

**Outreach and Education Committee
Action Guide
January 7, 2025**

Agenda Item IV: 2024 Communication Improvement Plan Progress and Analytics

Action: Review and Recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Staff will present an overview of Council communication analytics along with progress on the 2024 Communications Improvement Plan. The Committee is encouraged to provide feedback on 2024 communication efforts and make recommendations on how to further improve Gulf Council communication efforts and broaden its audience.

Agenda Item V: Domestic Shrimp and Seafood Education

Action: Review and Recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Staff will provide background about an industry request for developing education materials to inform the public about the variety of benefits of federally managed, domestic caught seafood and present a targeted communications plan, shaped by recommendations from the O&E Technical Committee. The Committee should contribute to developing a list of existing materials and organizations that communicate about domestic shrimp and seafood issues. The Committee is also encouraged to evaluate the targeted communications plan and determine whether it would be an appropriate mechanism for the Council to promote awareness of the issue and educate the public.

Agenda Item VI: Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management Outreach Update

Action: Informational

Committee input and next steps: Council approved the Fishery Ecosystem Plan (FEP) and Red Tide Fishery Ecosystem Issue (FEI) Communications Plan Outline in January 2024. This plan outlined the broad communications plans for the Council's work on ecosystem-based management and outlined a plan specific to the pilot FEI of red tide. Staff will provide a brief history of the Council recommendations for communicating the red tide FEI including information about Inflation Reduction Act funding and O&E Technical Committee recommendations. The Council will take up work on the red tide FEI following meeting of its Ecosystem Technical Committee during its April 2025 Council meeting so, this communications update is being provided in advanced of that work.

Agenda Item VII: Management Areas and Boundary Outreach

Action: Discussion and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: First, staff will provide a draft version of a new Management Area Map tool that intends to replace static PDF images used currently in the online regulations. The Committee is encouraged to provide feedback on the value and function of the tool and make any recommendations for improvements. Second, staff will discuss the potential for getting management areas and boundaries added to commercially available mapping tools and ask the Committee for guidance on how to get this accomplished. Third, staff will provide summary of the O&E Technical Committees discussion on the 20-fathom recreational shallow water grouper closure. The Committee is encouraged to provide any feedback on appropriate communications strategies to improve compliance with the current closure.

Agenda Item VIII: Public Comment Improvements

Action: Discussion and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Staff will begin by explaining how written comments are currently collected and presented to the Council. Next, staff will provide information on consideration for developing an anonymous voicemail box for public comment. While written comments can currently be submitted anonymously, this idea is being considered to ensure that all constituents have a readily accessible mechanism for providing comment in an anonymous, convenient format. Staff will also discuss a proposed process for providing comments reviewed through the voicemail box to the Council. The O&E Technical Committee Chair will provide the technical committee's feedback on the idea. The Committee should provide feedback and next steps to staff on the utility of proposed effort, provide guidance on how to report comments collected to the Council, and suggest appropriate mechanisms for making the public aware that the new comment option is available.

Agenda Item IX: 2025 Communications Improvement Plan

Action: Discussion and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Each year, staff develops a communications plan to guide Council communications work throughout the year. Staff will present its draft 2025 Communications Improvement plan which was shaped using past analytics, staff recommendations, and recommendations from the O&E Technical Committee. The Committee

is encouraged to provide any feedback for improving the 2025 Communications Improvement Plan and Council communications work, in general.

Agenda Item X: Other Items from the O&E Technical Committee Summary

Action: Review and Recommendations

Committee input and next steps: The Chair of the O&E Technical Committee will review any remaining items from the November 2024 meeting that were not covered by the Committee including, Recreational Initiative communications, for-hire reporting outreach, and the discussion on the Councils outreach strategy. The Committee can discuss the additional items and act, as desired.

Agenda Item XI: Other Business

Action: Discussion and recommendations

Committee input and next steps: Additional items may be brought up for discussion by Committee members during the adoption of the agenda, time permitting. If the Committee wishes to pursue action, then action can be scheduled at a future Council meeting.
