

Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council Meeting  
May 14, 2024 - Day 1

**CONVENE MEETING, INTRODUCTIONS, AND CONFIRM QUORUM**

Thomas McCann, Designated Federal Officer, welcomed members of the Council and all others present and briefly reviewed the protocol for the virtual meeting. Mr. McCann called the role and determined that a quorum was present.

**OPENING REMARKS**

Opening remarks provided by:

- Shannon Estenoz, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, Department of the Interior
- Martha Williams, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Sam Rauch, Deputy Assistant Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Ron Regan, Executive Director, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Shannon Estenoz expressed the historic significance of the Council's meeting and addressed the important perspectives and knowledge in the room. Ms. Estenoz acknowledged the Biden Administration's investment of funds into watershed restoration and protection, coastal resilience, and ecosystem restoration.

Martha Williams emphasized collaboration is key amongst everyone to achieve conservation goals, noting this Council's pivotal role in recommending policies and programs to expand participants throughout the country. Ms. Williams acknowledged past and current partnership with NOAA and how it's a good example of the potential that can be achieved when federal agencies work together.

Sam Rauch provided opening remarks on behalf of Director Janet Coit, ex-officio member of the Council, on behalf of the NOAA Fisheries program. NOAA Marine Fisheries assist on the restoration of waters and coastal economies dependent on those waters. Marine Fisheries play an important role in ensuring a sustainable future for recreational activities, including how to better incorporate recreational boating and fishing opportunities into the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Mr. Rauch stated that Marine Fisheries received about \$3 billion under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and about \$3 billion under the Inflation Reduction (IRA) Act. Marine Fishers has dedicated \$200 million for projects addressing marine debris, and \$123 million in funding across state and territorial coastal management programs and national estuary research reserves

Ron Regan, the Executive Director of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, spoke on behalf of Chuck Sykes, president of AFWA and ex-officio member of the Council. Mr. Regan shared that the Council has an open seat on the National Fish Habitat Program board. Mr. Regan shared that America's Conservation Enhancement Reauthorization Act passed the Senate and the reauthorization of the National Fish Habitat Partnership Program was included in legislation.

### **SFBPC MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS**

Candice Price - Urban America Outdoor Productions  
Barb Gigar - Aquatic Resources Education Association  
Risa Shimoda - River Management Society  
Carl Klimah - Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe Department of Natural Resources  
Chris Horton - Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation  
Gene Gilliland - B.A.S.S. LLC  
Lucas Bissett - American Flyfishing Association  
Daniel Andrews - Captains for Clean Water  
Tom Sadler - Marine Fish Conservation Network  
Jennifer Koenig - Brunswick  
Mike Leonard - American Sportfishing Association  
John Langford - Project Healing Waters  
Nancy Stewart - State Organization for Boating Access (SOBA)  
David Yoskowitz - Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
Patrick Berry - Backcountry Hunters and Anglers

Alternate member introductions:

Joseph Lewis - Mount Dora Boating Center and Marina  
Clay Crabtree - National Marine Manufacturer's Association

### **GROUP PHOTO**

In-person participants gathered in the courtyard for group photo.

### **OVERVIEW OF SPORT FISHING AND BOATING PARTNERSHIP COUNCIL (SFBPC), HISTORY AND PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

Steve Guertin, Deputy Director of Program Management and Policy at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, provided an overview of the SFBPC, its history, and the program priorities.

#### **Overview**

Mr. Guertin read the mission statement of the SFBPC and its goals to conserve, restore, and enhance the quality, function, sustainable productivity, and distribution of aquatic resources that support and increase recreational fishing and boating opportunities nationwide. Mr. Guertin shared that over the last 30 years, SFBPC has provided important

guidance to the Service and the Secretary of the Interior on fisheries programs and improving the efficiency of grant programs. Mr. Guertin shared that as of January 2023, the Council is now a statutory committee established by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021. He noted the new Council is made up of a diverse network of experts in recreational fishing and boating, conservation, advocacy, tribal and state natural resource management agencies. Mr. Guertin noted that with the newest adopted charter, diversity-based organizations are included in the Council's membership balance plan. Mr. Guertin drew attention to the importance of this change as it will better reflect the makeup of the country.

### **History**

Mr. Guertin explained that Council predecessors made recommendations that continue to yield conservation results and expanded recreational opportunities. Mr. Guertin first mentioned the National Outreach and Communications Program (NOCP). Mr. Guertin shared under the Sport Fishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998, the Council needed to assist in overseeing a strategic plan for NOCP. A subsequent strategic plan was developed, and as a result, the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) was established in October 1998.

Mr. Guertin also mentioned the National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP), which was established in 2002. The Council recommended the National Fish Action Plan to address the declines in America's fish populations and threats to aquatic habitat and water quality. Mr. Guertin reported that there is currently an open seat for a Council member to serve on its board. The NFHP board works in all 50 states under an array of authorities and sources to maximize the impact of conservation dollars. Since 2006, the partnership has funded more than 1,100 conservation projects. Since 2017, NFHP has provided over \$23 million to conservation programs, leveraging over \$167 million in matches for conservation projects such as improve angling and recreational opportunities

Mr. Guertin stated that the Council played an important role in providing feedback to the Fish and Aquatic Conservation program's current strategic plan.

### **Program Priorities**

Turning to program priorities, Mr. Guertin shared that through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the Service received investments that will support the National Wildlife Refuge System for resiliency and climate adaptation, and endangered species recovery. Mr. Guertin reported that the Service additionally received \$200 million in fish passage funding. NOAA and the Service have partnered with other Federal agencies to leverage \$2 billion of fish passage funding. Mr. Guertin noted that significant work has happened to bring that money to bear for habitat restoration projects on the ground that directly benefit anglers and boaters.

Mr. Guertin concluded with a message on how accessibility is key to the goals of the Service. Whether it be increasing access for anglers, hunters, and the recreating public, the Council has many opportunities to enhance accessibility to our public lands.

### **SFBPC NEAR-TERM IDENTIFIED PRIORITIES**

Dave Miko, Assistant Director of the Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program, provided updates on the Council's near-term priorities. Mr. Miko shared that the Council receives funding through the Sport Fish Restoration funds. Mr. Miko reported that currently there is \$1.6 million in that account available for use. Mr. Miko noted a key priority of the Council is its role of overseeing the implementation of the National Outreach and Communications plan (NOCP). Mr. Miko shared the Council will provide assistance to the Secretaries in fulfilling the priorities that were established by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021. One of those priorities is reviewing the most recent assessment of the NOCP. An additional priority for the Council is to study the impacts of derelict vessels and identify recyclable solutions for recreational vessels, such as abandoned vessels that pose a threat by blocking navigational channels, damaging ecosystems, and diminishing recreational value. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Marine Debris program will assist with this effort.

Another near-term priority is to assess non-motorized vessel access. Mr. Miko stated that in December of 2022, the U.S. Government Accountability Office created the "Recreational Boating: How Vessel Users Contribute to and Benefit from a Federal Trust Fund" report. The Council is tasked with reviewing that report.

Discussion points raised by the Council following the presentation included asking for examples of prior projects the Council has funded, as well as the process to decide where those funds go. Mr. Miko remarked that some funding goes towards travel for Council members and Federal staff while the remaining funds are able to go towards other types of research projects. The process to access funds would be developed in a subcommittee structure and ultimately up to a vote within Council. Ms. Gigar suggested looking at previous minutes to see if any questions have remained unanswered, since a discussion on access was being deferred until the GAO study was completed. Mr. Sadler inquired about the scope of the subcommittee responsible for the NOCP assessment. Mr. McCann explained that once the NOCP assessment and recommendations are shared, the subcommittee would thoroughly research each recommendation and identify ways to implement recommendations. Mr. McCann also shared that members would be hearing from RBFF later in the meeting.

### **AGENCY UPDATES USFWS & NOAA**

## **Overview of NOAA**

Russ Dunn, National Policy Advisor for Recreational Fisheries, provided an overview of NOAA, its programs, and where it operates. The 2022 Inflation Reduction Act provided a historic opportunity to advance climate resilience and understand climate driven changes to the marine and aquatic environments. Mr. Leonard inquired what NOAA's role was in the Great Lakes. Mr. Rauch responded NOAA has certain authorities working with the EPA under certain dedicated congressional provisions to do habitat work in the Great Lakes.

## **Tribal Priorities**

Mr. Dunn noted that in regard to Tribal priorities, \$390 million is being directed toward habitat restoration, fish passage, capacity, building, fish hatcheries, and science. Mr. Dunn stated Ocean-based climate resilience accelerators, a grant program, and the Climate-Ready Workforce are also priorities. Mr. Dunn noted that the Regional Fishery Management Councils are a federal partner and that additional funds are going to help the Council manage some of this workload that's coming in, while Red Snapper and North Atlantic Right Whales are also being looked at for funding.

## **National Ocean Service (NOS)**

Mr. Dunn detailed additional programs from the NOS. Mr. Dunn noted some priorities that included implementing the Recreational Fisheries policy, recreational data improvements, engagement, DEI, habitat, and the Marine Resource Education Program (MREP). Ms. Price raised the concern of many states about removing DEI programming and asked how they get through that when they're providing state funding. Mr. Rauch shared that they put out a national Equity and Environmental Justice (EEJ) Strategy, work with the states, and meet annually with state directors. Mr. Ruach also noted inequity, and looking at underserved communities is an important issue.

## **Fish and Aquatic Conservation (FAC) Program**

Dave Miko shared that FAC's mission is to work with others and their partners to engage the public using a science-based approach to conserve, restore, and enhance fish and other aquatic resources for the continued benefit of the American people. Mr. Miko shared that the Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program has a vast portfolio, consisting of 71 fish hatcheries, 51 Fish and Wildlife Conservation Offices (FWCO), 7 Fish Technology Centers, and 6 Fish Health Centers. Mr. Miko also included the Aquatic Animal Drug Approval Partnership (AADAP), which is the only program in the country specifically focused on developing FDA-approved drugs for fish and aquatic species.

Mr. Miko noted the 2017 economic impact analysts of the Fish and Aquatic Conservation program. Mr. Miko shared the expenditures and outreach activities supported by FAC, which are roughly \$2.1 billion in output and nearly 18,700 jobs. \$1.2 billion of those funds

are for recreational fish stocking that comes out of programs like habitat assessment and restoration activities, national fish hatcheries, and aquatic invasive species management.

Mr. Sadler raised a discussion point about the strategic plan and the “why” and “where” of it. Mr. Sadler noted that while the FAC is an important partner and resource, there’s been a challenge in the past regarding conversations with FAC. Mr. Miko shared that he hoped to include the conservation partners, states, NGOs, and industry regarding the plan in an effort to better understand their needs and expectations of the FAC Program, and, in turn, meet those expectations. Mr. Miko expressed his desire for the strategic plan creation to be both fully collaborative and cooperative effort. Mr. Horton echoed this sentiment, saying that he highly encouraged the collaborative effort and is appreciative of it.

### **National Fish Hatchery System**

Mr. Miko explained the Wild Fish Health Survey and the opportunities the Service provides for our state and Tribal partners. Mr. Miko noted FAC has 71 hatcheries, with a quarter of them being over 100 years old, and within that system, there is a deferred maintenance backlog of around \$400 million, while they only have \$16–\$17 million a year for maintenance work. Mr. Miko mentioned that in 2023, 127 million fish were released by the National Fish Hatchery System. Candice Price expressed her admiration and appreciation for fish hatcheries and the value they’ve provided.

### **Landscape and Invasive Species**

Mr. Miko detailed how the Habitat Assessment and Restoration Population Assessment program focuses on landscape-level conservation and management. As climate change impacts us, more and more of the U.S. landscape becomes vulnerable to impacts from invasive species. Mr. Miko emphasized how invasive species are a growing issue, as they contribute to over \$120 billion in environmental damages and losses annually. Through the Lacey Act, the Fish and Aquatic Conservation Program can list species as invasive. Mr. Miko announced that of the species they have listed on the Lacey Act, none have made it into the U.S.

### **Fish Passage Updates**

Mr. Miko highlighted the recent announcement of 43 additional projects in 29 states for a total funding of \$70 million under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Fish Passage Program.

## **RECREATIONAL BOATING AND FISHING FOUNDATION (RBFF)**

Dave Chanda opened by sharing that their strategic plan is a three-year plan developed with a consultant, their staff, and the board of directors in conjunction with the USFWS. Mr. Chanda shared that RBFF has long been a champion of supporting

underserved communities and how the First Catch Centers program was their pilot program to help such communities. Since the inception of the First Catch Centers program, it has now expanded to twenty-four state partners and thirty mobile trailers on the road. Mr. Chanda noted accessibility and how it was an issue at the time of the first strategic plan and still is currently. He made sure to note that access isn't just a physical aspect, but also a knowledge barrier. Mr. Chanda stated that, collectively, RBFF and the Council need to think of how to help the public find places that are close to home, not overly crowded, and available.

Mr. Chanda went on to share a little history of the RBFF, their mission, and their vision. Mr. Chanda noted that the American Sport Fishing Association and AFWA have seats on RBFF's board. Mr. Chanda indicated that one of the open seats is for an at-large member, and challenged the Council to think outside the box in terms of filling that seat. Stephanie Vatalaro echoed the RBFF mission and vision and shared their two main goals: consumer engagement and stakeholder engagement bucket. Ms. Vatalaro shared a video for this year's advertising campaign.

Mr. Andrews raised the discussion point of whether RBFF has asked new recruits to fishing and boarding to figure out what made them want to get involved. Ms. Vatalaro shared the current research project they are doing, "The Psychology of Churn." This reflects that while they are seeing new recruits to the activities each year, they are also losing people. Ms. Vatalaro noted that this project is to help better understand why people choose to leave when they do and to find ways to motivate them to stay. Carl Klimah pointed out how minority communities can skew trends, such as youth as opposed to adults. Ashley Reimann shared a question online regarding whether RBFF was involved with high school fishing leagues, as it seems to be growing. Mr. Chanda stated that while they've made some partnerships with fishing leagues and a few grants, this is not an avenue they've explored very deeply. He shared that the RBFF felt high school type clubs already do a good job at supporting avid anglers, whereas the RBFF targets novices.

## **NATIONAL OUTREACH AND COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAM**

Erin Hart, Principle of Spitfire Strategies opened up this agenda item with a quick intro on herself, as did Annabelle Gardner, Vice President. Ms. Hart mentioned that the audit spanned from 2016 to 2021 and how that's a longer time period than prior audits, noting the pandemic and other factors that played a role in the duration of the audit. Annabelle Gardner reviewed the questions used in the assessment and the metrics RBFF used in the research. Ms. Gardner shared many of the NOCP Assessment recommendations. Candice Price commented on the fantastic work that was done to pull all the information together. Lucas Bissett remarked on the learning curve with Gen Z and how to speak to an audience that will listen and tailor that message to them. Barb Gigar

remarked on how many of the recommendations would affect other groups, their corresponding communities, and entities, and how the recommendations for RBFF weave into the big picture for everyone. Risa Shimoda shared her thoughts of audience consideration and how the word “conservation” may not go with everything, such as boating, fishing, and posing questions to get everyone on board to work towards a goal rather than just listing everything. Mr. McCann reiterated to think about the nominees for the RBFF board, as the vote would be at the next meeting.

## **WRAP-UP AND ADJOURN**

Thomas McCann reminded everyone to think about nominations for the at-large seat on the RBFF board of directors and the NFHP board seat. Ms. Reimann discussed hotel checkout procedure and travel reimbursement. Mr. McCann adjourned the meeting at 4:51 p.m. until 8:30 a.m. on May 15, 2024.

## **ATTENDANCE**

### **Council Members**

Daniel Andrews, Captains for Clean Water  
Patrick Berry, Backcountry Hunters & Anglers  
Lucas Bissett, American Flyfishing Association  
Barb Gigar, Aquatic Resources Education Association  
Gene Gilliland, B.A.S.S. LLC  
Chris Horton, Congressional Sportsmen Foundation  
Carl Klimah, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, Department of Natural Resources  
Jennifer Koenig, Brunswick  
John Langford, Project Healing Waters  
Mike Leonard, American Sportfishing Association  
Candice Price, Urban American Productions  
G. J. Thomas Sadler, Marine Fish Conservation Network  
Risa Shimoda, River Management Society  
Nancy Stewart, State Organization for Boating Access  
David Yoskowitz, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

### **Ex-officio Members**

Martha Williams, U.S Fish and Wildlife Service

### **Alternate Members**

Clayton Crabtree, National Marine Manufacturer's Association  
Joseph Lewis, Mount Dora Boating Center and Marina



**Appointed Representative for Ex-officio Members**

Sam Rauch, National Marine Fisheries Service

Ron Regan, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

**Other Attendees**

Thomas McCann, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Designated Federal Officer

Russell Dunn, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Tim Sartwell, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Heidi Lovett, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Dave Chanda, Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

Stephanie Vatalaro, Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

Rachel Piacenza, Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

Stephanie Hussey, Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation

Cardell Johnson, Government Accountability Office

Elizabeth Jimenez, Government Accountability Office

Scott Heacock, Government Accountability Office

David Miko, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Steve Guertin, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Ashley Reimann, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Ryan Roberts, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Holly Richards, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Justin Cutler, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Lori Bennet, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Paul Rauch, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Erin Hart, Spitfire Strategies

Annabelle Gardner, Spitfire Strategies

Chair approval (date): 7/2/2024

Chair signature: 

## Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council Meeting May 15, 2024 - Day 2

### **ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISH QUORUM, RECAP DAY 1**

Mr. Horton, Chair of the SFBPC, welcomed members of the Council and all others present and thanked everyone for a great day of discussion on Day 1. He then introduced Mr. Miko and Mr. Dunn for a recap of the first day's discussions.

Mr. Miko clarified the supporting roles of the USFWS and NOAA. Mr. Miko emphasized the importance of open, honest communication for effective decision-making. Mr. Dunn echoed these sentiments and encouraged members to identify areas where NOAA could provide additional support. Mr. Dunn expressed NOAA's pleasure at being a formal partner.

Mr. Bissett asked about the breakdown of time spent on the mandates of the Council. Mr. Horton responded that it was fluid, with immediate emphasis on the RBFF review. Mr. Sadler suggested a chart or visual matrix would be helpful, showing action items for the next year, and over the next three years, for example. Mr. Gilliland encouraged the Council members to take notes at other meetings when things pop up that are a perfect fit for the Council.

### **NATIONAL FISH HABITAT PARTNERSHIP BOARD (NFHP)**

Mr. Horton opened the discussion regarding the open NFHP seat. Mr. Regan gave a brief summary of the number of people on NFHP board and their meeting frequencies. Mr. Regan explained the diversity of thoughts and insights on the board and that the participation of SFBPC members are welcomed and appreciated. Mr. Regan also touched on the qualifications of potential NFHP board members. Mr. Leonard gave additional overview of the role and coverage of NFHP, as well as the funding from Congress. Mr. Leonard recommended tabling the selection of a candidate for the board until Council members had the opportunity to review and learn more about the program. Mr. Horton suggested a follow-up email with more information on NFHP to gauge interest and set a timeline for voting. Mr. Leonard agreed with this plan and stressed the importance of timely follow-up. Mr. Bissett inquired if there are parameters regarding potential nominees and conflict of interest, providing an example of someone who might be pursuing a grant with NFHP. Mr. Leonard and others agreed that if there was a direct or perceived conflict of interest, the board member would recuse themselves from that specific deliberation.

### **SPORT FISH RESTORATION AND BOATING TRUST FUND: CONTRIBUTIONS AND BENEFITS**

Cardell Johnson, Director of Federal Land and Water Natural Resources and Environment at the U.S. Government Accountability Office, introduced his colleagues, Liz Jimenez, Senior Analyst, and Scott Haycock, Assistant Director, who would be assisting with the presentation. Mr. Johnson gave an overview of the GAO, along with a slide-show presentation on the Nonmotorized Vessel Access Report that was mandated by the last reauthorization of the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. Mr. Johnson also provided some insight to the scope and methodology of the GAO report. Ms. Jimenez presented the findings, such as who contributes and who benefits from the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. A discussion followed regarding the motorized and non-motorized contributions to the fund. Discussion points raised by the Council following the presentation included Mr. Klimah commenting on how boat ramps are strictly for boats and to perhaps market similar areas as multi-use facilities in a way to increase non-motorized vessels. Ms. Jimenez replied that states are trying to develop multipurpose spots, but noted there might be some confusion about the purpose and the potential funding for multi-use facilities. Mr. Bissett posed the question of what prompted the audit. Ms. Jimenez shared that the audit was due to a mandate within the Infrastructure and Investment Jobs Act. Mr. Leonard offered that much of this originated from discussions leading up to the last reauthorization of the Sport Fish Restoration and Boating Trust Fund, about the anecdotal and perceived conflicts between motorized and non-motorized vessels. Ms. Gigar noted an issue for state agencies is that there's not a connection to non-motorized vessels, as they are not registered like motorized vessels are, but there's a growing community of non-motorized vessels, such as paddleboarders. Ms. Shimoda inquired whether any discussions occurred with national groups for their perspective, also noting that regulations can differ greatly from state to state. Mr. Lewis provided commentary on non-motorized vessels not paying fuel taxes. Mr. Regan shared his thoughts of the report as he was one of the individuals interviewed for it.

## **OFFICE OF CONSERVATION INVESTMENT UPDATES**

Paul Rauch, Assistant Director of the Office of Conservation and Investment at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, shared a snapshot of the Sport Fishing Restoration Fund's apportionments to states for 2024. Mr. Rauch noted that the Sport Fishing Restoration Fund manages twelve programs for the Fish and Wildlife Service including training, policy, compliance, and operations support. Mr. Rauch discussed a pilot program to enhance informational signage on Wildlife and Sport Restoration program-funded facilities. Mr. Rauch discussed the state apportionments for 2024, which totaled \$382 million, which is down 10 percent from 2023.

Mr. Rauch discussed the Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) program and how its funding is used to construct and renovate berthing facilities for transient, non-trailable recreational vehicles. Mr. Rauch shared that they are funding twenty-two applications totaling \$4.4 million for tier one, and \$18.2 million for tier two, with eighteen applications already approved. Mr. Rauch also discussed the Clean Vessel Act program and how its funds are used to construct,

renovate, maintain and operate vessel sewage pump out stations for recreational boaters. Mr. Rauch noted they've received 26 applications and \$15.6 million in federal funding, which have been approved.

Mr. Rauch provided regulation updates currently being worked on, such as the CVA regulation and National Coastal Wetlands grant program, 50 CFR 80. Mr. Rauch mentioned the national survey for fishing, hunting, wildlife watching that was published in October 2023 and the valuable information it provided. Mr. Rauch briefly discussed the program Partner with a Payer, which was started by the National Shooting Sports Foundation, and a video was shared on its overview.

Discussion points were raised by Mr. Lewis about what types of oversight are currently incorporated into the BIG and CVA programs. Mr. Klimah commented on the Partner with a Payer program and shared, from the Tribal perspective, the monetization of conservation is a taboo subject.

## **COUNCIL BUSINESS, OPEN DISCUSSION**

Mr. Horton began the open discussion by reiterating the vacant NFHP board seat. Mr. Horton addressed the need to set up subcommittees. Mr. Horton recalled the previous day that the re-envisioning of recreational data collection partnerships with the states and stakeholders is a big point of discussion currently with marine fisheries management and suggest that a presentation be presented by NOAA at the next meeting. Mr. Bissett raised the topic of ex-officio members and if they have to be members of this council to populate subcommittees. Mr. Gigar suggested that perhaps outside experts could be brought in to help on subcommittees.

### **Finance Subcommittee**

Mr. Sadler raised the discussion point to add a budget or finance subcommittee. Mr. Leonard second Mr. Sadler's proposal. Mr. McCann went over some clarification topics for this subcommittee, while Mr. Dunn and Mr. Horton discussed procedural items for it. Ms. Reimann stated a motion to establish a Finance subcommittee to provide recommendations to the Council on potential expenditures of the balance of available Council funds, comprised of, but not limited to the Chairman and Vice Chair of the Council, and the Chair and Vice Chair of any subcommittee. The Council approved the motion.

### **Infrastructure and Access Subcommittee**

Mr. Horton discussed infrastructure and access, including non-motorized boating access, and increasing who and how to get on the water. Members self-selected to participate in the Infrastructure and Access subcommittee.

### **Conservation and Restoration Subcommittee**

Mr. Horton discussed conservation and restoration, and the broad implication of conservation. Members self-selected to participate in the Conservation and Restoration Subcommittee.

### **Communications and Outreach Subcommittee**

Mr. Horton discussed communications and outreach, noting this subcommittee is responsible for reviewing the RBFF report and offering recommendations. This is a big topic item with a lot of discussion surrounding it. Members self-selected to participate in the Communications and Outreach Subcommittee.

### **Ad Hoc Working Group**

Mr. Horton proposed the formation of an ad hoc working group to assist with the development of the Fish and Aquatic Conservation strategic plan. Mr. Horton volunteered to be part of this group and encouraged others to join.

### **ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT STEPS**

Mr. Dunn suggested inviting a representative from the MAFAC recreational subcommittee and vice versa, to keep both councils apprised of the work the other does. Mr. Leonard suggested Mr. Horton and the chair of MAFAC to talk and then set up a periodic check in as a starting point. Mr. Dunn agreed and proposed extending a formal invitation to MAFAC representatives.

Mr. Horton discussed upcoming meeting dates and location, and the need to use Doodle polls for scheduling meetings. Mr. Horton encouraged participation in subcommittees, noting the enthusiasm and commitment observed among members. Ms. Gigar suggested organizing information into a packet for follow-up after the meeting to ensure all members have the necessary details for effective participation.

### **WRAP-UP AND ADJOURN**

Ms. Reimann read a public comment from Barry Nobles, who emphasized the importance of maintaining focus on the Council's scope of work. The adjournment motion was made by Mr. Horton and seconded by Mr. Sadler. Mr. Horton thanked the participants for their engagement and adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.

Chair approval (date): 7/2/2024\_\_\_\_\_

Chair signature: \_\_\_\_\_