

# GRAY'S REEF NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL

5 February 2021

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Mona Behl, Secretary  
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Laura Busch  
U.S. Navy (Ex Officio)

10 Ocean Science Circle  
Savannah, GA 31411

Dear Superintendent Rogers,

Please accept this communication and attachments as the final products from the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) of Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary (GRNMS), addressing the present understanding of ecological connectivity. These products are the result of work from multiple sources and assembled by the SAC's Ecological Connectivity Working Group (ECWG). The four attachments can serve as reference materials for the state of understanding of connectivity of species across life-histories at GRNMS.

As you are aware, the ECWG had multiple starts and stops since formation (e.g., decisions on Terms of Reference, uncertainty of GRNMS objectives for use of products from multiple acting superintendents, additional demands on time to accommodate multiple objectives for GRNMS by ECWG members). To date they have not fully addressed the Terms of Reference. However, it is clear that information on ecological connectivity is needed soon to meet the schedule to update of the GRNMS Condition Report and revision of the GRNMS Management Plan. The GRNMS SAC supports the concept of an expert panel workshop that uses these products to address the original ecological connectivity recommendations from the 2012 Scoping Process that resulted in establishment of the ECWG.

The SAC looks forward to working with GRNMS on planning and implementation of the Expert Panel. Thank you, in advance, for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/S/

Michael Denmark  
Chair, GRNMS Sanctuary Advisory Council

