

Fish Habitat Outcome: Refinement of Questions for Management Board

We are requesting jurisdiction Management Board representatives meet with their current Fish Habitat Action Team (FHAT) representatives and other habitat experts to provide jurisdiction-specific feedback on two important fish habitat priorities: fish habitat assessment and ecosystem-based fisheries management. The feedback will help the investigators leading these two efforts increase feedback and interaction with the potential users in the jurisdictions.. A clear sense of jurisdictional application of these products, and related science needs will help guide the next work plan development. We are also looking to build the active capacity of the team and ensure the FHAT has the appropriate jurisdictional points of contact on the team to implement the actions.

Proposed Questions:

Topic 1: Fish habitat assessments

USGS and NOAA are developing a regional fish habitat assessment for tidal and non-tidal waters. The assessment will characterize habitat condition and, where possible, quantify stressor impacts on habitat condition and fish response. Questions:

1. How would your jurisdiction use the fish habitat assessment for fishery management, habitat conservation or restoration decisions?
2. Are there data sets or other assessments that could be integrated with the fish habitat assessment to improve its utility to your jurisdiction?
3. What other information or research needs to improve habitat restoration and conservation for fish to exist in your jurisdiction?
4. Are there other individuals that should be included as a fish habitat team member or interested party that could advance the needs you have mentioned?

Topic 2: Ecosystem-based fisheries management

NOAA is working with Chesapeake Bay tidal fish managers to develop applied research related to Ecosystem Based Fisheries Management (EBFM). The focus now is on evaluating changes in temperature, oxygen, and salinity on forage fish and their predators. Questions:

1. Are there people, data sets, and or technology you feel should be considered as a part of exploring this issue?

Finally, please discuss the best way for Management Board members to communicate with their jurisdictional fish habitat representatives to stay informed and engaged with this particular

outcome. We want to improve knowledge of fish-habitat issues to the Management Board in the future. Question:

1. Are there other fish-habitat related science needs the jurisdictions would like to be considered by the FHAT?