

GRAY'S REEF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

29 January 2021

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10 Ocean Science Circle
Savannah, GA 31411

Dear SAC Chairman Denmark,

Please accept this communication and attachments as the final products assembled by the Ecological Connectivity Working Group (ECWG). These products are assembled from multiple sources. The four attachments can serve as reference materials for the state of understanding of connectivity of species across life-histories at Grays Reef National Marine Sanctuary (GRNMS).

As you are aware, the ECWG had multiple interruptions in progress since formation (e.g., decisions on Terms of Reference, uncertainty of GRNMS objectives for use of WG products from multiple acting superintendents, additional demands on time by WG members to accommodate multiple objectives for GRNMS). To date we have not fully addressed the Terms of Reference. However, information on ecological connectivity is needed soon to meet the schedule to update the GRNMS Condition Report and revision of the GRNMS Management Plan. GRNMS plans to assemble an Expert Panel Workshop to address issues of connectivity and can utilize the assembled products to address the original ecological connectivity recommendations from the 2012 Scoping Process that resulted in the establishment of the ECWG.

It has been my privilege to serve as the Chair of the ECWG and look forward to working with GRNMS on planning and implementation of the Expert Panel.

Sincerely,



Peter J. Auster, Ph.D.

Chair, Ecological Connectivity Working Group
Senior Research Scientist, Mystic Aquarium
Research Professor Emeritus, Department of Marine Sciences, UConn

Attachments:

Rowley, K. 2020. Bibliography Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary: Connectivity. NOAA Central Library, Silver Spring, MD. NCRL subject guide 2020-01,

<https://doi.org/10.25923/de2s-qm19>.

Roberson, K.W., P.J. Auster, S. Fangman and M. Harvey (eds). 2020. Review of Scientific Research in and around the Designated Research Area of Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary (NW Atlantic). Marine Sanctuaries Conservation Series ONMS-20-08. NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, Silver Spring, MD.

Williams, B.L., K. Roberson, J. Young, and M.S. Kendall. 2019. Using Acoustic Telemetry to Understand Connectivity of Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary to the U.S. Atlantic Coastal Ocean. NOAA Technical Memorandum NOS NCCOS 259. Silver Spring, MD. 82 pp. doi:10.25923/r2ma-5m96

Furtner, S., S. Gad, I. Marill, and A. Qian. 2017. A Greater Gray: A Larval Connectivity Assessment of Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary. Master of Environmental Science and Management Project Report, Bren School of Environmental Science & Management, University of California, Santa Barbara. 70 p.

