

Ecosystem Committee: Action Guide and Next Steps for Tab Q

Agenda Item IV: Presentation on Modifications to the 2024 NMFS Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management Road Map

Timeline Status: Review, provide feedback, and consider approval of comment letter

Council input and next steps: On August 9, 2024, the Ecosystem Technical Committee (ETC) convened via webinar to discuss the 2024 NOAA Fisheries Draft Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management Road Map (Road Map; Tab Q, No. 4a) and the draft comment letter on modifications to the Road Map. Staff will summarize the ETC's discussions and recommendations. The Committee should review the ETC's comments on the Road Map (Tab Q, No. 4b) and provide feedback on the draft comment letter (Tab Q, No. 4c). The Committee should then consider a motion to approve the draft comment letter for submission to NOAA on behalf of the Council.

Agenda Item V: SSC Recommendations and Feedback on Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Contract Work

Timeline Status: Informational

Council input and next steps: During its July 2024 meeting, the SSC received a presentation from Dr. Bridgette Froeschke (University of Tampa) providing a progress update on EFH contract work to date. The purpose of this contract work is to identify, collect, and document contemporary benthic habitat spatial data which will be used to inform updated EFH descriptions for managed finfish and shrimp species. Council staff will summarize the SSC's discussions and recommendations relative to the EFH contract work. This SSC summary update to the Committee is informational and the Council will receive a presentation from Dr. Froeschke and the finalized EFH contract report during the November 2024 meeting.

Agenda Item VI: Other Business

Timeline Status: Potential Additional Items

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