

**Gulf Council
Standing Scientific and Statistical Committee
Meeting Summary
September 29 – 30, 2026
Tampa, Florida**

The meeting of the Gulf Council Standing Scientific and Statistical Committees (SSC) was convened at 8:30 AM EDT on September 29, 2026. The agenda for this meeting was adopted after adding two items under Other Business, and the minutes from the July 2026 meeting were approved as modified.

Review: SEDAR 94 West Florida Hogfish Stock Assessment

Council staff presented the findings from the Council’s Fishermen Feedback tool, which is used to capture information on a fish stock from active fishermen on trends or unusual occurrences that fishery scientists and managers may not have observed. The tool is usually deployed before a stock assessment, and its findings shared throughout the assessment process and development of management changes. Most responses for West Florida hogfish came from Florida, and from the private vessel component of the recreational sector.

An SSC member asked about the increase in recreational hook-and-line harvest of hogfish. Council staff replied that there has been limited documentation of historical hook-and-line harvest, but the practice did not become “mainstream” until the early 2010s. Another SSC member recalled an article in *Florida Sportsman* magazine detailing how to catch hogfish, and that fishermen had reported adopting the practice very soon thereafter. An SSC member asked about opportunities for spot-checking the input received through Fishermen Feedback, particularly with individuals who did not self-select to participate and provide input for the tool. Council staff replied that specifically querying fishermen who did not provide input for the tool has not been done to date. Another SSC member asked about the discard mortality rate. A Council staff member directly researching the topic commented that the limited data available show high vulnerability to barotrauma despite being primarily caught in shallow depths and anecdotal evidence suggests discard mortality may be high.

Dr. Chris Swanson (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission [FWC] and Center for Environmental Analysis, Synthesis, and Application [CEASA]) presented the stock assessment data, methods, and findings for SEDAR 94, which assessed the West Florida hogfish stock. This stock assessment is inclusive of private recreational landings data collected by the State of Florida’s State Reef Fish Survey. Increased harvest by private recreational fishermen was also identified in the data in recent years, as was an increase in regulatory discards concomitant with the increase in the minimum size limit from 12 inches fork length (FL) to 14 inches FL in 2017. Fishery-independent indices of abundance included the G-FISHER video, the FWC Seagrass Trawl, and the SEAMAP Trawl surveys. All three fishery-independent surveys appeared sensitive to the documented 2014 red tide episodic mortality event off west Florida. Discards were not included for the commercial sector or recreational spear gear (no data), and recreational hook and line discards were assigned a discard mortality rate of 41.4%. Steepness was not able to be

estimated in the model. Dr. Swanson estimated that there is some meaningful shift being observed in mean size at age, in that the number of smaller fish in the population has increased, perhaps from the increase in the minimum size limit. Model fits to directed fleet removals were good; to discards were poor; and, to fishery-independent indices, while marginal, did follow general trends. Recruitment appears somewhat consistent around a long-term mean, with a few very strong year classes over time driving spikes in biomass. The final base model proved stable and was supported by other diagnostic tests. The stock appears to have increased in biomass since the last stock assessment, with the current spawning potential ratio (0.55) estimated to be above the current proxy for fishing mortality rate at maximum sustainable yield (F_{MSY} ; 30% SPR), and that typically used for other protogynous hermaphrodites ($F_{40\%SPR}$). The West Florida hogfish stock is estimated to be healthy (not overfished and not undergoing overfishing) as of 2024.

An SSC member asked whether having different super-periods between fleets has any noticeable effect. Dr. Swanson replied no, adding that the effects of using super-periods in this way is fleet-specific to that fleet's respective selectivity and retention functions. Another SSC member asked about the ratio of males to females, in the context of the possibility of any sperm limitation within the population. Dr. Swanson said he would have to look into that and reiterated that hogfish begin life as females and can transition to male at larger size and older ages, often mediated by social cues. An SSC member asked about the growth platoon approach, which tracks stanzas of fish within a length class as they become more vulnerable to being selected by the fishery. The ratio of the platoons within the population has a demonstrable effect on recruitment estimates and is estimable within Stock Synthesis. Another SSC member asked about the drop-off in commercial selectivity at length to about 40% for fish larger than about 44 cm. Dr. Swanson replied that the result was model estimated based on the proportion of larger fish present in the population. Dr. Mike Allen (Gulf Council liaison) asked about the drop in selectivity for the recreational spear and hook and line gears to zero beyond about 60 cm FL. Dr. Swanson replied that hogfish larger than that size are not encountered by dockside intercepts, and so the model estimates that those fish are not being selected. Dr. Swanson added that it is not that those fish do not exist or are invulnerable to harvest, just that there are no data to demonstrate their harvest from dockside sampling. Those larger fish do, however, show up in the G-FISHER index. An SSC member asked whether it would be possible to see a profile of steepness across values from 0.8 to 1.0. Dr. Swanson said he would look into this and report back to the SSC on September 30th. An SSC member asked about the change in the size at transition for males moving from nearshore to offshore habitats and thought monitoring that metric might serve as an indicator of fishing pressure. Dr. Swanson replied that most of the historical fishery has existed closer to shore; however, the recent adoption of hook and line tactics has expanded the depths fished from those historical patterns. Generally, though, the data informing this change are limited to those fish observed, and more data are needed. The SSC member and Dr. Swanson agreed that looking into these older hogfish should be a research recommendation. Another SSC member asked about the lengths of fish collected from commercial trap, hook and line, and spear gear, the data for which were combined, and whether there were differences observed in those lengths. Dr. Swanson noted that the observed lengths in the commercial data are sparse, which is why those gears were combined, but that there had been a shift towards smaller fish in the more recent portion of the time series.

Regarding the recreational data, an SSC member posited that the nature of how fishermen are intercepted explains more of the observed recent decline in the recreational spear landings. The

SSC member also asked whether the updating of the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) Fishing Effort Survey (FES) data are expected to impact the results of the stock assessment. Dr. Swanson replied that he did not have any information at present regarding updating recreational landings data for West Florida hogfish relative to any updates to MRIP-FES.

Review: Mississippi and Alabama Creel Surveys

Staff from the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) and Alabama Marine Resources Division (ALMRD) each presented methodology and results to date for their state-specific recreational fisheries survey programs, MS Creel and AL Creel, respectively. MS Creel and AL Creel were established to replace data estimated by the federal Marine Recreational Information Program's (MRIP) Access Point Angler Intercept Survey (APAIS) and FES and were directly adapted from the statistical framework of Louisiana's LA Creel Survey with state-specific modifications to survey design. LA Creel received NOAA Fisheries certification as a statistically valid survey approach to provide recreational fishing data in 2017, and MS and AL Creel each received NOAA Fisheries certification in April 2026.

SSC members inquired whether three neighboring states (LA, MS, AL) with similar creel surveys would result in double counting of effort or landings estimates if anglers fished across state lines. MDMR staff replied that reporting is based on where fish are landed, and that surveyors are trained to ask clarifying questions to ensure accurate data collection. An SSC member asked how MS Creel was funded, and MDMR staff responded that MS Creel is supported through Gulf Fisheries Information Network (GulfFIN), where the data are also housed, and added that additional funding is available to solicit a contractor to conduct statistical comparisons among the different state survey programs. An SSC member inquired about the time lag required to produce the weekly catch and effort data, and MDMR and ALMRD staff replied that data are currently available approximately one month after collection, with improvements in timing expected as the programs develop to support in-season monitoring.

The SSC discussed whether it was appropriate or necessary for it to approve or recommend two surveys that have already been certified by NOAA Fisheries. An SSC member requested clarification about the benefits of MS Creel over MRIP. MDMR staff noted that the MS Creel effort survey targets licensed anglers rather than the population at large, and sampling design for dockside intercepts is improved because site-specific fishing pressure is characterized on a continuous rather than categorical scale. An SSC member added that the weekly frequency of the MS Creel survey would also contribute to increased accuracy and precision of estimates. An SSC member questioned why MS and AL Creel aimed to mirror the magnitude in landings estimated from the legacy MRIP Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS), which was phased out in 2018. MDMR staff clarified that the magnitude in CHTS-estimated landings is still thought to be generally accurate, and that the current annual catch limit (ACL) for red snapper is in CHTS units. An SSC member suggested projecting CHTS-estimated landings forward to compare with MS Creel landings. Dr. Richard Cody (NOAA Office of Science and Technology [OST]) contributed that OST can in fact project CHTS through 2026 and beyond for comparison.

The SSC discussed the potential implications for allocation and the need for accurate calibration among surveys but acknowledged that these topics were likely outside of the SSC's purview. Dr.

Allen thought that the Council would be interested in the SSC's review of the MS and AL Creel methodology, the landings estimates produced, and the uncertainty surrounding the estimates. The SSC supported the MS and AL Creel efforts to improve recreational data collection programs to mirror the LA Creel sampling methodology. Both programs' resultant data were presented for 2025 and 2026 to date. These data are expected to result in improved accuracy and increased precision in the landings estimates used for monitoring and stock assessment purposes. Ultimately, the SSC requested that MDMR and ALMRD produce additional materials for review at a future SSC meeting prior to making a formal recommendation, including a review of MS and AL Creel methodology in comparison with MRIP, gains in efficiency with the new programs, effort and landings estimates for Council-managed species, and uncertainty around those estimates.

Review: Results of the 2024 Marine Recreational Information Program Pilot Study and Data Recalibration

Dr. Cody presented the results of the 2024 pilot study which was designed to investigate and correct for telescoping bias in the MRIP-FES. This telescoping bias was determined to have resulted in overestimation of fishing effort in the shore and private recreational vessel fleets, and by extension, overestimation of the landings associated with those fleets. Dr. Cody detailed the steps taken to correct this bias, other modifications made to the MRIP-FES program and reviewed the results of the revised estimation method for several federally managed species in the Gulf.

Several questions were asked about the presented species-specific harvest and discard estimates. Council staff pointed out that management measures for vermilion snapper and an observed stock decline for king mackerel were unlikely to result in the relatively high discard estimates presented. They asked if more rigorous review was possible given, that in many instances, recreational estimates from MRIP-FES do not generally align with fishermen observations. Dr. Cody indicated that the recreational estimate review process is now more transparent than in the past with OST staff consulting with state agency partners to identify outliers or anomalies. However, Dr. Cody contended that any particular point estimate cannot be removed or substantially modified without some type of quantitative justification. He contended that the SEDAR process was a more appropriate avenue to incorporate qualitative information provided by fishermen.

Dr. Allen asked what the main driver was for reducing the magnitude of the of new recreational landings estimates. Dr. Cody said both the question order and temporal scale of the survey period contributed most to the change, and also to a bounding effect that focused survey responses. He stated that studies of angler behavior indicated that fishermen wanted to report fishing trips whether those trips occurred in the sampling period or not. This was especially the case in low effort "winter" waves (1, 2, and 6). By allowing participants to report trips for an annual period satisfied that desire in addition to focusing their responses to the targeted sampling period.

The SSC asked how the "new" FES estimates might be combined with the for-hire telephone survey (FHS) in the stock assessment process. Dr. Cody replied that since no methodological changes occurred with FHS, the relationship to combine FHS and MRIP-FES for input into a stock assessment would need to be revisited. He indicated that his office would work with SEFSC staff as needed to make those determinations. Council staff asked if OST had plans to investigate an approach to partition FHS estimates to align with Gulf and South Atlantic Council jurisdictional

boundaries. Dr. Cody stated that his office would be willing to explore methods to tease apart FHS estimates within Monroe County, Florida, to address that need.

Public Comment, September 29

None received.

Review: SEDAR 94 West Florida Hogfish Yield Projections

Dr. Swanson reviewed steepness profiling as requested by the SSC the day prior. As steepness decreases, estimates of spawning stock biomass (SSB) increase along with estimates of virgin stock size (R_0). Model fits were not meaningfully improved at lower steepness values. Dr. Swanson concluded with showing that there is not enough information to inform the stock-recruit relationship, which is a reason why steepness was not estimable in the base model.

Dr. Swanson reviewed catch projections for West Florida hogfish resulting from the SEDAR 94 stock assessment. Projections for the overfishing limit (OFL) were made at F_{MSY} , with both $F_{30\%SPR}$ and $F_{40\%SPR}$ simulated as MSY proxies, and the acceptable biological catch (ABC) estimated at 75% of the yield at F_{MSY} for both scenarios. It was noted that the SSC has considered both 75% of the yield at F_{MSY} and 75% of the fishing mortality rate at F_{MSY} in the past, and the yield is the more conservative value (it results in a lower F and allowable harvest). An SSC member thought the short-term projections based on the last five years of recruitment did not account for occasional spikes in recruitment that have been observed with this stock. Another SSC member thought the differences between the short-term and long-term recruitment values were minimal. Council staff asked whether the mean weights calculable between the projected yields in numbers and pounds have been validated with SRFS data, and whether the average weight is expected to change as the stock is fished down towards the SSB at MSY. Dr. Swanson replied that the mean weights in the model from the last three years (2022 – 2024) are being held constant in the projections (2025+).

Regarding the MSY proxy, the SSC discussed the merits of selecting $F_{30\%SPR}$ or $F_{40\%SPR}$. An SSC member noted that the stock is currently managed under $F_{30\%SPR}$ and has not been overfished under that proxy. Other SSC members noted the SSC's recent decision-making pattern of selecting $F_{40\%SPR}$ based on the life history of hogfish, which is a protogynous hermaphrodite. Another SSC member added that the stock has not been observed to have been fished down to $F_{30\%SPR}$ before, and therefore it is unknown how the stock would respond over time to such heavy fishing pressure. The SSC converged on relying on the long-term average for recruitment for informing projections using an F_{MSY} proxy of $F_{40\%SPR}$.

Motion: The SSC reviewed the stock assessment model developed during SEDAR 94 for West Florida Hogfish and considers it to be consistent with the best scientific information available, and suitable for informing management advice.

Motion carried without opposition.

Dr. Swanson shared updated projections with the SSC using $F_{40\%SPR}$ as the proxy for F_{MSY} and assuming the long-term average of recruitment. Council staff noted that the actual landings have been used in interim years under projections scenarios for other stock assessments. An SSC member thought that considering the equilibrium yield at $F_{40\%SPR}$ would also be appropriate, given the current stock condition and propensity for occasional recruitment pulses. Council staff noted that the current ACL in MRIP Coastal Household Telephone Survey units is 150,400 lb ww. Further, recent recreational landings in SRFS units over the last 5 years oscillate between approximately 70,000 – 170,000 lb ww, plus commercial landings of between approximately 7,400 – 10,400 lb ww, for 2020 – 2024. SSC members observed that if the predicted catches at $F_{40\%SPR}$ were used in the projections, those values would overestimate expected landings based on recent landings and the resulting constant catch scenario would be more conservative than if recent finalized landings were used as a surrogate instead. An SSC member commented that moving to $F_{40\%SPR}$ was a conservative step in the right direction, and that if a constant catch scenario is considered, that they would prefer to see the assessment re-run in a few years to check on how the stock is responding. The SSC member supported a three-year average of the projected yield for 2028 – 2030 for both the OFL and ABC. This projected yield would assume that the projected catch limits from the interim years (2025 – 2027) would be harvested. These catch limits are well above recent harvests, adding some conservatism to using the three-year average of the projected yield for 2028 – 2030 for both the OFL and ABC.

Motion: The SSC sets the OFL for West Florida hogfish at 208,103 lb ww, which is the average projected yield from 2028 – 2030 at $F_{40\%SPR}$ estimated from the SEDAR 94 stock assessment base model. The ABC is set at 177,581 lb ww, which is the yield at 75% of $F_{40\%SPR}$. The SSC recommends that the West Florida hogfish stock be reassessed in 2029.

Motion carried with one opposed, one abstention, and one absent.

Review: SHELF Egg Project

Dr. Chris Stallings (University of South Florida, Mackerel SSC) reviewed the Spawning Habitat and Early-Life Linkages to Fisheries (SHELF) program with the SSC. The SHELF program was established in 2017 to develop a long-term record of fish reproductive activity on the West Florida Shelf through DNA barcoding of individual fish eggs. By leveraging archived egg collections from the SEAMAP Fall Plankton Survey, SHELF extended the resulting time series back to 2013 while continuing annual sampling. More recently, SHELF developed an independent Continuous Underway Fish Egg Sampler to augment SEAMAP sampling. Together, these efforts have produced a species-level record of spawning activity for managed and non-managed fishes in the eastern Gulf. As SHELF concludes its third phase and over ten years of observations, the data are beginning to support fisheries applications and other management-relevant products. Data products from SHELF are considered in Gulf stock assessments (e.g., recently, SEDAR 99 for Gulf migratory group king mackerel). While SHELF currently samples only the eastern Gulf and may not be suitable as a direct tuning index for Gulf-wide assessments, it provides an independent source of information that can strengthen confidence in assessment outcomes and reveal patterns not detected by other monitoring programs.

Dr. Stallings reviewed SHELF findings, which have identified over 100 species via DNA barcoding. Regarding king mackerel, while coefficients of variation are high, a decline in spawning output across the West Florida shelf has been observed between 2013 and 2025. Dr. Stallings also showed a northward shift in the centroid distribution of king mackerel egg abundance from off of west-central Florida into the Big Bend region. Dr. Stallings expressed a desire to expand sampling efforts into the western Gulf to create a more holistic dataset for the species it collects in the region. He added that DNA barcoding could be increased with increased sample collections made between SEAMAP stations. Further, if a seasonal period for sample collection could be added under the current program, Dr. Stallings recommended adding a summer sampling effort to capture peak spawning activity for multiple reef fish species.

An SSC member thought such collections like SHELF would be valuable in the western Gulf also. Dr. Allen asked about grouper species in SHELF sampling, to which Dr. Stallings commented on timing issues between when spawning occurs and the physical presence of eggs and larvae at the surface where sampling occurs. Another SSC member agreed and thought it may be difficult to draw causation between recruitment to juvenile and adult abundances due to the many factors at play for successfully sampling eggs. Dr. Stallings acknowledged variables with spawning periodicity and depth but said that based on the considerable sample sizes with SHELF, they do not observe issues with egg presence/absence between day and night cycles. An SSC member recommended investigating larval data fits in recent stock assessments, noting that such data are uncommonly used for meaningfully informing trends. Doing so may help identify gaps to fill to make those larval data more informative.

Review: Social Science Questionnaire for Gulf Species

Dr. Matt McPherson (Southeast Fisheries Science Center [SEFSC]) presented the findings of a pilot expert survey assessing the social value of Gulf of America (Gulf) fisheries. This is an approach that has been applied to the broader Southeast region, including the South Atlantic and Caribbean. This interest in assessing social value as separate from economic and biological value arose during the development of the Risk-Value matrix, which would combine different forms of value with different forms of risk to decide how to prioritize species for stock assessments and management. Dr. McPherson discussed the methodology of the survey including the social value dimensions and the ranking scale used along with preliminary findings. The objective of the presentation was to elicit feedback from the SSC on whether structured expert elicitation is a useful approach for assessing the social value of fisheries and, if so, for the SSC to identify the refinements needed before a larger application.

Many SSC members agreed that the dimensions used by this survey might result in a prioritization of the social value of recreational fisheries over commercial fisheries. One SSC member discussed that recreational value may receive higher overall scores as two dimensions (recreational well-being and teaching and knowledge) seem exclusive to the recreational sector. He suggested that the subsistence and food security dimensions might need a commercial corollary, based on their social value employing members of a community, particularly those who might be at risk. He further warned of a trend bias, where respondents might rank based on current trends and not long-standing historical practices. One SSC member mentioned that it is hard to disentangle the dimensions of social value from biological and economic components. An SSC member suggested

that there could be a factor analysis, to account for multiple recreational dimensions. Another SSC member suggested that the different uses of recreational fishing be considered, factoring in how some might be used for harvest and subsistence and some for catch and release.

SSC members asked about the methodology of the survey, including the process of expert elicitation. One SSC member supported expert elicitation but suggested that it could be challenging to assess if someone is an expert on all dimensions and all species in the survey. Another SSC member asked the presenter to discuss criteria for selecting experts and suggested that they might consider members of Gulf communities with on-the-water experience. Another SSC member questioned the value of the survey if it was just distributed internally due to Paperwork Reduction Act limitations. The presenter responded that they are searching for ways to distribute the survey to external participants. Another SSC member asked about the length of the survey and warned of fatigue at the end. One SSC member suggested there might be a random effect in the analysis.

Some SSC members also inquired about state industries and state managed species. An SSC member suggested that non-federally managed species could be considered as a point of comparison. Another SSC member suggested that participants in state industries might see different scales of issues than those who are federally permitted, although they may be targeting the same species.

Discussion: Regulatory Streamlining

Mr. Peter Hood (independent contractor) presented proposed mechanisms for improving the efficiency of routine and minor adjustments to management advice, including developing a more automated process for updating catch limits and other management changes for a suite of pilot species. The Council funded this work as part of its ongoing regulatory streamlining efforts, with the aim of improving the timeliness and throughput of incorporating updated scientific information into the management process. This work will continue with development of prospective amendments to fishery management plans to implement the regulatory efficiency measures. Mr. Hood outlined two potential ways to leverage the use of framework procedures to increase flexibility and expediency to implement routine ACL changes for species with a stock ACL and no sector allocation.

An SSC member requested clarification on the difference between framework actions and plan amendments. Mr. Hood replied that framework actions are used to address recurring adjustments to management actions (e.g., ACL, bag limit, size limit), while plan amendments are used to develop more complex management actions. An SSC member asked why social and economic issues resulted in delays to development of Spanish mackerel management actions. Mr. Hood clarified that the bottleneck resulted from SERO anthropologist and economist staff workloads and prioritization, not issues with the fishery. An SSC member pointed out that the examples of simple management actions provided in the presentation were centered around increases to the ACL, and that decreasing the ACL may be more controversial.

SSC members discussed whether regulatory streamlining for the proposed pilot species was the best way to gain efficiency, given that these species do not appear before the SSC very often and

their management actions are typically straightforward. Mr. Hood and Council staff contributed that the aim of this regulatory streamlining effort was to start small, with non-controversial species and management actions, both to free up staff and Council time to focus on complex management issues and to test the automation process for potential expansion to other species in the future.

SSC members discussed the difficulty in assigning a threshold for minor changes in ACL that could be considered for automation. SSC members suggested that a species-by-species evaluation of thresholds may be necessary, particularly when considering the differences in data streams, data units, and modeling approaches among species. An SSC member urged caution in assuming that small changes in ACL always result in small impacts. SSC members suggested a checklist or decision tree approach for evaluating whether a species could be considered for an automatic ACL adjustment process, including considerations such as population stability and potential impacts to access.

Public Comment, September 30

None received.

Other Business

SEDAR 109 Greater Amberjack Workshop Appointments

Council staff solicited the SSC for volunteers for the participatory components of the upcoming stock assessment of Gulf greater amberjack (SEDAR 109). Drs. Jim Nance and Paul Mickle, and Mr. Jason Adriance volunteered to participate in the Data Workshop. Drs. Jim Nance and Dave Chagaris, and Mr. Jason Adriance volunteered to participate in the Assessment process. Dr. Luiz Barbieri was volunteered to chair the Review Workshop. Council staff will help identify other SSC volunteers to serve as reviewers.

Discussion: Gulf Greater Amberjack Count

SSC members discussed the Gulf portion of the completed Greater Amberjack Count study, which endeavored to produce an estimate of absolute abundance of greater amberjack in the Gulf and the South Atlantic, respectively. A summary presentation of the updated results following the review by the Center for Independent Experts (CIE) in April 2026 was to be provided at this SSC meeting but needed to be rescheduled due to timing for providing review materials by the briefing book deadline. The summary presentation will be provided next to the Council in October 2026, and the SSC at a subsequent meeting.

An SSC member noted that over \$40 million has been allocated towards projects aimed at generating estimates of absolute abundance in the southeastern U.S, including the Great Red Snapper Count and the Greater Amberjack Count. The SSC's review of the results of the Greater Amberjack Count was supposed to occur originally in July 2026, then it was moved to September 2026, and now it is going to the Council before the SSC, which the SSC member thought was different from the typical order of operations for the Council reviewing scientific materials of this type. The SSC member recalled that the CIE recommendation from the review of the Greater

Amberjack Count was not to use it for informing management advice. The SSC member thought a discussion about these types of studies by the SSC was necessary, as the opportunity costs for performing these types of studies was high and their rate of success for informing stock assessments was low. Another SSC member agreed in part, with some exceptions for certain other projects mentioned like for cobia and tripletail, and expected that despite poor CIE reviews, some data therein should still be useful. An SSC member did not want to disparage the idea of congressional funding to address Gulf fishery questions but thought it important to make sure future studies were best oriented to inform fisheries management. The SSC member also thought the current pattern of communication and order of review created confusion for the public regarding the results of such projects. Planning for integration into stock assessments and utility for management should be a key part of the project planning.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 am eastern time on September 30, 2026.

Meeting Participants

Standing SSC

Jason Adriance
 Harry Blanchet
 Dave Chagaris
 Thomas Frazer, *Vice Chair*
 David Griffith
 Tiffany Hopper
 Jack Isaacs
 John Mareska
 Paul Mickle
 Trevor Moncrief, *Chair*

James Nance
 Dan Petrolia
 Sean Powers
 Andrew Ropicki
 Ralph Townsend
 Steven Scyphers
 Steve Saul

Council Representative

Mike Allen