

December 2018 Fisheries GIT Decisions

December 17-18, 2018 Meeting at the Mariner's Museum in Newport News, VA

- **Endorse selection of St. Marys River in Maryland as a restoration tributary**

Background:

St. Marys River was selected as the 9th of 10 tributaries to restore oyster habitat and populations by 2025, under the 2014 Chesapeake Watershed Agreement. The Maryland oyster workgroup is currently developing a tributary blueprint for the St. Marys.

Recommendation:

Endorse the selection of St. Marys River for large scale oyster restoration in support of the 2014 Bay Watershed Agreement oyster outcome.

Vote Outcome:

Approved

Follow up actions:

Complete blueprint approval process and begin construction in St. Marys River, aiming for late 2019.

- **Endorse interim methods for success metric monitoring in selected tributaries**

Background:

With increasing costs required to monitor each tributary under the 2014 Agreement, research by Oyster Recovery Partnership (ORP) was commissioned to develop more cost-effective monitoring solutions. The new methods have been presented to Maryland working group and are being used at their discretion to evaluate restoration success metrics beginning in fall 2018.

Recommendation:

Support the Maryland Workgroup's decision to apply the new monitoring methods in 2018. Request that the Maryland workgroup further evaluate the new methods post 2018 monitoring season for ability to address the success metrics and reduce costs before applying over the long term.

Vote Outcome:

Approved

Follow up actions:

Continue discussions on how to standardize monitoring across Maryland and Virginia tributaries.

- **Determine next steps and better define the role of the Invasive Catfish Task Force**

Background:

The Invasive Catfish Task Force (ICTF) recently released a report outlining the state of scientific research on invasive catfish and updated recommended actions. With the release of these reports the ICTF is seeking guidance on their current role. The ICTF sent a letter to the Fish GIT executive committee requesting guidance and suggesting a baywide management plan for invasive catfish could help to define a specific management goal that considers various stakeholder interests. In the absence of a bay wide management plan, the ICTF can continue to play a coordination and information exchange role.

Recommendation:

Executive Committee members agree to refine the need for and, if necessary, the role of ICTF.

Vote Outcome:

Approved

Maintain ICTF under condition of developing clear objectives

Follow up actions:

ICTF will meet to prioritize objectives.

- **Formalize the process for blue crab stock assessment updates**

Background:

Jurisdictional representatives met with Maryland DNR staff developing the stock assessment update to review progress and discuss the need for a full benchmark stock assessment. Based on results of the stock assessment update and success of the current management framework, it was suggested a benchmark stock assessment is not needed at this time. The updated stock assessment report is being completed and will be reviewed by CBSAC. There was a suggestion that decision rules be drafted as a tool to enhance the current management framework.

Recommendation:

- 1) Agree that a benchmark stock assessment is not needed at this time.
- 2) Agree to develop a process for future stock assessment updates and drafting decision rules, in consultation with the Fish GIT.

Vote Outcome:

Approved

Follow up actions:

A finalized report on 2017 update results will be reviewed by CBSAC.