



**RICK SCOTT**  
GOVERNOR

March 11, 2015

Mr. William Chappell  
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries  
NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service  
1315 East-West Highway, Room 14636  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Mr. Chappell:

This letter is in response to your request for nomination to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council. My office consulted with members of recreational and commercial fishing interests and these discussions highlighted the importance of saltwater fishing that support jobs and economic vitality in Florida, particularly in our coastal communities. We received recommendations and endorsements from numerous individuals and organizations who care deeply about the management of our saltwater fisheries:

Bill Kelly, Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's Association  
Bob Jones, Southeastern Fisheries Association  
Janie Thomas, Shrimp Producers Association  
Jerry Sansom, Organized Fisherman of Florida  
John Jolley, Former Atlantic Council Member  
Russell Hudson, Directed Sustainable Fisheries, Inc.  
Tom Twyford, Jr., West Palm Beach Fishing Club  
Tripp Aukeman, Coastal Conservation Association

After careful consideration of each applicant, I am pleased to nominate the individuals listed below for the obligatory seat, currently held by Benjamin Hartig III. These nominees are well qualified for their sector and would make excellent candidates for appointment to the Council. Given the serious challenges facing saltwater fishery management in the State of Florida, I am providing my nominations in order of preference and ask that you give strong consideration to the preferred nominee.

I am recommending **Mr. Benjamin Hartig III** as the preferred choice for reappointment to the obligatory seat on the Council. Mr. Hartig has been a full-time, hook and line commercial fisherman for over 31 years, specializing in king and Spanish mackerel and snapper/grouper species. He has proven council experience and leadership, combined with a familiarity of current management plans, serving as a member on the Council for 6 years and as Chair for the past year. Targeting a wide variety of species commercially, combined with a long-term view of resource sustainability, Mr. Hartig has contributed to a significant role in the management

process of the Council. He has also been involved this past year in the Keep Martin Beautiful Coastal Cleanup, and is currently a member of the Port Salerno Commercial Dock Authority. Mr. Hartig believes in a simple construct for managing our nation's fisheries, if you manage sustainably and are able to balance the needs of the fish with the needs of the fishermen, the fishermen reap the rewards of healthy fisheries.

My second recommendation is **Captain Robert Johnson**. He is the owner and operator of Jodie Lynn Charters, LLC in St. Augustine. Captain Johnson has been an avid recreational angler and charter boat operator for the past 34 years. He has extensive experience working with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, designing and implementing a tagging program involving Red Snapper and spawning aggregations. He is also a member of the South Atlantic Dolphin Wahoo AP and SEDAR Pool, and has served as past chair of the Snapper Grouper AP. Captain Johnson has been a lifelong recreational saltwater fisherman and has a strong desire to protect the South Atlantic fisheries for future generations.

My third recommendation is **Captain Scott Taylor**. He has 40 years of experience in the commercial sector and operates a fleet of twelve longline swordfishing vessels based within the North Atlantic Fishery. Captain Taylor currently serves as a member of the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association. Last year, he advised and worked with Pew Charitable Trusts in the design of the ICCAT approved electronic tagging system for bluefin tunas. Captain Taylor believes that proper management, hard work with a full dose of transparency, and open mindedness will be the ingredients for continued success in the conservation of our precious marine resources.

In summary, my recommendations for the at-large seat are as follows:

1. Mr. Benjamin Hartig III
2. Captain Robert Johnson
3. Mr. Scott Taylor

I appreciate your consideration of my nominations for Council appointment and look forward to seeing citizens of Florida continue their service on the Council in ways that will help ensure wise and sustainable use of our valuable saltwater fishery resources. Please contact my office if you have questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rick Scott", written in a cursive style.

Rick Scott  
Governor