Title: Regional Fishery Management Council Coordination Committee Update

Desired outcome(s):
1) Board understanding of what the Council Coordination Committee is.
2) Board understanding of the fish habitat related issues discussed during the February Committee meeting.

Background:
The reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management (MSA) in 2007 established a Council Coordination Committee, or CCC. The CCC consists of the chairs, vice chairs, and executive directors from each regional fishery management council (council), or other staff, as appropriate. This committee meets twice each year to discuss issues relevant to all councils, including issues related to the implementation of the MSA. NOAA Fisheries hosts one meeting in January or February of each year, and the second meeting, hosted by one of the councils, is usually held in May or June.

The CCC recently met February 19th and 20th in Washington, DC. The NOAA Office of Habitat Conservation provided an overview of NOAA's habitat conservation initiatives and partnership opportunities to help Councils better understand how they can benefit and where they should engage. NOAA stressed the importance and benefits of looking to the Fish Habitat Partnerships as a means to advance sustainable fisheries goals, and also highlighted opportunities for engagement. NOAA also highlighted the NOAA Blueprint initiative, restoration efforts, and linkages to Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.

The next meeting of the CCC will be held May 12-15 in Virginia Beach, VA. A second phase of the habitat discussion will be held, focusing on options for Council engagement in habitat conservation and improving coordination across councils on habitat strategies.

Staff Recommendation/Proposal:
- The Board should consider topics that may be of mutual Board/Council interest and share them with the regional fishery management council Board member and the NOAA Fisheries Board member as appropriate.

Reference material:
February CCC agenda