

Committee Reports



INFORMATION
WILL BE
PROVIDED AT
THE MEETING.



PAT McCRORY
Governor

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Secretary

BRAXTON C. DAVIS
Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Marine Fisheries Commission
Strategic Habitat Area Region 4 Advisory Committee

FROM: Anne Deaton
Casey Knight
Division of Marine Fisheries

DATE: April 27, 2017

SUBJECT: Strategic Habitat Area Region 4 Advisory Committee Meeting

The Strategic Habitat Area Region 4 Advisory Committee met at 10:00 am April 21, 2017 at the Department of Environmental Quality Wilmington Regional Office, 127 Cardinal Dr. Ext., Wilmington, NC. The following attended:

Advisers: Troy Alphin, Mike Mallin, Jessie Jarvis, Fritz Rohde, Fred Scharf, Dawn York, Kyle Rachels, Nora Deamer

Absent: Robb Mairs, Hope Sutton, Jeremy Humphrey

Staff: Anne Deaton, Casey Knight, Chris Stewart

Public: Rita Merritt, Nancy Brechtlein

A committee chair had not been assigned at the first meeting. Casey Knight called the meeting to order.

MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA

There was no modification to the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were offered.

BACKGROUND

This was the first meeting of this advisory committee. Anne Deaton opened the meeting explaining the origin and purpose of Strategic Habitat Areas and the process being used, including the type of input data needed for habitat targets and alteration data, and the site selection software (Marxan) used in the analysis. The results of

the three completed regions were shown. She explained that the habitat needs of the priority species for the region drive input data and showed the division's list of priority species.

PRIORITY SPECIES

The advisory committee recommended using species life history guilds rather than individual species where possible since the focus is on capturing diversity. Based on this the categories were anadromous fish (striped bass, American shad, river herring, sturgeons), estuarine reef species (black sea bass, gag, sheepshead), inshore sciaenids (includes spot, croaker, spotted sea trout and others), flounders, oysters, clams, blue crab, and shrimp.

NATURAL RESOURCE TARGETS AND REPRESENTATION LEVELS

Casey Knight reviewed the individual GIS data layers for natural resource targets occurring in Region 4, and committee members provided some feedback. Knight explained that initial target representation levels (the percent of a total habitat type to target for selection), were based on the percentages used in Region 3 and 2 as starting points. Percentages are based on abundance, sensitivity to degradation, importance to priority species, and scientific literature from previous ecosystem assessments on acceptable values. The advisory committee discussed scaling the representation levels to the habitat acreage, but decided it would be better to use the previous values and fine-tune based on regional differences. The committee made a few changes and suggested that a sensitivity analysis be conducted by running Marxan with the percentages selected, and two other scenarios with lower and higher values.

ALTERATION FACTORS AND WEIGHTINGS

Knight reviewed the individual GIS data layers for alterations (used as a proxy for habitat condition) to be used in the Region 4 analysis. Due to lack of time, the advisory committee was given a homework assignment to review the alteration rankings table (ranks severity/impact of a given alteration on each habitat). Advisory committee members are to make suggested changes to any rankings they disagree with, and return by email. Once that information is returned, representation levels and alteration rankings will be finalized and sensitivity analyses of Marxan will be run and reviewed at the next meeting.

Enclosures

Cc: Catherine Blum
Mike Bulleri
Scott Conklin
Dick Brame
Braxton Davis
Charlotte Dexter

Jess Hawkins
Dee Lupton
Nancy Marlette
Katie Mills
Phillip Reynolds
Jerry Schill

Gerry Smith
District Managers
Committee Staff Members
Marine Patrol Captains
Section Chiefs