

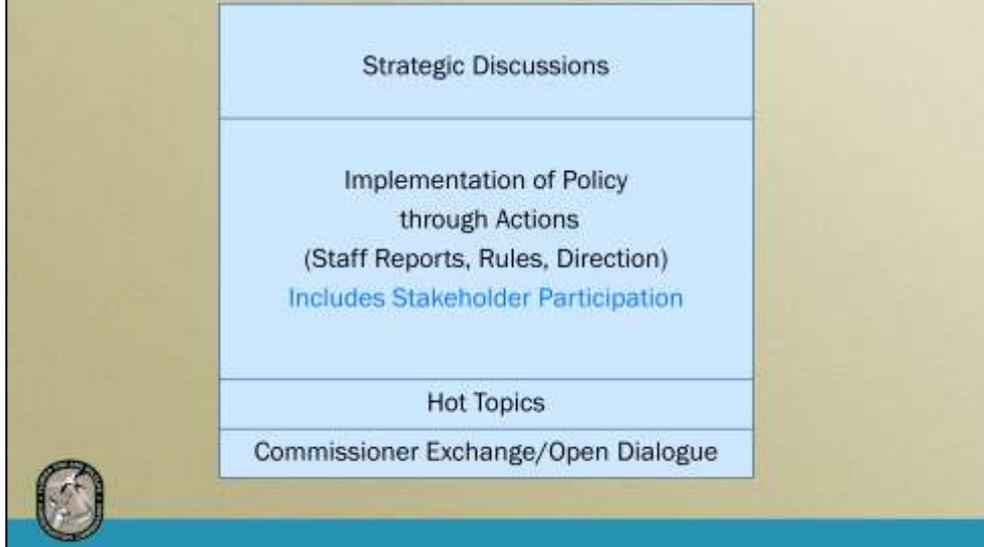
This is a review and discussion of the proposed 2015-2016 Work Plan for items staff will present to the Commission. This Work Plan is for the period beginning July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016.

**This represents only that portion of the agency work that involves direct Commission approval or direction. There are many other actions that are conducted which are very important and a part of our strategic plan.**

Report date: August 20, 2014

Prepared by David Arnold

# Commission Meeting Structure



This presentation will focus on the larger block of time on this graphic.

## How Do We Create a Work Plan?

- Review Commission Vision and Policy Focal Areas
- Consider Agency Strategic Initiatives
- Review previous and current year work plan accomplishments
- Consider resources available
- Put forward items which require Commissioner action



## Strategic Initiatives

- Running the Business
- Imperiled Species Management Plan
- Expand Participation in Conservation
- Conservation through Innovation
- Conflict Wildlife
- Boating as a Gateway to Conservation and the Outdoors



**Running the Business** – Establish an internal infrastructure (team and process) that identifies the areas of business operations and practices that represent high risk, prioritize them and modify them to address risks.

**Imperiled Species Management Plan** – Complete the Imperiled Species Management Plan and begin implementing prioritized species actions and integrated conservation strategies by the end of 2015.

**Expand Participation in Conservation** – Increase conservation participation among youth and families representing Florida's diverse population by expanding partnerships to implement FYCCN and other programs that promote fishing, hunting, boating, wildlife viewing, shooting sports, and conservation appreciation.

**Conservation through Innovation** – Implement a comprehensive approach, using innovative conservation tools and strategies, focusing on incentives for private lands and marine fisheries management. Strategies may include enhancing partnerships, incentives, and streamlining regulations.

**Conflict wildlife** – Ensure continued support and appreciation for fish and wildlife by implementing an integrated programmatic approach across FWC to minimize adverse impacts associated with native and non-native fish, wildlife and plants. Successful efforts should minimize human health and safety, environmental, social and economic impacts.

**Boating as a Gateway to Conservation and the Outdoors** – Strengthen and promote the conservation connections of boating while protecting people and natural resources, and improving boating related opportunities.

## Major Work Plan Items

- Reports on Issues
- Updates on Council Actions or Specific Initiatives
- Proposed Rules/Draft Rules/Final Rules
- Approvals of staff actions on land acquisition or management plans
- Approval of FWC's legislative proposals and Legislative Budget Request



Traditionally, staff bring items to the Commission in the major categories of staff reports, updates, various administrative approvals and items that are a part of the formal rule making process.

The rest of the presentation will link the Agency Goals and Strategies with specific action items.

## Florida's Fish and Wildlife Populations and Their Habitats



This theme reflects FWC's commitment to conserving and managing diverse and healthy fish and wildlife populations and the habitats they depend on. Management includes a broad spectrum of activities that include conservation of specific populations so they do not become imperiled. Conservation of fish and wildlife also requires sufficient quantities and quality of habitats in public and private ownership. The development of these management actions are based on using the best available science, including the social sciences and the engagement and input of stakeholders. Outreach and enforcement of regulations also play a part in this theme.

## Strategic Initiative Linkage

- Imperiled Species Management Plan
  - Finish the plan and bring rules as needed
- Conservation through Innovation
  - Continue focus on private land incentives



## Fish and Wildlife and Their Habitats

**Goal: Ensure the sustainability of Florida's fish and wildlife populations**

- Indigo Snake Permitting Guidelines
- Manatee Management Rules/Plan Update
- Panther Management Updates
- Marine Turtle Permitting Rule
- Bear related rules



**Strategies: Manage listed species so they no longer meet Florida's listing criteria; Manage species to keep them from meeting Florida's endangered and threatened listing criteria; Provide protection for fish and wildlife species through responsive enforcement efforts.**

Indigo Snake Permitting Guidelines – staff are working collectively with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and stakeholders to develop guidelines and anticipate bringing them to the Commission.

Manatee Management Rules/Plan Update – Staff plan to update Commissioners on progress as needed and bring any draft rules as available

Panther Management Updates will be provided as needed.

68E-1 F.A.C. Marine Turtle Permit rule – Staff propose to finalize revisions to this rule to incorporate online permitting application procedures and approvals and changes in procedures in response to stakeholder comments and concerns.

Bears – Staff will continue to work on proposed rules to help address feeding of bears and additional actions related to conservation and management.

Bear Progress Report – staff is implementing Black Bear management after approval of the Management Plan. After meeting with bear assistance groups, progress reports will be presented.

## Fish and Wildlife and Their Habitats

**Goal: Ensure sufficient habitats exist to support healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations.**

- Critical Wildlife Areas (CWAs)
- Agricultural BMPs for wildlife
- Incentives for Private Lands
- Aquatic Plant Control



**Strategies: Protect lands and waters critical to sustaining healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations through diverse incentive programs; Manage habitats to sustain healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations;**

CWAs – Staff was directed to bring forward agenda items to re-establish, establish, or dis-establish CWAs as needed. Certain changes can be done using the delegations to the Executive Director.

Agricultural BMPs for Wildlife – Staff will continue to work to improve the best management practices in concert with the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.

Incentives for Private Lands – As teams identify potential incentives, updates will be brought to the Commission for discussion and approval.

Aquatic Plant Control – rules related to permitting various aquatic plant control will be revised.

Habitat enhancement is taking place at the Fellsmere Reservoir and Upper St. John's River Restoration Sites

## Fish and Wildlife and Their Habitats

### Multiple Goals

- Imperiled Species Management Planning
  - New Species Evaluations
  - Finalize Plan and Rules
- Progress Reports and Updates on
  - Chipola River Shoal Bass Conservation Project



**Goal:** Ensure the sustainability of Florida's fish and wildlife populations

**Strategy:** Manage listed species so they no longer meet Florida's endangered and threatened listing criteria;

**Goal:** Ensure sufficient habitats exist to support healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations .

**Strategy:** Manage habitats to sustain healthy and diverse fish and wildlife populations

Imperiled Species Management Planning – Staff plan to bring a final comprehensive plan with integrated conservation strategies to the Commission and if necessary rules to implement protection would follow.

The evaluation of any new species follows a process set forth in Florida Administrative Code (FAC) Rule 8A-27.0012 and if any requests are received then Commission briefings would occur in the Fall of 2015. (NO NOMINATIONS WERE RECEIVED IN 2014)

Chipola River Shoal Bass – Staff continue to work to determine the status of shoal bass (a species of greatest conservation need) which, in Florida, only occurs in the Chipola River.

## Interactions with Fish and Wildlife, including Fishing, Hunting, Boating and Wildlife-Viewing Opportunities



Fishing, Hunting, Boating and Wildlife-Viewing Opportunities are where we connect with a very significant percentage of Florida's residents and visitors.

Floridians have a wide array of jobs directly related to wildlife recreation, commercial fishing, seafood processing, and the boating industry estimated at over 452,786 individuals

*Jobs related to hunting, fishing and wildlife -viewing have an economic value estimated at \$19.7 billion to Floridians.*

## Strategic Initiative Linkage

- Expand Participation in Conservation
  - Continue working with stakeholders to expand hunting and fishing support
- Boating as a Gateway to Conservation and the Outdoors
  - Bring items developed by strategic team
- Conservation through Innovation
  - Continue work on Gulf red snapper, snook and Marine Fish Focus Group
- Conflict Wildlife
  - Focus on bears, panthers, lionfish



## Expanding Participation in Conservation

**Goal: Provide residents and visitors with quality fishing, hunting, boating and wildlife-viewing opportunities that meet their needs and expectations while providing for the sustainability of those natural resources**



The next slides will focus on various ways we will work to address the objectives of this goal. These include managing hunting and fishing areas and opportunities; recruiting participants; protecting wildlife and people; using minimal regulations and addressing conflict wildlife.

## Managing Hunting and Recreational Access

- Establish new areas for public hunting and other recreational access and adjust existing areas as needed
- Approve proposals for new and adjusted hunting opportunities



Many parts of the agency come together to work on hunting opportunities.

### Proposed establishment orders for Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) or Wildlife and Environmental Areas (WEAs) or Miscellaneous Areas (MAs)

As opportunity arises, staff will present proposed orders to establish new WMAs/WEAs/MAs or to disestablish existing WMAs/WEAs/MAs. Proposed establishment orders are generally included on the consent agenda, although any substantive rule changes associated with establishment orders would be presented for consideration and formal action.

### Development and presentation of proposed rules associated with hunting and game management statewide and on public hunting areas –

Hunting and Game Management (HGM) staff will coordinate the development of proposed hunting and game management rules including but not limited to rules and statutes regulating the take of alligators, development and establishment of deer management units, and regulations governing the take of turkeys. HGM staff accept rule change proposals from the public, other FWC staff, stakeholders, and wildlife management area cooperators on a year-round basis. Staff will review these and bring forward for Commission review and approval at the appropriate times throughout the year. Since public hunting area regulations must be incorporated into area brochures, changes that would be implemented for the 2016-2017 hunting season would need to be considered for final adoption at the February 2016 Commission meeting at the latest.

## Managing Migratory Bird Seasons

### 2015-2016 Migratory Bird Seasons

- June 2015 - report on anticipated early migratory bird seasons (dove, snipe, rails, gallinules, and wood duck and teal)
- September 2015 - report on anticipated late migratory bird seasons (waterfowl and coots)

### 2016-2017 Migratory Bird Seasons

- February 2016 - report on all anticipated migratory bird seasons including draft rules as needed
- April 2016 - report on final migratory bird seasons including final rules as needed.



Goal: Use minimal regulations to manage sustainable fish and wildlife populations, manage access to fish and wildlife resources, and protect public safety.

Federal regulations are amended annually to establish the maximum number of days and dates within which individual species and groups of species of migratory birds may be hunted. These regulations also establish the maximum bag limits for taking migratory birds. States are required to select dates and bag limits for taking migratory birds within these “frameworks.”

#### Proposed 2015-2016 migratory bird seasons and federal frameworks –

The federal schedule for establishing migratory bird season frameworks for the 2015-2016 season precludes the Commission from taking timely action to conform Commission rules to changes in the frameworks. Staff will advise the Commission of anticipated changes to federal frameworks, make recommendations, and solicit Commission guidance, and make any necessary changes by filing a notice of proposed rule for adoption of the federal standards, after federal frameworks are finalized. If necessary due to time constraints, changes will be made by executive order prior to notice being filed with the Florida Administrative Register. A report on anticipated early migratory bird seasons (dove, snipe, rails, gallinules, wood ducks, and teal) will be presented at the June 2015 (for the 2015-2016 hunting season). A report on anticipated late migratory bird seasons (for the 2015-2016 hunting season) will be presented at the September 2015 Commission meeting.

#### Proposed 2016-2017 migratory bird seasons and federal frameworks –

The proposed federal schedule for establishing migratory bird season frameworks for the 2016-2017 season will allow for the Commission to take timely action to conform Commission rules to changes in the frameworks. Therefore, a report on anticipated migratory bird seasons (both early and late) including draft rules as necessary will be presented at the February 2016 Commission Meeting with final rules presented at the April 2016 Commission Meeting.

## Interactions with Fish and Wildlife...

- Establish the Fellsmere Reservoir FMA
- Amend Upper St. John's River FMA rules



**Strategy:** Develop and maintain widely available, diverse and accessible fishing, hunting, boating and wildlife-viewing opportunities that meet the needs and expectations of residents and visitors while providing for the sustainability of those resources and emphasizing partnerships with both public and private landowners.

Staff is working with multiple counties to establish Fish Management Areas (FMAs). Fellsmere Reservoir will be in Indian River County.

Staff continually review fishing opportunities and will recommend adjustments as needed. Upper St. John's River FMA's will need to be amended when that area is ready.

## Interactions with Fish and Wildlife...

**Goal:** Use minimal regulations to manage sustainable fish and wildlife populations, manage access to fish and wildlife resources, and protect public safety.

- Statewide Largemouth Bass Harvest Regulations
  - Finalize rule changes from Review Team
- Reports on saltwater stock assessments and meetings of federal Councils and Commissions
  - Possible Rule changes
- Review of all agency rules
- Participate in reauthorization of Magnuson-Stevens Act



**Strategy:** Continually evaluate proposed and existing regulations, based on resource management benefits, public safety concerns, and economic and social impacts, to improve or eliminate regulations as warranted.

A team has been created to review existing largemouth bass regulations to determine their current effectiveness, and recommend changes where appropriate. Rules proposed in 2014-15 will be finalized.

**Strategy:** Coordinate with partners and stakeholders to ensure that appropriate authorities and regulations exist to maintain sustainable fish and wildlife populations.

The Division of Marine Fisheries Management (DMFM) conducts extensive planning and coordination with the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute (FWRI) and federal partners to ensure that fishery stock assessments are available to inform management recommendations.

Work plan development takes into account Commissioner input, stock assessment schedules, recommendations of DMFM and FWRI staff, public concerns, federal issues, and issues carried over from the previous year's work plan. The majority of these issues will be collaborative efforts between DMFM and FWRI. However, as with every work plan, there are a few items that will be handled solely by DMFM.

Checklist of current work plan items		
HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Lionfish Rebreathers and Aquaculture</li> <li>✓ Gulf Reef Fish Permit</li> <li>✓ Sea Cucumbers</li> <li>✓ Swordfish</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Wingnets</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bay Scallop Season</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>King Mackerel and Lionfish Tournaments</li> <li>Mackerel and Cobia</li> <li>CD Endorsement/Casitas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eels</li> <li>Barracuda</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇌ Mangrove Snapper</li> <li>⇌ Slipper Lobster</li> <li>⇌ Flounder</li> <li>⇌ Marine Life Recreational Sale</li> <li>⇌ Striped Mullet</li> <li>⇌ Orange Cup Coral</li> <li>⇌ Snowy Grouper</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇌ Coral ESA Listing</li> <li>⇌ Oyster</li> <li>⇌ Menhaden</li> <li>⇌ Speckled Hind/Warsaw Grouper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⇌ Red Drum Tournament Permit</li> <li>⇌ Northeast Shrimp Issues</li> <li>⇌ Gulf Gag Grouper</li> <li>⇌ Sheepshead</li> <li>⇌ Hogfish</li> <li>⇌ Mutton Snapper</li> <li>⇌ Gulf Black Sea Bass</li> <li>⇌ Species Removed From Federal Management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Fishery Strategic Plans</li> <li>* Non-regulated Marine Species</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Red Snapper</li> <li>* Biscayne National Park</li> <li>* Agency Strategic Planning</li> <li>* FKNMS Planning</li> <li>* Trap Fisheries Management</li> <li>* 68B Rule Cleanup</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Florida Threatened Species</li> <li>* Electronic Reporting</li> <li>* Marine Habitat Planning</li> <li>* South Florida Fisheries Management</li> <li>* Goliath Grouper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stingrays</li> <li>- Blackfin Tuna</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Horseshoe Crab</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Marbled Grouper</li> </ul>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Completed</li> <li>⇌ Expected to be completed this year</li> <li>* Ongoing</li> <li>⇌ Carryover</li> <li>- On hold</li> </ul> </div>

This is a checklist of the items that are on the current (2014-2015) work plan that extends through June 30, 2015. They are partitioned into high, medium, and low priorities. Within each category, the items are further divided into *completed*, *expected to be completed this year*, *ongoing*, *carryover*, and *on hold* categories. *Ongoing* items are multi-year projects, advisory boards/workgroups, or items expected to continue into the 2015-2016 work plan. *Carryover* items are those we expected to complete in 2014-2015 but were unable to finish. In other cases, some parts of *carryover* items have or will be completed, but additional issues related to these items surfaced and will be addressed in next year's work plan. Of the 47 items listed, five are *completed*, six are *expected to be completed* during this current work plan year, and 19 will roll over into the 2015-2016 work plan. There are four items *on hold* for the 2014-2015 work plan year and 13 items are considered to be ongoing.

Proposed 2015-2016 Workplan Items		
HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW
<p><i>MSA Reauthorization</i></p> <p>Marine Fisheries Focus Group</p> <p>Snook</p> <p>Gulf Reef Fish Data Reporting System</p> <p>Rebreathers/Spearfishing</p> <p>Hispanic Outreach</p> <p><i>Bringing Fish Back From Bahamas</i></p>	<p><i>Spanish Mackerel</i></p> <p><i>Spot/Atlantic Croaker</i></p> <p>Shrimp Research</p>	<p>Recreational Bag Limit</p> <p>Sales</p> <p>Marine Life Recreational Sale</p> <p>Florida Threatened Species</p> <p>Non-regulated Marine Species</p> <p>Marbled Grouper</p> <p>Orange Cup Coral</p>
<p>68B Rule Cleanup</p> <p>Agency Strategic Planning</p> <p>Trap Fisheries Management</p> <p>Biscayne National Park</p> <p>FKNMS Planning</p> <p>Menhaden/Electronic Reporting</p> <p>Oysters</p> <p>Eels</p> <p>South Florida Fisheries Management</p> <p>Coral ESA Listing</p> <p>Red Snapper</p> <p>Snowy Grouper</p> <p>Red Drum</p> <p>Goliath Grouper</p>	<p>Red Drum Tournament Permit</p> <p>Fishery Strategic Plans</p> <p>Gulf Black Sea Bass</p> <p>Mullet</p> <p>Bay Scallops</p> <p>Flounder</p> <p>Sea Anemones</p> <p>Sharks</p> <p>Wholesale/Retail Reporting</p> <p>NE Shrimp Issues</p> <p><i>Species Removed From Federal Management</i></p> <p>Electronic Reporting</p> <p>Mutton Snapper</p> <p>Speckled Hind/Warsaw Grouper</p> <p>Yellowtail Snapper</p> <p>Mangrove Snapper</p> <p>Blueline Tilefish</p>	
<p>Hogfish</p> <p>Gag Grouper</p>		
<p><b>Blue = Federal Issue</b></p> <p><b>Yellow = New</b></p> <p><b>Black = Carryover</b></p>		

This is a list of the proposed 2015-2016 work plan items. They are partitioned into high, medium, and low priorities. Within each category, the items are distinguished as *new* or *carryover* issues. Of the 51 items listed, 12 are listed as new items for the upcoming work plan. Items that are listed in *black* are state issues and those that are listed in *blue* are federal issues. Overall there are 30 state issues and 21 federal issues.

## Stock Assessments for Current and 2015-2016 Workplan

### State

Snook (2015)  
 Red Drum (2015)  
 Spotted Seatrout (2016)  
 Striped Mullet (November 2014)  
 Bay Scallops (March 2014-2016)

### Federal

2014	2015	2016
<b>Gulf</b>	<b>Gulf</b>	<b>Gulf</b>
Gag Grouper	Red Snapper	Gag Grouper
Greater Amberjack	Red Grouper	Greater Amberjack
Red Snapper	Vermilion Snapper	Red Drum
<b>Atlantic</b>	Gray Triggerfish	Yellowedge Grouper
Snowy Grouper	Scamp	<b>Atlantic</b>
Blueline Tilefish	Gulf Menhaden	Blueline Tilefish
<b>Gulf and Atlantic</b>	<b>Atlantic</b>	Scamp
King Mackerel	Atlantic Menhaden	Golden Tilefish
Hogfish	Red Grouper	Red Porgy
Mutton Snapper	Gray Triggerfish	
	Red Snapper	
	Weakfish	
	<b>Gulf and Atlantic</b>	
	Yellowtail Snapper	
	Black Grouper	
	Goliath Grouper	



This is a list of the state and federal stock assessments that are expected to be completed during the current or the upcoming 2015-2016 work plan. Any rulemaking associated with these assessments would likely occur during the upcoming work plan year.

## Interactions with Fish and Wildlife...

**Goal:** Enhance the safety and outdoor experience of those who hunt, fish, boat and view wildlife

- Review and adjust boating restricted area rules as needed
- Review rules guiding establishment of boating restricted areas, especially those submitted by local governments



**Strategy:** Enhance the boating safety and waterway experience of residents and visitors through improved access, management, education and enforcement

Boating restricted area rules to be reviewed include:

Withlacochee River, Suwannee /Santa Fe Rivers; St. Johns County – Tolomato River; Apalachicola River; Palm Beach County

Chapter 68D-21, 23 and 24 Rules – these rules implement Section 327.46, Florida Statutes. A review of these will be made to consider amendments and changes.

## Interactions with Fish and Wildlife...

**Goal:** Minimize adverse environmental, social, economic and health and safety impacts from fish, wildlife and plants that are known to cause, or have a potential to cause, adverse impacts.

- Finalize work with stakeholders and bring forth amendments to captive wildlife rules as necessary
- Report on wildlife conflict related activities
- Bear Management Actions



**Strategy:** Manage captive and non-native wildlife movement and trade through proactive and responsive enforcement, regulation and education, with an emphasis on species that pose a high risk to our native fish and wildlife.

Staff will be working on sections of Florida Administrative Code Rules 68A-6, 68A-9 and 68A-12 to identify improvements and return to the Commission as appropriate. Staff will also work on wildlife conflict issues and periodic reports will be made to the Commission.

**Strategy:** Effectively communicate to residents, visitors and businesses how to be safe and act responsibly when interacting with or possessing fish, wildlife and plants.

**Strategy:** Manage species and their habitats as well as species and human interactions to eliminate or reduce the adverse environmental, social, economic and health and safety impacts from native and non-native fish, wildlife, and plants.

Bear Progress Report – staff is implementing Black Bear management after approval of the Management Plan. After meeting with a bear assistance group, a progress report will be presented and if appropriate a discussion of additional rule on feeding issues will be presented.

## Sharing Responsibility for Fish and Wildlife Conservation and Management with an Emphasis on Developing Conservation Values in Our Youth



We have made a high level commitment to working with youth. We want to ensure that future generations care and are able to actively support and practice fish and wildlife conservation stewardship. This theme focus on our Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network, stakeholder outreach and engagement, and our use of volunteers to help in many of our programs.

## Strategic Initiative Linkage

- Expand Participation in Conservation
  - FYCCN activities
- Conservation through Innovation
  - Work with Marine Fish Focus Groups



## Sharing Responsibility for Fish and Wildlife Conservation and Management...

**Goal:** Ensure residents, visitors, stakeholders and partners are engaged in the processes of developing and implementing conservation programs.

Provide Updates on Efforts



### Strategies:

Foster a common vision among partners and the FWC to maintain and enhance fish and wildlife populations and their habitats through interagency coordination, mutually beneficial goals and initiatives.

Engage residents, visitors, stakeholders and partners to understand their perspectives, develop and implement conservation programs, and implement fishing, hunting, boating and wildlife-viewing management activities .

Staff will provide updates on our cooperative efforts with other agencies and of our partnerships with non-governmental entities to advance fish and wildlife conservation.

## ...Developing Conservation Values in Our Youth

**Goal: Ensure current and future generations support fish and wildlife conservation**

Periodic updates and reports on events and accomplishments

Partner Recognitions



### Strategies:

Expand and promote a network of youth conservation centers, programs and initiatives through leveraging FWC programs and staff, and developing public and private partnerships and sponsorships.

Develop and deliver standardized youth conservation curricula and fishing, hunting, boating and wildlife viewing outdoor activity programs, and assist with adapting programs and curricula to meet the needs of diverse communities.

**Goal: Increase opportunities for residents and visitors, especially youth, to actively support and practice fish and wildlife conservation stewardship.**

### Strategy:

Provide and promote opportunities for residents and visitors, especially youth, to participate in conservation stewardship activities, including FWC volunteer opportunities.

## Future of Hunting Initiatives

- Reports on events and accomplishments, as needed
- Recognitions



Goals: Ensure current and future generations support fish and wildlife conservation; Ensure residents, visitors, stakeholders, and partners are engaged in the processes of developing and implementing conservation programs; and Increase opportunities for residents and visitors, especially youth, to actively support and practice fish and wildlife conservation stewardship.

We continue to focus on getting others involved in the hunting heritage by:

- 1) providing basic introductions to hunting and the shooting sports;
- 2) getting youth to complete a hunter safety course, and
- 3) giving those who desire to go hunting an opportunity to learn additional hunting skills and to participate on a safe, mentored hunt.

Recognitions include Hunter Safety Instructor of the Year and Youth Hunting Program Landowner of the Year and outstanding partners.

## Responsive Organization and Quality Operations



This theme describes our activities that ensure we provide exceptional customer service, are accountable, operate efficiently and effectively and continually explore new ways to improve our services. We are also committed to helping Florida business and job growth. To do this requires that we understand the needs of our stakeholders, residents and visitors and maintain and build a highly qualified workforce that is responsive, works transparently and uses available resources in an honest and fiscally responsible manner.

(Note: Photos illustrate an officer providing fishing regulations, a scientist sampling for red tide that impacts public health as well as fish and wildlife resources, and one of our offshore fishing reef projects.)

## Strategic Initiative Linkage

- Running the Business
  - Evaluate our processes and modify them to address risks as needed.
- Boating as a Gateway
  - Protect people and natural resources



## Responsive Organization and Quality Operations

**Goal:** Provide resources and support for the safety and protection of residents and visitors, our natural and cultural resources, and for emergency responses to critical incidents and environmental disasters.

- Updates on Division of Law Enforcement efforts in response to emergencies.
- Highlights of our involvement in special events and programs promoting fish and wildlife.



### Strategies:

Provide immediate and effective disaster response and recovery through mutual-aid efforts with local, state, and federal partners.

Provide search, rescue and recovery services in coordination with local, state and federal entities to ensure the safety of residents and visitors.

Protect natural and cultural resources through proactive and responsive enforcement efforts.

## Responsive Organization and Quality Operations

**Goal: Ensure the FWC has highly effective and adaptive business practices.**

- Reports on our budget and other business of the agency
- Reports on accomplishments of staff and recognitions from internal and external sources



### Strategies:

**Manage existing and secure additional resources necessary to achieve fish and wildlife conservation and meet residents, visitor and stakeholder needs.**

**Foster a diverse, accountable, responsive and skilled workforce who effectively serves Florida's residents and visitors.**

Reports – we will bring budget matters to the Commission and convey information about staff accomplishments.

## Discussion

As staff continue to work on implementation of our Strategic Initiatives, additional high priority actions may be identified and added to this work plan.

Staff requests your approval and any additional direction on the 2015-2016 Work Plan



Staff submits these proposals to you for approval and requests additional direction on any items you would like to see come before you during the next fiscal year.

The following slides are considered back up material and are not anticipated to be part of the actual presentation to the Commission



## Agency Strategic Plan Themes

- Florida's Fish and Wildlife Populations and Their Habitats
- Interactions with Fish and Wildlife, including Fishing, Hunting, Boating and Wildlife-Viewing Opportunities
- Sharing Responsibility for Fish and Wildlife Conservation and Management with an Emphasis on Developing Conservation Values in Our Youth
- Responsive Organization and Quality Operations



Since September, 2012, staff have continued to work on the Strategic Plan that is guiding our work for the next 5 years. Staff teams have developed detailed Objectives that will link to specific measurable tasks that implement the goals and strategies we have set forth. Using the high level guidance that the Commissioner's have been discussing, staff will continue to prioritize objectives that allow us to focus on a few issues of highest importance.

The Strategic Plan has been organized around FOUR major themes. Our conservation message is reflected in the Goals and Objectives of these themes. The first three of these overlap nicely with the Policy Focus Areas that have been identified through the focused discussions of this Commission.

## Performance Measures

- A .075% annual increase in the number of active participants in hunting, freshwater fishing and saltwater fishing.
- An 35% annual increase in the number of youth involved in FWC's conservation programs.



These two performance measures are currently being tracked and results submitted to the Department of Economic Opportunity as a part of the 5 year Strategic Plan for Economic Development in Florida.

Staff are developing additional performance measures that will measure progress on the most important areas of the FWC's work.

## Commissioners' Vision

- Policy Focal Areas
  - Future of Fish and Wildlife Conservation
    - Expanding Participation
    - Conflict Wildlife
  - Habitat Conservation and Management
    - Priorities for conservation
    - Focus on public and private lands
    - Providing sustainable access
  - Innovative Management Tools
    - Marine Fish
    - Private Lands



During the past year, your discussions have provided staff with Strategic Guidance in these major focal areas.

## List of Terms

### Priorities

- **High** – items that are most important to develop and complete in a timely manner
- **Medium** – items that are important but do not take precedence over high priorities
- **Low** – items that are important enough to include in the work plan but may only be done as time permits

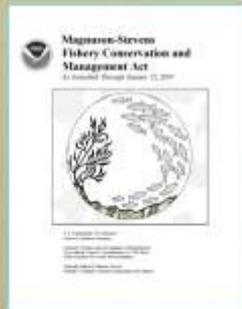
### Item Classifications

- **To Be Completed** – items that are not yet completed but are expected to be completed during the current work plan year
- **Ongoing** – multi-year projects that will continue into the next work plan cycle
- **Carryover** – items that will be continued into the next work plan cycle
- **New** – brand new issues that will be added to next year's work plan
- **On Hold** – items that are no longer under active development



This slide contains a list of terms that are used in this document to prioritize and classify work plan items.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - NEW



### Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Reauthorization

- Remain active in the process
- Provide comments on bills when necessary

### Marine Fisheries Focus Group

- Strategic planning for fisheries issues
- Stakeholder involvement



### Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) Reauthorization

The MSA, which is the primary federal law that directs conservation and management of federal fisheries is up for reauthorization. FWC will remain active in this process by working with Florida's federal legislative delegation and providing comments on any relevant bills.

### Marine Fisheries Focus Group

The Commission requested staff to form a focus group inclusive of recreational and commercial fishers, seafood industry representatives, restaurateurs, and other relevant stakeholders to strategically plan for addressing marine fishery issues.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - **NEW**



### Snook

- Assessment due Fall 2015
- Evaluate management philosophies, goals, and regulations following its release



### Snook

The next stock assessment is expected to be completed in Fall 2015. FWC has committed to work with stakeholders to evaluate snook management philosophies, goals, and regulations following its release.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - NEW



### Gulf Reef Fish Data Reporting System

- An update will be presented to the Commission

### Rebreathers and Harvest

- Investigate the issue of allowing fish harvest while using rebreathers



### Gulf Reef Fish Data Reporting System

The Commission requested staff to present an update regarding implementation and enforcement of the Gulf Reef Fish Data Reporting System in November 2015. DMFM, FWRI, FWC Law Enforcement (LE) will work in collaboration to develop this update and any necessary changes to the program will be made based on Commission direction.

### Rebreathers and Harvest

Currently, divers are prohibited from harvesting fish while diving with a rebreather in state waters. The Commission has approved an exception to allow the use of rebreathers while harvesting lionfish. Rebreathers are also permitted in Gulf federal waters, and are allowed in south Atlantic federal waters when harvesting non-snapper-grouper species. The Commission has directed staff to further investigate the issue of allowing fish harvest while using a rebreather in state waters.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - **NEW**

### Hispanic Outreach

- Project to promote fishing opportunities within the Hispanic community



### Bringing Fish Back From Bahamas

- SAFMC working on allowing dolphin and wahoo fillets to be brought into the U.S. and exempt wahoo from U.S. bag limits



### Hispanic Outreach

FWC is working on a project that will promote fishing opportunities within the Hispanic community.

### Bringing Fish Back From Bahamas

SAFMC is considering allowing dolphin and wahoo to be brought back to the U.S. as fillets (fillets of snapper and grouper are already allowed to be brought back) and exempting wahoo caught in the Bahamas from U.S. bag limits. If the SAFMC approves these changes, the Commission may need to consider similar rulemaking for state waters and such rulemaking may spill over into the 2015-2016 work plan cycle.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - Ongoing/Carryover



### 68B Rule Clean-Up

- Systematic examination of marine fisheries rules
- Collaborative project with DMFM, LE, and Legal

### Agency Strategic Planning

- DMFM will continue to participate in the agency-wide effort to develop and implement a strategic plan



### 68B Rule Clean-Up

DMFM is conducting a systematic examination of marine fisheries rules in coordination with FWC LE and the Legal Office in an effort to improve consistency and clarify the fishing regulations. Substantial progress has been made already during Phases I and II of the project, but the effort is ongoing and will continue into the next work plan cycle.

### Agency strategic planning

DMFM staff will continue to participate in the agency-wide effort to develop and implement an agency strategic plan.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - Ongoing/Carryover



### Trap Fisheries Management

- Several issues dealing with trap fisheries

### Biscayne National Park

- FMP finalized
- Working toward completion of GMP



### Trap Fisheries Management

Our trap fisheries have multiple issues that need to be considered in the coming year, including, but not limited to, trap marking and trap reduction programs.

### Biscayne National Park (BNP)

BNP's Fishery Management Plan (FMP) has been finalized. FWC and the National Park Service (NPS) have been working together on alternatives to the previously proposed no-take marine reserve for the General Management Plan (GMP). Once the GMP is approved, DMFM will work with BNP staff to bring proposed rule changes, outlined in both the FMP and GMP, to the Commission for consideration.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - Ongoing/Carryover



### Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Planning

- FKNMS is going through a rezoning process
- FWC input will be needed

### Menhaden

- Develop electronic reporting for fishery
- Need mechanism in place by Jan. 2016 to close fishery when quota is reached



### Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Planning (FKNMS)

The Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary is working on their rezoning process, and FWC will have a role in commenting, input, and potential rulemaking.

### Menhaden

The Atlantic fishery is subject to the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) quota, and Florida exceeded its quota in 2013 and 2014. FWC is working with the ASMFC to limit the impacts of the quota closures on small-time bait fishermen. Electronic reporting will likely be necessary for the fishery in order to monitor harvest rates relative to the quota, because the Commission will need to have a mechanism in place by January 2016 to close the fishery when the quota is reached.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - Ongoing/Carryover



### Oyster

- Need short term and long term plans for monitoring and assessment of population
- Clean up rules and consider need for changes

### American Eel

- Declines in U.S. stock
- ASFMC is considering management options



### Oyster:

FWC will need to develop short term and long term plans for monitoring and assessment of the population. The oyster rule also needs to be evaluated to determine if changes need to be made.

### Eels

Declines in the U.S. stock have been occurring in recent decades. In response, ASMFC is considering management options that may necessitate Commission rulemaking.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - Ongoing/Carryover



### South Florida Fisheries Management

- Joint-Council committee developing management options
- FWC has a leading role in identifying some of these issues

### Coral Endangered Species Act Listing

- Several coral species may be federally listed under the ESA soon
- Commission action may be required to minimize fishery interactions with listed corals



### South Florida Fisheries Management

A joint-council committee is developing management options for fisheries in South Florida. The FWC has a leading role in identifying and addressing some of these issues that cross state and federal jurisdictions.

### Coral Endangered Species Act (ESA) Listing

In the next few months, NOAA Fisheries is expected to announce their final decision on listing several coral species to the ESA, including species that occur in Florida. If Florida coral species are listed, Commission action may be required to minimize fishery interactions with listed corals.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - Ongoing/Carryover



### Gulf Red Snapper

- GMFMC is considering management options
- Commission rulemaking may be considered

### Red Drum

- Federal assessments planned
- Gulf Council may consider allowing recreational harvest in some federal waters



### Gulf Red Snapper

The GMFMC is considering a wide variety of management strategies for red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico, including regional management of the recreational fishery, intersector trading, a for-hire individual fishing quota program, and sector separation. Depending on the action taken by the GMFMC, the Commission may wish to consider complimentary actions for state waters.

### Red Drum

A red drum assessment is scheduled to be completed in 2016 for the Gulf of Mexico fishery, and an update is scheduled for 2015 for the Atlantic fishery. The GMFMC is considering allowing recreational harvest of red drum in federal waters out to nine miles in the central Gulf states. Allowing recreational harvest in federal waters will depend on the status of the Gulf red drum stock.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - Ongoing/Carryover



### Goliath Grouper

- Joint-Council committee evaluated available scientific information
- New assessment planned
- Councils will consider if and how to move beyond the moratorium

### Hogfish

- Assessment under review
- Stakeholder concern about the health of the stock



### Goliath Grouper

A Joint-Council committee on goliath grouper recently evaluated scientific information and recommended that a new stock assessment be conducted. The FWC will take the lead on this assessment. Once the assessment is complete, the Councils will discuss management issues, including how to move beyond the moratorium. The Commission may wish to address the moratorium in state waters pending the outcome of the stock assessment.

### Hogfish

A federal stock assessment for hogfish was recently completed and is currently under review. Based on the outcome of this assessment, management changes may be warranted. Many stakeholders have expressed concern for the health of the hogfish stock and feel the regulations need to be stricter. The SAFMC is also considering changes to the size limit.

## 2015-2016 High Priority Items - Ongoing/Carryover



### Snowy Grouper

- SAFMC considering management changes
- Commission rulemaking may be considered

### Gulf Gag Grouper

- Federal assessment completed
- GMFMC is considering regional management



### Snowy Grouper

The SAFMC is considering management changes for snowy grouper. The Commission may consider consistent actions for state waters during the next work plan cycle.

### Gulf Gag Grouper

A federal assessment was recently completed for gulf gag grouper and indicates the stock is no longer overfished or undergoing overfishing. Management changes may be warranted. The GMFMC has agreed to consider regional management of gag grouper recreational harvest at Florida's request.

## 2015-2016 Medium Priority Items – NEW



### Spanish Mackerel

- SAFMC is considering management changes for commercial fishery off Florida
- Commission rulemaking may be considered

### Spot/Atlantic Croaker

- ASMFC is revising FMPs
- Commission rulemaking may be needed to comply with FMP



### Shrimp Research

- Examine how fishery is operating today
- Evaluate regulations



### Spanish Mackerel

SAFMC is considering changes to trip limits and the quota system for commercial harvest in federal waters off Florida. Current federal regulations are cited in state rule and would need to be updated/modified if federal rules change.

### Spot/Atlantic Croaker

ASMFC is revising their current Fisheries Management Plan (FMP) for these species. Commission rulemaking may be needed to comply with the provisions of the FMP.

### Shrimp Research

The shrimp industry has undergone significant changes since the current regulations were implemented. An examination into the current fishery practices is needed in order to evaluate and improve the regulations that are complex, confusing, and outdated. Reviewing and streamlining these regulations is a priority for the rule cleanup process and is supported by the Agency Strategic Plan.

## 2015-2016 Medium Priority – Ongoing/Carryover



### Red Drum Tournament Permit

- Permit application needs updating
- Loopholes in rule language

### Fishery Strategic Plans

- Staff will continue to work on FSPs for major regulated species



### Red Drum Tournament Permit

The need for updates to the tournament permit program were identified during the rule cleanup process. Modifications to the tournament application are needed. The tournament rule also contains some provisions that create loopholes due to overly specific language.

### Fishery Strategic Plans

Staff will continue working on Fishery Strategic Plans (FSP) for the major regulated species. Several plans are currently in development and draft stages, including red drum, stone crab, snook, and flounder.

## 2015-2016 Medium Priority – Ongoing/Carryover



### Gulf black sea bass

- Bycatch issues

### Mullet

- Recent silver mullet assessment
- Survey sent to fishery participants
- Request to remove a local law
- Roe discard Issues



### Gulf black sea bass

Staff will continue to research the issue of fishermen harvesting black sea bass in stone crab traps and bycatch of stone crabs and finfish in black sea bass traps.

### Mullet

An assessment of silver mullet has been conducted, and a survey has been sent out to fishery participants to develop a better understanding of how the fishery operates. Staff has also received requests to remove a local law related to reduced bag limits for mullet during the roe season. Additionally, there has been an increase in effort during the roe run and continued complaints about discard issues. DMFM needs to evaluate and determine if management changes are needed.

## 2015-2016 Medium Priority – Ongoing/Carryover



### Bay Scallops

- Upgrade survey
- Need for full stock assessment

### Flounder

- No regulations in federal waters



### Bay Scallops

FWRI is looking into developing index based reference points to give a longer-term target for sustainability and is also evaluating how they survey the resource. The idea is to conduct a full stock assessment in the future. The Commission may wish to consider management changes for this fishery if the research indicates that it is warranted.

### Flounder

There is no flounder FMP for federal waters. The Commission may want to consider extending regulations into federal waters.

## 2015-2016 Medium Priority – Ongoing/Carryover



### Sea Anemones

- Finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> year of a 3 year study on *Condylactis*
- Evaluate *Condylactis* closure
- Evaluate other species of anemones

### Sharks

- Continued user conflicts related to shore-based shark fishing
- Reports of increased depredation on other species by sharks



### Sea Anemones

FWRI will be completing a three year study of *Condylactis*. After the conclusion of the research, the *Condylactis* closure will be evaluated and management changes may be considered for this and other species of anemones.

### Sharks

DMFM continues to receive complaints about user conflicts related to shore-based shark fishing and has also been receiving reports of increased depredation of other species by sharks. DMFM will continue to work with a variety of stakeholders to develop management practices that will ease user conflicts and evaluate increased depredation of other species by sharks.

## 2015-2016 Medium Priority – Ongoing/Carryover



### Wholesale/Retail Reporting

- Dockside/roadside sales

### Northeast Shrimp Issues

- Controversy regarding trawl measurements
- Request for higher bycatch limits
- Request to extend spawning closure into federal waters



### Wholesale/Retail Reporting

DMFM will evaluate the FWC policy related to dockside/roadside sales without a Wholesale Dealer license.

### Northeast Shrimp Issues

Northeast Florida shrimpers have requested a variety of regulation changes for the commercial shrimp fishery. There is controversy regarding shrimp trawl measurements that are allowed in inland and nearshore waters. Requests have also been received to increase the bycatch limit in shrimp trawls and to extend the state waters spawning closure (April/May) into federal waters. SAFMC has a shrimp management plan that allows for a spawning closure in emergency situations, but it does not include an annual closure.

## 2015-2016 Medium Priority – Ongoing/Carryover



### Species Removed From Federal Management

- Commission may consider extending regulations into federal waters for species no longer under federal management

### Electronic reporting

- Federal wholesale dealers required to report electronically
- Commission rulemaking may be considered



### Species Removed from Federal Management

Several Florida species have been removed from federal management or may be removed from federal management in the near future. DMFM staff will review these species and consider whether extending state regulations into federal waters is appropriate.

### Electronic Reporting

Federal wholesale dealers are required to report electronically and the councils are considering electronic reporting requirements for federal for-hire vessels. The Commission may want to consider similar rulemaking for state wholesale dealers or state for-hire boats.

## 2015-2016 Medium Priority – Ongoing/Carryover



### Mutton Snapper

- SEDAR completed in 2014
- Joint-council committee is considering regulations to protect spawning aggregations

### Speckled Hind and Warsaw Grouper

- SAFMC considering spawning area closures
- State regulations inconsistent with federal regulations
- Additional protection requested in state waters



### Mutton Snapper

A SEDAR was completed in 2014. There has been increased concern from the SAFMC, stakeholders, and Law Enforcement about areas in federal and state waters that need protection during spawning aggregations. The South Florida joint council committee is considering bag limit decreases and other measures to protect spawning aggregations.

### Speckled Hind and Warsaw Grouper

The SAFMC is considering spawning area closures for multiple snapper grouper species as a means to protect speckled hind and warsaw grouper. FWC's regulations in state waters are inconsistent with federal regulations. The harvest of these species is allowed from state waters but prohibited in federal waters of the South Atlantic. Stakeholders and the SAFMC have requested additional protections in state waters.

## 2015-2016 Medium Priority – Ongoing/Carryover



### Yellowtail snapper

- Joint-council committee is considering changing the commercial fishing year

### Mangrove Snapper

- Stakeholder concerns about state and federal size and bag limit discrepancies



### Blueline tilefish

- Deepwater species that is overfished and undergoing overfishing
- Not regulated in Atlantic state waters



### Yellowtail snapper

The South Florida joint-council committee is considering changing the commercial fishing year so that the ACL closures would be less disruptive to the fishery. The Commission may wish to consider rule making in state waters.

### Mangrove Snapper

Some stakeholders at the South Florida Workshops in 2013 raised concerns about the state and federal size and bag limit discrepancies (currently 5 fish at 10" in state waters, and 10 fish at 12" in federal waters). However, smaller fish are found in state waters, so the discrepancies may be appropriate. Management changes may need to be considered.

### Blueline Tilefish

Blueline tilefish is a deepwater species that is overfished and undergoing overfishing. Blueline tilefish are not regulated in Atlantic state waters but are managed federally and are harvested in some areas of state waters. Management restrictions may be coming for federal waters off Florida, and the Commission may want to consider consistency with federal rules.

## 2015-2016 Low Priority – Ongoing/Carryover



### Recreational Bag Limit Sales

- Recreational bag limits sometimes sold commercially
- Concerns about potential “double counting” in trip tickets and MRIP surveys

### Marine Life Recreational Sale

- Aquarium enthusiasts are selling/exchanging marine life species
- No mechanism in the marine life rule for this activity



### Recreational Bag Limit Sales

Recreational bag limits harvested from for-hire vessels are sometimes sold commercially. This can potentially lead to “double counting” in trip tickets and the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) surveys. Stakeholders have requested that the FWC evaluate the regulations and policies related to this activity.

### Marine Life Recreational Sale

Aquarium enthusiasts sometimes sell/exchange marine life species (and corals) that they are propagating, breeding, collecting, and holding. Some of these organisms are native while others are not, however there is no mechanism in the marine life rule to allow for this activity.

## 2015-2016 Low Priority – Ongoing/Carryover



### Florida Threatened Species Plans

- Work with HSC to develop management plans for listed marine species

### Non-Regulated Marine Species

- Potential management of non-regulated species



### Florida Threatened Species Plans

Staff will continue to work with the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation (HSC) to develop management plans for marine species listed by the FWC as Threatened.

### Non-Regulated Marine Species

Through the Marine Life Workgroup process, several marine species outside of the marine life rule were identified as potential candidates for possible size or bag limits. It has been recognized that there are possibly other species not related to the marine life fishery that may benefit from certain restrictions. Staff from various divisions have been discussing potential management of many non-regulated marine species.

## 2015-2016 Low Priority - Ongoing/Carryover



### Marbled Grouper

- Possible candidate to be listed as federally endangered

### Orange Cup Coral

- Invasive species of stony coral
- SAFMC may consider removing from FMP



### Marbled grouper

It appears this species may meet criteria for listing as a federally endangered species. FWC may need to take action in the listing process.

### Orange Cup Coral

This is an invasive species of stony coral that people have been requesting permission to harvest. The SAFMC may consider removing them from the FMP, which would open the fishery to harvest in federal waters. FWC may want to consider rulemaking or other ways to allow for removal.