion of the NEMAP survey may have an alternate funding source, and that was listed as one of the priorities that came out of the Executive Committee meeting.

If that source does in fact come through, and we can verify that that money is available, then that will free up some of the funding to move farther down that list and work on some other priorities. I think since the Executive Committee did not prioritize all the other projects on there, if there is additional funding available, now that the NEMAP project has been funded elsewhere.

We'll have to go back to the Executive Committee and seek guidance from them on which are the next priorities down that list that we should use the available money for. I guess all of this goes with the caveat that the S-K funding is not guaranteed in any year anyway. There are a number of variables here, but we'll keep working with the Executive Committee to try to work through those.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: I also will mention that we also on this particular item, we also tasked staff with developing a white paper. Where we would have some criteria that would evaluate the different funding proposals each year, some kind of ranking system that would help us decide which of the many research needs that we have.

Both fisheries dependent and fisheries independent could be funded, if we continue to have access to some of these Saltonstall-Kennedy funds. Are there any other questions?

REQUEST BY SAFMC TO CONSIDER COBIA AS AN INTERSTATE FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SPECIES

CHAIRMAN GROUT: We'll now move on to Item Number 5. We've had a request from the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council to consider cobia as an interstate fisheries management species. Gregg Waugh, who is the Executive Director of the Council, is here to give a little overview on the request.

MR. GREGG WAUGH: Good morning. I recognize that your time is short, so I'll be as brief as I can be. I'll be available here the rest of today and tomorrow, if anybody wants to talk one-on-one with some of the more details. There have been a few corrections since the version that you received, and I'll point those out as we go through.

I outline a brief history here. I am not going to go through all the details, but the important point is when we started this original management of cobia in 1983, there was one stock from Texas through North Carolina. The MSY was approximately a million pounds, and the size limit we established was a 33 inch fork length.

We made some adjustments over time. In 1990, the MSY was specified as 1 million pounds, the average catch at that time from 1981 through '89 was almost 2 million pounds, and so we implemented a two-person per day bag limit. We made some additional adjustments in Amendment 8, in '96, the range was extended for the coastal migratory pelagics, including cobia, up through the Mid-Atlantic's area; and the MSY was revised to 2.2 million pounds.

We made some SPR adjustments in '98. The real change came about in 2011 in Amendment 18. This is when we had to address the new changes from the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This put in recreational quotas, which was needless to say quite an adjustment. But we had had

previous to this a couple of assessments done by the National Marine Fisheries Service that looked at two migratory groups, treating the Gulf as one group, and the Atlantic as one.

There was stock exchanged, but there were sufficient differences that we could manage those as two migratory groups. We set two migratory groups from Texas through the Florida west coast, and then the Florida east coast through North Carolina. The allocation was 92 percent recreational, 8 percent commercial. That was based on catches at that time; looking at the catches from 2000 to 2008 for historical time period, and then 2006 through 2008 for more recent.

But at that time the assessments were saying we didn't know what MSY was, so we agreed to use the overfishing limit or OFL. We used the annual catch limit. If that was exceeded that would determine overfishing. I'm not going to go into these numbers here, but we set the Atlantic migratory group.

We didn't have a current stock assessment. The advice from the Southeast Fishery Science Center for our SSC was to use landings data to come up with an ABC, and then the council would use that to specify an annual catch limit. We did that looking at the average landings from 2000 to 2009, plus 1.5 times the standard deviations.

That gave us an annual catch limit. We put in accountability measures that are also required. That is something that happens if your ACL is exceeded, and on the commercial side we tracked the landings, closed the fishery. If there is an overage there would be a payback if the stock is overfished, and the total catches exceed the total ACL.

The one that is more important and operative right now is the recreational accountability measure. If the recreational and total annual catch limits are exceeded, then the Regional Administrator is required to shorten the

following season. When we put that in place, you would compare the catch in one year to the previous year using the previous year's catch. One year you would add two, and average them, add three and then a moving average. Unless an adjustment was made to the annual catch limit, and I'll talk about that in a moment; but we didn't change the bag limit.

We tried to encourage the public to consider a reduction down to one, but there just wasn't any support at that time. We got an age-based stock assessment in 2013, with data through 2011. They looked at the genetics that showed a mixing zone along the Florida east coast up into Georgia, parts of South Carolina.

The tagging data showed more a mixing zone on the Florida east coast, and so the assessment was conducted using the Georgia/Florida line as a border. South of that into the Gulf was the Gulf stock, Georgia through New York was the Atlantic stock. It came back not overfished, not overfishing; but the biomass trends were down.

The MSY for this stock was estimated at 808,000 pounds, and we got our overfishing limit and our allowable biological catch in millions of pounds. The ABC is a maximum that the council can set. Indeed that is what the council did set as our annual catch limit. We took those results and implemented those in 2014.

The regulations became effective in 2015. That set two new migratory groups, the Gulf and the Florida east coast, and then Georgia northwards up through New York. We kept the 92 percent recreational, 8 percent commercial. The ACL, the annual catch limit in 2015, was 690,000 pounds, and it was 670,000 pounds in 2016 onwards.

We did not change the accountability measure, and so this is shown towards the bottom in the red. If you change the accountability measure, which we did in 2015, then in 2016 you look at last year's landings. That is why we are taking

action now. We didn't change the management measures at that time.

The recreational annual catch limit decreased from about 1.4 million pounds for the area, from the Florida Keys through New York, down to 630,000 pounds in 2015 for the area, Georgia through New York. The recreational catch in that area in 2015 was 1.54 million pounds, 145 percent over the recreational ACL. It is over the total ACL. It is over the overfishing limit of 760,000 pounds, and it is over the MSY.

We were overfishing last year. That presents a problem, and that's why the accountability measure is triggered, and that requires that the 2016 season be shortened to ensure that the 2016 annual catch limit is not exceeded. To do that when you calculate the length of the season; that is done using the ACT or the annual catch target and that is 500,000 pounds.

The Regional Office worked with the states to see what adjustments they could make to regulations for this year, to factor in what the season would be. That season is projected to close now on June 20th. The council has already begun working on a framework to change that accountability measure, so we don't have the same type of requirement for next year.

However, it is critical that catches remain in 2016 below the annual catch limit. Otherwise, we're going to continue to have overfishing and we're going to have to be more restrictive in what management measures are put in place in this framework action. We are asking ASMFC if you're interested in developing a joint or complementary management plan for state waters. The bulk of the harvest comes from state waters, so we need to have cooperation within state waters. Just briefly on the timing. We are conducting a public question and answer session on May 9th, in Kitty Hawk.

The council will be looking at management options at our June meeting. We can't

implement state-by-state quotas through the framework, but we are looking at adjustments to the fishing year; perhaps having a period of time when there is no retention allowed, perhaps in the month of May to complement what the state of South Carolina has done in the southern portion of their state. That to try and spread that harvest out so that there is ACL remaining when the fishery gets up to northern North Carolina and Virginia waters.

We're conducting public hearings in early August. The Mid-Atlantic will be considering this at their August 8 through 11 meeting. Then our council will review this in September, and approve for formal review. We're on a very tight schedule, and that is necessary in order to get these changes in place prior to next year. I'll leave it there, and I would be glad to answer any questions.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any questions from the board for Gregg on this issue?

MR. BORDEN: A quick question, Gregg, if we were to partner with you on some kind of joint plan, what would you envision as far as the staff responsibilities? Would the South Atlantic Council being doing most of the staff work on that type of activity?

MR. WAUGH: I think that depends on what approach you want to take, and how detailed you want to get. If you're talking about bag limits, trip limits, size limits that could extend the season so that there wouldn't be a closure. I think that is some analysis that we could do in conjunction with the Regional Office. If you want to go so far as to look at state-by-state allocation of that ACL, then I think that is perhaps something that would be better done through ASMFC, involving your staff. You all have more experience in doing state-by-state allocations.

MR. ROBERT H. BOYLES, JR.: Gregg, can you tell the board approximately percentages of the catch that comes from state waters?

MR. WAUGH: I think last year was 82 percent. It varies by year, and it also varies by state. In Georgia and South Carolina, the bulk of the harvest is now coming from federal waters. That has been a recent shift due to the status of that inshore population in South Carolina. It varies by year. But certainly on average, the bulk of the harvest is coming from state waters.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Follow up. Robert.

MR. BOYLES: Given that information, I'm prepared to make a motion when you're ready for it.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay any other, keep that in mind, I have Tom Fote.

MR. THOMAS P. FOTE: When I hear that 82 percent of the harvest comes in state waters. When we had that in the north on species like that; weakfish and other species, it basically was when a majority of the catch came in federal waters the feds would basically handle the plan. When a majority landed in the state waters, it would be handled by the states.

After watching what happened in red snapper, I don't really want to get involved with what is going on down south, and would really appreciate, maybe what the feds should consider. Since the majority is landed in state waters, turning the whole management over to the South Atlantic Board. I think that would be a better way of operating it.

MR. W. DOUGLAS BRADY: Gregg, I'm just trying to get my head around, you had a number up there, 1 million and about 500,000 pounds when it was from the Keys to New York; as far as the catch allowance. Then it changed in 2015 from Georgia line to New York, and that was around 650,000. I'm just curious, what was the catch between the Keys and the Florida line? What did those numbers come out to be?

MR. WAUGH: In terms of what's been landed, I want to think it is on the order of 400,000 pounds; okay, 330,000 pounds.

MR. BRADY: You're not going to revisit this, but I'm trying to get my arms around it to go back to the people of North Carolina. When it was the Keys to New York, again it was about a million and a half. If that range or that designation had not changed, then you would have been around a million pounds in that range for the catch; 380 plus, wait a minute or is it a million and a half that was caught? What was the total catch between the Keys and New York in 2015?

MR. WAUGH: I don't have that figure, because we're managing them now as two separate stocks. I could certainly get that for you. If approximately 330,000 pounds were harvested on the Florida east coast, then you add that to the 1.54 million pounds, so you're getting up around 1.8. There is a mixing zone here, and there is a lot of concern about where that boundary was set.

Certainly that is something that could be looked at in the future. But a point to keep in mind that if you move that boundary from the Florida/Georgia lines south, the annual catch limit will go up. But also then those catches on the northeast Florida coast will count towards that annual catch limit. There may not be any net gain.

MR. ABBOTT: I know it is early in this process, but has any consideration been given to its cost?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: The short answer is no. We did not budget for any cobia activities in this year's action plan. The longer answer is there is considerable uncertainty on what it would cost, because we don't know exactly what the states want us to do. Is it to initiate a full FMP and establish a tech committee and advisory panel?

Establish all those groups and have all those groups meet, or is it something very simple; that just it's a new FMP but very basic elements, which would require a lot less staff work. The cost depends on what the Policy Board decides they want to and the South Atlantic Board decides they want to do. I guess the other side of this is we do have some contingency funds in the budget. If that is the will of this group that we use some of those funds for cobia management, then that is appropriate as well.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Follow up, Dennis?

MR. ABBOTT: I pretty much thought that would be your answer and I also thought that you would probably look at using the contingency funds, which I was instrumental in getting put in the budget. But nothing for sure ends up ever being as simple and as cheap as we may think. I think we would probably end up; it would be a full blown activity. I'm not opposed to it, but I just think that we are aware of that.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Just a follow up, if I may. The other side of this is staff workload, not just dollars. The ISFMP group is pretty busy right now, and we are going through a transition with one of the coordinators. One option may be to hire someone from outside the commission on a contract to help out with this project, or something along those lines. If that is the will of this board that they want to move forward with cobia, and don't want to slide other priority items to a later date. Just that is another thing to keep in mind.

MR. DAVID G. SIMPSON: I am looking ahead on the agenda to Item 8 and Climate Change. Ordinarily I wouldn't worry too much about what the South Atlantic Board wants to do with a species that stays neatly within your confines. But when I hear mention of partnering with the commission, because they have more experience with state-by-state quotas, I get very nervous.

The fish are already up into New York. Apparently they have regulations on them. We're the next one up. We are seeing the craziest things showing up in Connecticut. About every two months I contact Spud and send him pictures and say, what is this? We just caught half a dozen of them.

I am very reluctant to go down that path at this point. If there is federal management for it, I'm happy to implement whatever the measures are to complement the federal management, but I'm very reluctant to go down the path of creating another problem for us specifically and the commission generally.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Robert, are you ready for your motion?

MR. BOYLES: Yes I am, Mr. Chairman. I would make the motion that the Policy Board directs the South Atlantic Board to develop alternatives for a fishery management plan for cobia, which would include alternatives for joint management, complementary management, and exclusive jurisdiction for the commission.

PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Let's get the motion up on the board, and then we'll see if we get a second; seconded by Jim. We'll get it up there and then once we've got it up there my intent is to see if we have public comment on this. Those who want to comment from the public, raise their hand, please. Two, okay. If you could come to the public microphone, and if you could try and keep your comments directed specifically at that motion up there on the board, whether you're in favor of it and why. Try to keep the comments down to about three minutes here.

MR. JONATHAN FRENCH: My name is Jonathan French; I have been part of an informal collaborative of approximately 50 to 60 stakeholders in Virginia and North Carolina that

are heavily involved in the cobia fishery. Just 15 of those folks reported that they're looking at a potential loss of \$500,000.00 in gross revenue.

Those are not just charter fishermen, those are tackle shops, people who construct site fishing towers, et cetera. I am speaking today to oppose this motion until South Atlantic corrects some other issues. Mr. Waugh did not mention one, if you go back in the slides a couple of slides, Virginia wasn't initially factored in the ACL calculation, yet Virginia is one of the largest fisheries for cobia in the Atlantic region.

Two, I don't believe that east Florida is managed now by South Atlantic, it is part of the Gulf Coast, so the issue of the ACL being abnormally small and not reflecting the catch; that has not been addressed. Perhaps most frustratingly, the comment was made about if Florida was added back in that perhaps that would be a net zero gain, because the Florida fish being caught would no longer count.

My problem is that not only was Florida carved out of the zone, but we saw such a substantial increase in the number of fish caught in Virginia and North Carolina, Virginia preposterous numbers, and those increased catches were reflected on science that essentially says 40,000 additional targeted trips were focused on cobia in one year.

There is no other corresponding data that backs up that claim. Just to imagine for those of you who are familiar with the Chesapeake Bay and Northern North Carolina fishery, that is 400 additional boats per day over 100 day period. As a cobia fisherman, if there were 400 additional boats per day in the limited areas in the bay that carry fish regularly; I probably wouldn't fish for them anymore, because it would be a traffic jam.

This huge increase in the number of catch in Virginia, and North Carolina, again per NOAAs data, when you look at Virginia's citation data as an example; Virginia's catch data went up or

quadrupled according to NOAAs numbers, but the citations only went up 13 percent. Even though NOAAs argument was that the average size fish went up five pounds, and is coming up on what is very close to citation levels for the average fish.

Finally, some of the recommendations that were made in terms of extending the season, the only one that would give a full season for the Atlantic states required North Carolina and Virginia to not only decrease to one fish per person per day, but to go to one fish per boat per day at a 45 inch fork length, which is essentially a citation sized fish. I found that particularly troubling, given that NOAAs original justification arguing that the biomass was decreasing, the breeding stock was decreasing; showed that larger female fish were on the decline.

Their solution is to only target large, female fish. That doesn't make a whole heck of a lot of sense. Until those issues are addressed, having a discussion as to whether or not South Atlantic or the Atlantic Marine Fisheries Commission is going to manage this species, I think need to be put on hold, and these other issues need to be addressed. Thank you for the forum.

MR. DAVID BUSH: David Bush; North Carolina Fisheries Association. In light of the comments I just heard that sort of makes me take pause as well. However, I do want you all to keep in mind that with the ever amounting reductions that we receive on multiple fisheries at all times, many of our folks, especially in northern North Carolina, will commercial fish for a small portion of the year. Then they go back to their charters. These folks have charters already scheduled throughout the year.

I know that we can't change the numbers at the flick of a switch. Apparently some work needs to be done. I understand the work the South Atlantic Council has already been doing, and I appreciate that. But we do need to fill in these gaps of information, because for us to proceed

on this would be something that we would like to support.

But to do so we need to get that information filled in. The guys that are going to be affected by this again, are a very small portion of the overall, I believe 7 percent approximately is charterboats, and when they have a charter of six folks they take out, forgetting the captain or a mate; only one person can bring a fish home on a charter for cobia. Please keep that in mind, and whatever it is that you do, we ask that you be expeditious and try to get this worked out as quickly as possible.

MR. JEFF DEEM: I sort of support the motion. I would really like to see the science get straightened out first. The part that I like about this the most is exclusive, because it is critical that this be controlled on a state-by-state basis with state-by-state schedules. If you end it on June 20th, the nearest state to the south of us, North Carolina sees 75 percent of its season.

Virginia would see only 25 percent of its season. To address some of the other motions or factors that was brought up earlier. For Virginia this is a 90 day season, and it is estimated by the science that we had 92,000 trips in that 90 day season. That is an average of 1,000 trips per day. That is pretty hard to swallow. There is some room for correction here.

If we look at 2013 to 2014, the average weight of a fish went up 5 percent, the effort went up 1 percent, and the landings dropped 39 percent. If we look at 2014 to 2015, the effort went up 25 percent, the weight went up 19 percent, the success went up 2 percent, but the landings supposedly went up to 283 percent of what the previous year was.

There are some real problems with trying to follow through, and I hate to see this, because I've been in fisheries management for a long time, and I've always heard people argue with the science. But when you get a 25 percent increase in effort, and a 283 percent result in

landings increases; there are some real problems here. It needs to be straightened out, and I really think the ASMFC, since this is 82 percent state waters, could do a much better job of handling this fish without any South Atlantic involvement.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Thank you, Jeff, anybody else from the audience; back to you, Robert?

MR. BOYLES: Just for the board's information, Gregg mentioned some recent actions that had been enacted in South Carolina. For a long time our measures in South Carolina on cobia have been complementary, a two fish bag, a 33 inch minimum size. Several years ago our general assembly enacted a measure to make cobia a game fish.

There is no commercial take in South Carolina. But it is important, I think, for the board to understand and recognize that using data that our staff collected, with looking at a spawning aggregation in the southern sounds; an area that we now have codified in the southern cobia management zone, which are all state waters south of 32 degrees 31 minutes. We have effectively made our South Carolina state waters fishery in the southern part, this spawning aggregation, a catch and release only fishery.

There is no possession during the month of May, which is the height of our fishery in South Carolina. I think it's important to note that our fishermen in South Carolina recognize the importance of this resource, how critical it was and how critical it was that we protect that spawning biomass, have strongly advocated to the degree of more than 70 percent of our respondents to public surveys favored this restriction, which will result in a greater than 50 percent decrease in the take in state waters for South Carolina for cobia.

That is a big hit. I certainly empathize with the folks who have great concern. I appreciate you all being here to talk to the policy board about

your concerns about this fishery. But this is something that we have seen is needed. We think it is appropriate for the commission to explore these different options, and I would urge passage of this motion.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Further discussion from the board? Jim Gilmore.

MR. JAMES J. GILMORE: Robert, just a clarification on the motion. Is this committing us to a plan or is it just looking at alternatives; and then we would commit to doing a plan later?

MR. BOYLES: Well, I guess I was trying to be deft. I think this commits us to a plan, it's just we don't know what it looks like. Is it a joint plan, is it an exclusive plan? Exclusivity of course means that the South Atlantic Council has to give up jurisdiction, and I certainly don't want to presume what that action would be. But Dr. Crabtree reminded me that South Atlantic Council gave up jurisdiction on species like red drum, which is another very important species for us.

I think there is precedent here, but the way I see this, Jim, moving forward is that this motion would task the South Atlantic Board and with the staff's help, as Bob suggested earlier, would lay out options for how we might move forward in promoting both conservation and access to this fishery.

MR. G. RITCHIE WHITE: That was basically my question, but I guess I'm still not clear on your answer. The way I read this, this would provide us with information to make a decision at a future date, as to how we might begin management or not. Am I correct on that or does this compels us to select one of the options that will come back?

MR. BOYLES: I see now. I apologize for the elliptical nature of my response. I would like to see the commission take over some management responsibility. It would be up to

the board, I think to lay out the options and to develop those options for the fishery management plan. Yes, I think I would say that the intent of this motion is to commit us to get into cobia management, in some form or fashion. I don't know what it looks like.

MR. SIMPSON: As I alluded to before, it puts me in sort of a dilemma. I enjoy sitting in on South Atlantic Board meetings, because you do things differently, and I would like to model that in more places. But it makes me very nervous to think about less or so management board on the commission managing a species that may begin to affect us. It bothers me much, much more to get into another species that is jointly managed by the commission, where we are not represented on the federal side. That has hurt us profoundly for years. I'm concerned about that particular alternative. At this point as it is crafted I really can't support it, reluctantly.

MR. BRANDON MUFFLEY: Dave actually touched upon one of the points that if this does go to the South Atlantic Board that New York has no representation on that board, and maybe even northern states that might want to consider it. I support it conceptually, and I think it has a lot of merit that the commission be involved in the management of this species.

I guess I have somewhat concern as there is this oppressing issue that I think the South Atlantic Council is trying to address, and I don't want to see the commission rush into committing itself to managing another species, without fully thinking about all the implications. There is this immediate need that kind of why we're here talking about it, because of these constraints that are going to be happening; because of fisheries that impact those states on the commission.

I am just trying to understand what the timing may be here, and I don't want to see us rush into something and get us kind of wrapped around an axle that don't address some concerns from northern states and those types

of things. I support it, but I just want us to figure out the timing in terms of how all this will play out, to try to address the immediate needs; but also understand what it is going to mean for us longer term.

CHAIRMAN GORUT: Bob, can you answer that; the timing? I think we had some discussions on this.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Well, if the commission were to kick off a full FMP from start to end and implementation, it would be hard to get that done by the end of this calendar year, obviously, since we're almost half way through the year, to implement in 2017. It would likely be implementation and sometime during the course of '17 or beginning of 2018, so it is a little ways down the road.

Actually I had my hand up earlier, because I think the point that Dave Simpson and Brandon just made about what states would be represented on the board, I think is something important to explore. There is kind of the assumption that we all worked on that this would go to the South Atlantic Board, but the policy board is not precluded from forming a new board altogether, The Cobia Management Board.

Have the range go as far up or down the coast as appropriate, whatever the data shows and whatever states have an interest. I am not speaking for or against the motion, but if it were to go to the South Atlantic Board for further exploration, some of that exploration could be, what states should be involved in future management. There are a fair amount of questions, I suppose, as this moves forward.

MR. FOTE: As a long-time member of the South Atlantic Board, sitting through the meetings, always that I would never leave the table, because I get pulled in from the north and pulled in from the south. I enjoyed the way it managed fisheries, and always supported this.

My problem is I dealt with the New England Council on winter flounder, where they have a plan that's different from us and a complementary plan. I've dealt with the Mid-Atlantic for the last couple years on black sea bass, summer flounder, and scup and it makes me very, very concerned about going down that path. My feeling here is that we should sit as a board, with a member of that board, look at the options, discuss it among ourselves, and come back with recommendations to the Policy Board on what we would see would be the best alternative, and let the Policy Board make the decision at that time.

If you had just said exclusive jurisdiction, I would vote for that in a minute. But when you add the other two factors in there, I have real concerns after 25 years of experience dealing with joint plans. The South Atlantic, we never had to deal with them the way we had to deal with the Mid-Atlantic and New England. I'm still thinking about this.

But I think the best way to go is changes to make the board will start considering and talk it over, not this South Atlantic Board meeting, because you've already got a full agenda, at the next board meeting; and come back with recommendations to the Policy Board of how we should move forward.

Then have a full Policy Board discussion, since yes, New York doesn't sit on it. We are catching quite a few cobias in New Jersey now. It just basically, I'm afraid to get into that kind of thing, and we might in the next five or six years catch a lot more cobia in Delaware, New Jersey, and in New York. Let's be careful how we move ahead; and probably Connecticut.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Further discussion? Dennis Abbott.

MR. ABBOT: Sort of a follow up to my question to Bob. Our meeting weeks are full now. Since I've been here we've added recently Jonah crabs and sharks and smooth dogfish, and we

have an increasing difficulty in getting our work done in three or four days. This will be just another thing. But again, it is not our issue but peripherally New Hampshire will be involved, time wise in this. Again, I'm not opposed to it, but just highlight that.

MR. BOYLES: Perhaps I was too prescriptive, unintentionally in the motion. I think where I'm coming from is that we have a lot more to gain by working together on this fishery than not. I think where I'm coming from is as Gregg mentioned. Last year 80 some odd percent of the catch came from state waters.

Clearly there is a temporal aspect, as you've heard from the public and as our own individual experience as it states. There is a temporal aspect to this that suggests that there is more to be gained by an interstate plan of some sort. Mr. Chairman, the motion is on the floor. I don't know that I can amend it. But I certainly am not intending to exclude or preclude our neighbors to the north, Dave, and in Connecticut and New York.

I'm not sure that the South Atlantic Board maybe is the appropriate mechanism. I think what I'm asking the Policy Board to authorize is to; let's proceed with the development of a fishery management plan. I'm not sure what it looks like, because, Dave, I share your concerns about joint jurisdiction, shared jurisdiction. I mean there is a lot to be considered.

I will confess to you, I am a recent convert to this, because I have been concerned; because we still have a bunch of take, at least off of our coast from federal waters. I still think there is a role for federal jurisdiction here of some form or fashion. Now whether we can weigh, the states can occupy that field exclusively, should the cobia be removed from the federal fishery management unit. I don't know. But those are questions that we don't have answers to now. But I think if we wait to explore the concept or the options of an interstate fishery

management plan. I think we're doing a disservice to the resource.

I think we're doing a disservice to our constituents, and I think there is more to be gained by cooperation. If I could I would withdraw the motion in favor of one that could be perfected that would simply say that we agree to develop an interstate fishery management plan. But again, we don't know what those elements are, so I'm not quite sure how to proceed.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: We can't withdraw the motion; it is the property of the board at this point. Can I get a ruling as to whether the maker of the motion can make an amendment to his own motion?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Yes, the maker can amend their own motion. If the will of the board is to sort of make this motion go away and then start with a clean slate, there can be a motion to withdraw. If there is approval by the board then this motion can go away, and you can start with a clean slate. It's up to you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Spud; on this issue?

MR. A.G. SPUD WOODWARD: I would offer an amendment to this motion that adds a sentence that says the South Atlantic Board will bring to the Commission through the Interstate Policy Board, a recommended alternative for his consideration. I don't know that we can put a date on it yet, realistically. You can't do it at the next meeting, I wouldn't think. But maybe by the annual meeting this year, is that realistic?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Why don't you leave a time off, and we'll try and obviously we'll want to do this as quickly as possible. We'll get that amendment up on the board, and then is there a second to that amendment; Tom Fote. John Bull, I had you in the queue before the

amendment came up. Do you want to comment on this and the underlying motion?

MR. JOHN M. R. BULL: I hear the concerns for Connecticut and New Jersey and some others here about what we would be getting ourselves into. But I think that if you clear away a lot of it, it boils down to, in my mind, simply this. Most of the issues with this fishery are in-state water issues.

I believe that the Commission here has the tools in the tool box to help craft a, not necessarily management, but at least a framework here to better manage this species here; and it's a pretty complicated situation. To that end I agree and support both the motion and the amended motion here. I believe that this is the path that we need to take, in order to insure that this fishery is better managed in the future.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Spud, is that amendment correctly worded? I just want to make sure.

MR. WOODWARD: Yes that captures the essence of it. Also, just to make sure everybody clearly understands the intent of that motion; it is to basically not commit us prematurely to the acceptance of a plan, but to make sure the full Commission has an opportunity to decide whether to promulgate a plan, and of what form.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Jim Gilmore, you had your hand up, and Dave Simpson.

MR. GILMORE: Actually Spud just clarified that; so essentially we would vote on whether we're doing a plan at a future Policy Board meeting. We're going to explore right now. You guys are mostly sold on this, but I really do want to know what I'm getting myself into.

MR. SIMPSON: Yes, I would just echo what Jim said. I'm much more comfortable. I would like to see them go ahead and do this, but I frankly wouldn't wish joint management on anyone else, so be careful as you proceed.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any other discussion from the board on the motion to amend? Seeing none; do we need time to caucus? I'll give you 30 seconds to caucus. Okay, all those in favor of the amendment raise your hand, all states, all those opposed, abstentions, null votes; motion carries 15 to 0 to 2 to 0.

Now just to be clear, since this was an amendment, what I heard Spud say is this is not committing us with this amendment on there at this particular point, to actually developing an FMP. That is what I heard you said it was going to be brought back to the Policy Board and we would make then a decision once that was brought forward. I realize you had indicated, Robert, that you were committing us. But I believe we now have an amendment, where it was clearly on the record that it wasn't with this amendment.

MR. BOYLES: Just a question, Mr. Chairman, maybe for staff. I'm trying to think of the last time that we were engaged in a conversation about taking on a species, I'm thinking Jonah crab. Can staff remind me how we took on Jonah crab?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: Yes, Jonah crab the industry brought forward a proposal to the commission at that point, and they asked that ASMFC be involved. That issue was brought before the Policy Board and the Policy Board agreed that there was enough need for assistance in Jonah crab management, because there was no other Jonah crab plan at the time; and there still isn't.

The Policy Board signed off on creating or allowing the Lobster Board to develop a Jonah Crab FMP. Very similar pattern, if you look at the charter the Policy Board is the group that decides what species ASMFC manages. It is clearly under the purview of this group.

MR. BOYLES: I'm not trying to belabor this, I was just thinking about the mechanics. This is in effect committing us to exploring the

development of an FMP, which I'm fine. I appreciate everyone's support, and certainly understand the concerns; but just wanted to make sure that I've got the process down straight. Because I do understand that the new motion will explore the development of these various management strategies, but does not commit; and I'm fine with that.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR BEAL: One option may be, depending on how much staff work we can get done between now and the August meeting, would be to order the meeting so that the South Atlantic Board meets prior to the Policy Board. If a recommendation came out of the South Atlantic Board in August, the Policy Board could then take that recommendation up and decide if they wanted to move forward in August. That is what we would try to shoot for at the staff level, but we may require a little bit of outside help to get there; which we can talk about offline.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay further discussion now that we have an amended motion?

MR. FOTE: Because Bob was asking about the mechanics, it reminds me when we took over lobsters. The feds said it's an easy fish to manage; we wouldn't have any problems, so that is why we took over the management of lobsters. That is how I remember. Other people might remember a little differently. But they actually gave it to us to take care of. They can do that; and they gave it to us with a bunch of other species, where they said it is mostly in state waters in the northern part of the range, so that is what we took.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: **Okay, further discussion on the amended motion? Do you need time to caucus, or were you able to caucus on both of these the last time? Does anybody need time to caucus right now? I don't see any hands going up, so all those in favor of this motion raise your hand, all those opposed, abstentions, null votes; the motion again**

carries 15 to 0 to 2 to 0. Any other discussion on this item? Ritchie White.

MR. WHITE: Does it make sense for staff to begin working on cost and how an FMP would be handled within the Commission in advance of making this decision, so we might have information on that aspect when this comes back to us for a decision?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any problem with that, Toni? We can do that; sounds good. Any other discussion on this agenda item? Okay we'll now move on to a very, very brief discussion of revision of conservation equivalency guidelines; because we didn't get through everything.

MS. TONI KERNS: Basically what I'm going to say is that we're going to do this in August, since the Executive Committee only go to the first issue, so I will not waste the Policy Board's time at this time; and we'll come back in August.

JOINT MANAGEMENT AND SCIENCE AND ASSESSMENT SCIENCE COMMITTEE REPORT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay that was a good quick one. Shanna now has a report on Joint Management and Science and Assessment Science Committee meeting.

MS. SHANNA MADSEN: I have also been indicated to cut some stuff out, so I am going to make this a little bit briefer. Essentially, the Assessment Science Committee and Management Science Committee met in conjunction in April, since we had a number of issues that we wanted to go over together.

I am not going to go into great detail about those, but one of those that I did want to discuss, and just bring to the Policy Board's attention, was that during the meeting we discussed the development of a Commission Risk and Uncertainty Policy. I know this was already talked about at the Executive Committee level, and it had been determined

that Jason McNamee had volunteered as the Chair of this committee. The goal will be to develop a policy that should be able to account for both scientific and management uncertainty within our decision making process; and determine an acceptable level of risk. We're hoping that this policy will be flexible, however still transparent. Now that the work group is kind of formed, I am going to be meeting with that group to develop a timeline, and hopefully plan an in-person meeting, and begin that brainstorming process.

What is this policy going to look like? We actually had a similar multidisciplinary workgroup for the Menhaden Board, and we felt that it was extremely productive to kind of craft something that works for our managers, our stakeholders, and our scientists. We have some volunteers from the Assessment Science Committee and the Management and Science Committee already lined up.

I know that I have a few commissioners that have spoken to me about potentially being a part of this committee; Pat Geer in the South Atlantic, and Lynn Fegley for the Mid-Atlantic. I would be hoping to maybe solicit some help from our northern partners to hopefully get a northern representative on there as well.

I'm looking for three to four people total, so you can come up to me after this meeting, if you would be willing to volunteer. I think we're just going to dive right into the assessment schedule timeline. The ASC sat down to review the schedule, and discuss some of the changes that we've made throughout the previous year.

We revisited the implications of the confidentiality issues that were preventing the horseshoe crab assessment from moving forward. I know that the Horseshoe Crab Management Board discussed this yesterday, and recommended that they move forward with a black box assessment in 2018. Obviously the ASC did not get to hear that recommendation, so we can go back and

discuss that and hopefully get that placed on the schedule.

The American Eel TC reviewed their research recommendations and concluded that there was not enough new data to do a benchmark assessment in 2017, but an update would be warranted, and so the ASC placed that on the schedule. As I discussed in our previous meeting, the Biological and Ecological Reference Points Workgroup recommended that we place an assessment for the multispecies modeling in 2019.

The ASC also placed that onto the schedule. The Striped Bass Management Board requested an assessment update be conducted in 2016, to get everything up to speed with an additional year of data. You'll see that change reflected on the schedule as well. The river herring and shad assessment updates were switched.

What we did is we wanted to make sure that the river herring update would then coincide with NOAA's plan to revisit the ESA listing termination in early 2018. The river herring assessment update is scheduled for 2017, with the shad update in 2018. The Tautaug Management Board also requested an assessment update be conducted this year, since the Long Island Sound regional assessment in New York and New Jersey regional assessments are being completed this summer, and they want the other regions to be brought up to date.

The ASC reviewed that recommendation and went ahead and placed that on the schedule for 2016. Since the weakfish, spoiler alert, I guess. Because the weakfish peer review was passed, they recommended that we have an assessment update in 2017. The ASC reviewed that and also placed that on the schedule. Here is where I would need a little bit of board input. I'm sorry if this is a little confusing and a little hairy, but it is for us too. We've been given, since there have been changes to the MRIP program; we're transferring over from that

coastal household phone survey on to the mail survey.

We anticipate that there should be some impacts in the data that would be used for several of our species. The NRCC has sort of given us a couple of options for adding some assessments to the SARC schedule in 2018. Essentially for the spring of 2018, they suggested striped bass, black sea bass, and summer flounder.

In the fall they suggested bluefish, scup, and spiny dogfish. This is kind of given to us in like a, you pick two, menu. There are three that were being given for the spring, three that were being given for the fall; and then kind of tell us which two of those you would prefer. The ASC discussed these recommendations.

They recommended that we move forward with placing striped bass and summer flounder at kind of the top of that list; considering that would coincide with their five-year trigger time. They also just wanted to suggest that we be a little bit careful to take on more assessments beyond that; kind of due to the workload of those folks.

There is a big number of overlap with those groups that would be doing those stock assessments. They kind of put those two at the top of the list, and recommended that we move forward with placing those on the schedule. From there I would be happy to take any questions. I would be wondering what the board's thoughts were on us moving forward with trying to put striped bass and summer flounder at the top of that list.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Questions? Are there any thoughts on striped bass and summer flounder being at the top of that list in 2018? Go ahead, Adam.

MR. ADAM NOWALSKY: I guess my only question with summer flounder would be, is the expectation that there is going to be enough

new information to come forward to make that something different, potentially for management use? There is ongoing modeling work that I've talked to the Summer Flounder, Black Sea Bass and Scup Management Board about in the past, and we've had some discussion about here, in terms of getting updates. What advice can you give us about what we might expect out of that if we go that direction?

MS. MADSEN: This would just be a change in the data, but since MRIP is transitioning they are anticipating that that data is going to be affected by the change in the way that they're conducting the MRIP surveys. Since that data is changing that kind of inherently leads to having a benchmark in order to update that data.

MR. NOWALSKY: Just to follow up on this. I would assume we would be relooking at this again next year. While that change in the data is certainly one aspect of it, if the new modeling was to become available in say, 2019, we could reassess at that point; as opposed to having to have to wait five years afterwards.

MS. MADSEN: Yes, definitely. We'll look at this. We look at the schedule yearly. We'll look at it again next year. We just have an NRCC meeting coming up next week, so we wanted to go ahead and provide some recommendations so that they could get us on the schedule, and make sure we kind of reserve our spot ahead of time. But most certainly we can revisit that in the future.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Shanna, I had a quick question, just so that I understand. When you said that there is a number of species here that are listed for SARC, but you're saying that they only have room for two species the entire year, or two species at both the fall and the spring SARC?

MS. MADSEN: They have space for two spaces at the spring and then two spaces at the fall. But the Assessment Science Committee did

warn against us potentially putting four stock assessments on the schedule, just due to the fact of the workload.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: My concern, particularly with species that are managed under federal management, which are bound by ACLs and AMs; that if we end up with a disconnect in what our new harvest data is going to be, and what the old ACLs are based on, or we have new ACLs that are based on the new MRIP data.

We may have a disconnect between what we're using for catch information as applied to the ACLs, which we're bounded by. My concern from a manager would be that we should be looking at only the federally managed species first, and then starting to work at something like striped bass. Did you all hear that? Okay, sorry. I'll try this again.

MRIP is going to change, potentially change some of our catch estimates for recreational harvest. In the federal management theatre, we are bound to stay within our ACLs and below our ABCs. My concern is if we have not adjusted our ABCs, based on the updated MRIP data, then what is going to be presented as harvest is not going to be matching up.

You could have, and I'll give you an example, from the way I understand this, you know let's say we don't update our ABCs, and the new MRIP data says that; well actually going back ten years, the average catches are actually about twice as high as what we originally thought. Now we're saying that the catches are higher.

But we haven't changed how we calculate our ABCs. You could be going over your ABCs very easily, even with current management measures. At least that is my concern with this. The reason I'm bringing this up is we're not bound by that with striped bass. I would actually be looking at, let's move forward with changing; say black sea bass and fluke.

Have benchmark assessments on black sea bass and fluke, so that we could make those changes to the ABCs, and have them match up with what the new MRIP data is going to be; because they are going to be using that as I understand, in 2018. There won't be any coastal household telephone survey estimates any more after that. Yes, go ahead; I'll go with John and Roy, and then Dave.

MR. JOHN CLARK: Yes I just wanted to point out, Doug, on the striped bass. My understanding of Addendum IV was that those 25 percent reductions were supposed to be in place until the next benchmark assessment, when we reconsider. If we push back the benchmark, are we going to revisit based on this 2015 update, or will the 25 percent reductions then have to stay in place until we do get a benchmark?

CHAIRMAN GROUT: That certainly is an issue, you're right.

MR. SIMPSON: Yes, so we were thinking about the same problem but arriving at different outcomes maybe. I am really concerned about the implications of these new numbers that we're anticipating. As you said, we've been warned that it could be a doubling; the estimate could actually be twice as high as what we're accustomed to looking at.

Taking on a species that is jointly managed, I will warn Robert that the relationship in this union is to love, honor, and obey the federal government, and the Mid-Atlantic Council in this case; not so much the modern commitment that your spouse may have made to you and mine made to me. It is more my mother's commitment, do what Dad says; not that she did, but.

You understand my reluctance that the Mid-Atlantic Council is really, really dragging its feet about allocation. It's a very difficult issue. I guess my preference from the Commission perspective would be let's move on striped

bass, and maybe another commission managed species tautaug or something that we can manage here, internally, where we're all at the table, and we have a little more flexibility.

That would be my preference. I think it would take a little more dialogue with NOAA and the Mid-Atlantic Council about what their intentions are with these species that are under federal management, and we're a joint partner; because you can imagine if you rebuild that time series, and it doesn't just double the numbers for recreational all the way back.

Say it is double the numbers in the last five years, but similar numbers back through time, because they're making a guess at what they might have been back then. Then the argument from the commercial side will be, the allocation of 60/40 is fine, but you guys are way over and you need to cut your recreational harvest by half. That is what I'm afraid of.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: My concern, is there something, we have an NRC meeting coming up soon. Is there something that could help us bring something forward to them? As I understood when we were talking about these MRIP re-estimations, there was a plan in place for how stock assessments were going to be updated to apply this. Let's see how this process moves forward. We would like to see a plan to get all these assessments updated with peer reviewed assessments.

MS. KERNS: I was a member of the Transition Team for MRIP. We did work through the Transition Team. We were split into a Management and the Stock Assessment Group, and the Stock Assessment Group did prioritize species for assessments to occur first, and then following up that all assessments would be updated with these new numbers.

There is priority placed on the species that we thought would be most impacted by the change in numbers, as well as priority is put on for the management side of things of how we manage

those species. Do we have state-by-state quotas? Do we use ACLs that we thought might be impacted?

All of these species for the most part were on that priority list. I don't think dogfish was a priority on there, and scup I think was in the medium priority level, if I am remembering correctly. I think one of the things that might be helpful at the NRCC level, if we can't really come to a consensus of one, is to maybe prioritize these six species. There will be some discussions and negotiations at the NRCC meeting. We do sit down with the New England Council and the Mid-Atlantic Council on priorities there, and so if we could have an idea of what is most important to us down the line.

Then as we talk at the NRCC, then we'll have a better idea of what the commission wants to see. I will remind the board though that we did commit to do a benchmark assessment for striped bass in 2018, and typically we do go through the SARC process for that peer review. If it is not the will of the board to use the SARC process, then we can explore some other avenue for that peer review. But we did commit to doing that.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: I agree that striped bass still should be one of our top priorities here. The question is going to be, given the recommendation from our stock assessment scientists that we can only do one other; which one is going to be that priority? Is that summer flounder, what they were recommending?

But that would leave bluefish and black sea bass and scup off. I'm not worried about spiny dogfish, as far as recreational catch estimates. I don't think that is going to be a huge issue. Are you okay with summer flounder being number two? Do you want to pick a third and a fourth; black sea bass or bluefish or scup? Dave Borden?

MR. BORDEN: Black sea bass.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: How did I know that was going to be third? Anything else, any other recommendations for Number 4, okay those are the top three; striped bass, summer flounder, and black sea bass. Do we need a motion on that? Okay, no. Anything else that you need, Shanna?

MS. MADSEN: No, thank you very much for your input.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay, we need a motion to approve the assessment schedule as modified today. Roy.

MR. ROY MILLER: I move we approve the assessment schedule as modified today.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Do we have a second? Emerson is the second. Further discussion, seeing none; **is there any objection to the motion? Seeing none; it passes by consensus.** Okay that is it on that item.

FOLLOW UP ON CLIMATE CHANGE WORKSHOP

CHAIRMAN GROUT: We're now down to Agenda Item Number 8. This is a follow up on our Climate Change Workshop.

Something that I would like to put up is a suggestion I have for creating a Climate Change Workgroup. I've also put together a task for the board considerations to this workgroup, as well as a general idea of who would make up. While that is coming up, has anybody had any other thoughts or questions or things they would like to bring forward about our climate change workshop?

MR. WHITE: Not that. But I was just wondering if your intention is to work through all we have left to do before lunch, or are you thinking about breaking here at some point? Because it seems like we have a ways to go.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: I've been informed by staff that the next two things are going to take less

than ten minutes combined. Then the question is do we take a break for lunch before we come back for the business session? Okay, once we get to that point we'll take a poll as to whether people want to push through or eat.

PROPOSAL TO DEVELOP A CLIMATE CHANGE WORKGROUP

CHAIRMAN GROUT We've got that up. As I indicated, what I'm proposing to do is develop a Climate Change Workgroup that would be comprised of commissioners, technical support, staff and federal partners. The working group's tasks will be tasked with developing science, policy and management strategies to assist the commission in adapting its management to changes in species abundance and distribution, resulting from climate change impacts; any discussion on this? Adam.

MR. NOWALSKY: The wording of that I think certainly captures a lot of what we talked about yesterday; and I certainly have no objection to that. But I did just want to make one comment as I thought about the discussions from yesterday, and some of the discussion item bullet points that you had presented to us; and one of those being precautionary management decisions in anticipation of shifting distributions.

One of the things that I think it is important that this group looks at, and gives us advice on, is that the shifting distribution does not necessarily mean decline in overall population. I think that is important when we look at, we heard a lot about when we talked about the Lobster Management Board, and the desire that nobody wanted to see the fishery go away, per se, and that a lot of this is out of our control.

None of us are here; we wouldn't be here if we were in the business of completely ignoring conservation on a resource. But a lot of the climate change items that we deal with are not about a resource not being conserved, it is

simply about it moving; and taking that into account. I just wanted to bring that forward.

As I gave that more thought from the conversation that we had yesterday, I certainly think that the way this is worded here doesn't put us into a sense of, well because stocks are shifting, we have to be more precautionary in what we do to our fishermen, who are feeling those affects immediately already; long before we initiate management action.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Good points, Adam, any other discussion on this? Steve Train.

MR. STEPHEN TRAIN: I was wondering if we could include any other interested parties to the list of possible participants.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: That sounds fine to me. Do you want me to add that specifically to the wording? We can add it. It will be added, other interested parties; any other thoughts on this and any objections to this task? Are there any commissioners that are interested in volunteering? Bill Adler, thank you, Adam, thank you, Steve Train, John and Ritchie, Brandon, Spud; we're going to have the entire commission here, good, oh and Mike Armstrong has been nominated.

MS. KERNS: I was writing frantically, I had Bill Adler, Adam, Steve Train, Brandon Muffley, Spud Woodward, John Clark, Ritchie White and Mike Armstrong. Did I miss anybody? Doug Brady. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Thank you very much; I appreciate this willingness to serve here. I am sure we'll start off with some conference calls, but we may need to have some face-to-face meetings at some point. We'll try. I know we've got Mike Armstrong from the Management Science Committee volunteered. We'll try and get a few other technical folks to help out. I know our federal partners have also agreed to send a representative. Jay.

MR. JASON McNAMEE: As you were asking the question I quickly e-mailed Mark Gibson, and he would like to be included on the team as well. I think he would be an asset to the team.

ATLANTIC STURGEON STOCK ASSESSMENT UPDATE

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Excellent, thank you very much. Katie Drew, sturgeon assessment.

MS. KATIE DREW: I'll make this brief, because I'm hungry too. The sturgeon stock assessment is proceeding on pace. We're going to have an assessment meeting in July, an in-person meeting with the Stock Assessment Subcommittee. We've recently resolved some of our data sharing issues with data sources who were a little hesitant about being involved in the ASMFC process; so I feel we've made good progress in getting some of the best and most recent up-to-date data for this species.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Question, sorry about that. Go ahead, Robert.

MR. BOYLES: I'll have it offline, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Are you sure? Okay, anybody else have questions for Katie? Okay, Mark.

LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT

MR. MARK ROBSON: I just want to go over very quickly a number of the items that the Law Enforcement Committee is working on right now on your behalf for various boards. Starting with lobster, we have established an Offshore Enforcement Subcommittee, and we've had considerable help from Commissioner David Borden on that. We are continuing to develop some ideas about what to look for there to enhance offshore enforcement in the American lobster fishery; as we proceed with some of the trap reduction schedules.

We've already had a teleconference call, we'll be meeting again. We had discussion at our LEC meeting this week, and we'll be having more teleconference calls to work up some specific proposals and ideas. We heard a presentation yesterday regarding Maine's trap tag transferability program that they have implemented as a pilot.

The LEC members were impressed with the way that program has been working for them, and it seems to be something that's effective and relatively free of loopholes; so we think we can get onboard with that type of a trap tag transferability program elsewhere, if needed. We understand that there were questions regarding possible enforcement issues for the lobster size limit differences that we have among the states, and also with interest in trying to make sure that we standardize V-notch enforcement.

The LEC heard a little bit about those issues at the meeting this week, and we're prepared to continue working on them, and provide any advice or input to you as needed. With Jonah crabs we also understand that there is going to be an addendum looking at claw harvest possibility options. We will obviously stand ready to provide comments on that. We have an Enforcement Subcommittee continuing to work on tautaug, particularly the live-fish tagging program. We will continue to work on that with staff and with several of the commissioners here. We think we have some good information coming to us that we can look at with regards to tag-type designs that would be suitable for enforcement purposes as well.

We had a lot of discussion yesterday and this morning about some more or less emerging issues that we are seeing in enforcement, with regard particularly to the summer flounder fishery and safe harbor issues, safe harbor requests and also some dual landings requests. We understand that this is something that is sort of a developing issue that we might need to look at in the future.

Again, the LEC is trying to collect as much information on what those specific issues are, whether they are management or there may not really be any specific enforcement concerns or problems at this time; but we are going to look at that and be prepared to provide input to the Summer Flounder Board on that; as requested.

We had a couple other issues. We were asked to kind of take a look at the eel aquaculture program that North Carolina implemented, and identify some of the enforcement safeguards that were put into effect for that permit; to be able to provide some of that information and some of those strategies back to the board, if there were future requests for aquaculture-type operations.

We've gone through the permit conditions for North Carolina. They had about five pages of permit conditions, a lot of them related to making sure that everything was on the up and up and that the enforcement was able to do their job. We'll put that together in a written format, and we can make that available as well to the board. Right now we're talking about American eel, and I think that is maybe where we would submit that information to.

Just one last thing, we continue to have some discussions about the importance and the unique nature of aerial enforcement work. We have another subcommittee that is formed to look at that; to consider how we've ranked and rated aerial enforcement as a technique, and to see how it works with other types of enforcement platforms, and to tie that in with some of the federal and state coordination of funding and priorities, for equipment and reimbursement for that sort of activity. That completes my report, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any questions?

MR. WHITE: When you talk about aerial, does that include drone or is that just fixed wing?

MR. ROBSON: No, this is just discussing fixed wing at this point.

MR. BORDEN: You probably saw me dashing in and out of the room the other day when the Enforcement Committee was going on. I went over and listened to a number of the sessions that are of interest. I would just like to take the time to thank Mark and the members of the LEC For what I think is fine work that they've already initiated on this offshore enforcement effort.

I think they are really doing good work. They deserve credit. They have responded to the board initiation on this, and I look forward to working with them. I think they will bring back a number of alternatives that I think we'll find useful, in terms of improving enforcement. Thank you, Mark, for all your work. Please pass my compliments along to the subcommittee.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Any other questions for Mark? Okay we have one other agenda item before we'll break for lunch, and then we'll come back for the business session.

COMMISSION POSITION ON THE FEDERAL MONUMENT PROPOSALS

CHAIRMAN GROUT: We have a request from the Lobster Board to take a Commission position on the federal monument proposals up in the northeast. I am going to turn that over to the Lobster Board Chairman, Dave Borden.

MR. BORDEN: I'll try to be brief, but I also recognize that there are a number of people at the table that have not been exposed to this issue, so I am just going to lay out a little bit of background. Then what I would like to do is just take a few questions, and then I'll make the motion.

In terms of coral management there are two almost parallel processes that are going on now. One process is New England Council Coral Amendment, which is very similar to the

process that the Mid-Atlantic Council went through. Under that process, so everybody understands, it is a normal fishery management process.

There is full disclosure, there is full transparency. The council formed subcommittees and solicited public input and there are workshops, and all those types of things. Just as importantly there are impact analyses that are conducted. That is one effort that is going on. The Commission is involved in that.

Chairman Grout appointed a member to the New England Council Committee, so we have input to that; and we'll be revisiting the progress in that aspect of the program. Pretty much every time we have a meeting we'll put it on the agenda. The other process that is going on is a process under an act called the Antiquities Act.

This is an act that was passed in 1906, by Congress. What it does is it provides the President of the United States proclamation authority to protect areas under law. As I just indicated, it is proclamation authority. The President literally can sign a proclamation and take pretty substantial areas and protect them.

Now this activity has been going on since 1906. There have been 132 different sites that have been established, consistent with this authority. These sites include, I would point out, and some of our most famous parks in the United States have been established using this authority. It has been used to good effect in numerous occasions, by both Republicans and Democrats.

In this case a group of environmental organizations have essentially asked that the President use this to establish a marine monument in the New England area, offshore. Because of the nature of the request, and because of the law that was passed. I think this music going on in the next room really highlights this presentation.

Because of the nature of the underlying law, the Antiquities Act is really not required to go through the same process as the Magnuson Act. In other words, it is just a signature on a piece of paper. At this point the President has basically petitions and letters. I think there have been about 160,000 letters that have been submitted to the White House on this. From what I understand through a whole range of political sources, the President is actively considering doing this, and the timing of it unfortunately, may take place before our next meeting. I am sure some of you are saying, how does this apply to us? Well, the way it applies to us is we manage, along with our partners in NOAA, the offshore lobster resource. We're also actively involved in the management of a number of Mid-Atlantic and South Atlantic species that inhabit this area. The area that has been tentatively outlined and I would emphasize the word tentatively, because you cannot pick up a piece of paper.

We can't go anywhere and find a piece of paper that says this is the proposal. There are no specifics that have been offered, just a concept. We're in this situation where this proclamation may take place, I would think, in the next two months. That is basically what I've been informed by a number of Congressional officers.

As a result of that and given the potential for a negative impact on some of the fisheries that we manage, the Lobster Board took up this issue and basically crafted this motion as guidance. Now the other point here is that Chairman Grout and our Executive Director have arranged for a meeting between the leadership of the Commission and the President's office, the Council of Environmental Quality.

The purpose of the meeting is to discuss both the offshore lobster industry, but also these other issues, which involve commercial fisheries and recreational fisheries. It is quite conceivable, given the precedent that has been set in the Hawaiian chain, where they

established I think a 158,000 square mile area reserve.

In that area they prohibit all commercial and all recreational fishing. Doug and Bob have set up a meeting next Monday, where a number of us are going to go and talk about potential impacts on our fisheries. The Lobster Board took this up – and I'm almost finished – and decided that although there isn't a specific proposal that we all could react to, which we would like; that we think that we should provide some guidance and have a Commission position on it.

The Lobster Board took this up, passed this motion, and so this is a motion to this committee. If this committee were to adopt it, then it would provide additional guidance to the leadership as they go forward with the discussions with CEQ. I would like to emphasize one point here. You have these two procedures.

The essence of this motion would draw a line, and basically say if you're going to proceed with this proclamation, please draw the boundary line here; and any sort of coral protection that would ensue landward at the line, would be done through the Magnuson Act. The reason that suggestion is being made, is because that process is fully transparent.

We would be able to look at those proposals, comment on them, look at our fishery impacts, talk to our constituents and so forth. The suggestion here is a process suggestion. I think that is an important point. We are not endorsing the creation of a monument; we're just recommending that they follow a certain process.

I think what I would like to do is to read the motion on behalf of the committee into the record. I am going to suggest a slight word change if the Chair can accomplish this through a perfection, I think that would be useful. **On behalf of the American Lobster Board, move the Commission send a letter to the President**

of the United States of America regarding the following. The preference of the Commission would be for the current New England Council Coral Management Process to continue, without presidential use of the Antiquities Act to protect deep sea corals. Should the President/CEQ decide to designate a New England deepwater monument prior to the end of his presidency, the Commission requests that any area so designated, be limited to the smallest area compatible with the proper care and management of the objects to be protected; as required by the Antiquities Act.

Further, the area be limited to depths greater than approximately 900 meters, and encompass any and all of the regions seaward of this line out to the EEZ. That only bottom tending fishing effort be prohibited in the area, and that all other midwater surface fishing methods, recreational and commercial be allowed to continue to use the area. That the public and effected user groups be allowed to review and comment on any specific proposal prior to its implementation. I would move that on behalf of the Lobster Board.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Because that is a motion on behalf of the board, it doesn't need a second; any discussion on this motion?

MR. BOYLES: I would just like to offer my support and from my perspective, for the Policy Board to know that the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies has an Ocean Resources Policy Committee, which I'm involved. The Policy Committee is exploring implications of the use of the Antiquities Act in the marine realm.

I would like to just reiterate Commissioner Borden's concerns about transparency and accessibility to the decision making process. It is a very mature process in the fisheries management world, and certainly something we're very interested in, and conversely, somewhat concerned with the potential application and the exclusion of constituents

with the designation under the Antiquities Act. I would certainly speak in favor of the motion.

MR. LOREN W. LUSTIG: I find this to be a very fascinating discussion. I'm trying to remember what I learned long ago about the Antiquities Act. I believe it was used by Teddy Roosevelt quite a bit for the national monuments. But my question relates to the role of Congress. I believe that they have the power to review and perhaps overturn by a Congressional Action, the proclamation of the President through legislative action. What I don't know is if that was ever attempted. If anyone has information about that I would be very interested in that.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Information I've read indicates that yes it has occurred in the past that Congress has overturned presidential proclamations on this. Eric, do you have a follow up on that?

MR. ERIC REID: Congress has amended the size of some of these designations by moving the boundaries around a little bit, and through a full act of Congress they have removed some. I also want to point out that it has been challenged. The Antiquities Act and a presidential authority have been challenged in courts all the way up to the Supreme Court.

The authority of the President has never been questioned in court. It has never lost. Except for a full action by Congress, this is a one-way street for us. Nobody is saying anything about corals not being protected; it is defending a public process. The Antiquities Act doesn't require any NEPA review or guidelines. I could talk as long as it's going to take to convince everybody in this room that this is a necessary action, but I am sure you would all prefer that I didn't, so I will leave it as that. I'll answer any more questions though.

MR. WILLIAM A. ADLER: I was just looking at one of the words here in the, I think it is the third paragraph down, where it says approximately 900 meters and encompass any

or all of the region seaward of this line, out to the EEZ. Is that correct? I thought the EEZ started at three miles. Okay, as long as we've got it right here.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: any other questions or discussions on this motion?

MR. BORDEN: Just this is a very quick point to Bill's point. There is also a chart with a line on it that approximates a 900 meter line that goes with this.

MR. ADLER: But is it out to the EEZ or out to the limit of the EEZ?

MR. BORDEN: I guess if we really wanted to be specific we would say out to the outer limit of the EEZ; because it is all part of the EEZ.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Do we have any objection to making that editorial change? Seeing none; is there further discussion on this motion?

MR. BORDEN: I apologize, Mr. Chairman. I just point out this motion passed the Lobster Board unanimously.

MR. SIMPSON: With one abstention. No, I stepped out which I apologize for. I am fine with this. If it hasn't already been discussed, I think it is important to give the staff the latitude to craft this with a tone and verbiage that is appropriate for the recipient of the letter.

CHAIRMAN GROUT: So done. Further discussion on this motion, do you need time to caucus, does anybody need time to caucus? I don't see any hands so we'll vote. **All those in favor raise your hand, opposition, abstentions, null votes; the motion carries 15 to 0 to 3 to 0.** Okay thank you very much on this, we will bring this letter forward to CEQ on Monday; any other items for the Policy Board? Adam.

MR. NOWALSKY: Very quickly, just as Chair of the Tautaug Board for those members of that board that were expecting a meeting during this

meeting week. There is a memo under the ISFMP meeting materials giving you an update of where we are in our planned path forward, thank you.

ADJOURNMENT

CHAIRMAN GROUT: Okay I'll take a motion to adjourn. We will reconvene the business session in 45 minutes, because we are running behind schedule and then we will move into our Parliamentary Workshop.

(Whereupon the meeting was adjourned at 1:08 o'clock, p.m. on May 4, 2016.)