

Member Update for 19-20 June 2017 Sustainable Fisheries GIT meeting

Department of Defense

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Telemetry Projects:

1) From Carter Watterson at Navy's NAVFAC Atlantic Region Office: Efforts to monitor the movements and seasonal distribution of Atlantic sturgeon and loggerhead, green, and Kemp's ridley sea turtles using acoustic telemetry within the Chesapeake Bay continue. The Navy's acoustic telemetry receiver array, which spans the lower Chesapeake Bay and portions of its tributaries (see attached map), is in its fifth year of operation through funding from U.S. Fleet Forces Command. In addition, efforts to monitor sturgeon spawning events in the Pamunkey River continue and, thanks to funding from NAVFAC MIDLANT, were expanded to also cover the Mattaponi River last year.

2) From Todd Beser at Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground: Purchased receivers to track tagged fish, primarily to determine if APG's waters are inhabited by endangered sturgeon species. Todd is currently working with Dr. Secor at UMCES to determine good sites to deploy the receivers. The goal is to fill in the void between Pooles Island and Spesutie Island.

3) Seth Berry at Naval Support Facility Indian Head installation submitted a DoD Legacy program pre-proposal and is following up with an annual Natural Resources programming request for a project involving Atlantic and shortnose sturgeon telemetry tracking and a habitat and movement assessment in the Potomac River. (FY18-20 pending funding)

Other Fish species and habitat surveys are planned in FY17 at these DoD Installations:

1) From Dorothy Keough and John Pilcicki at Fort Belvoir: Installation personnel are working in the field cooperatively with various partners on fisheries improvement initiatives. This includes anadromous fish survey/sampling by George Mason University, American Shad Restoration (capture/stocking), education events on conservation and fishing, installation and maintenance of fishing line recycling containers, etc. Also, to perform wildlife population surveys, habitat surveys, and habitat enhancements, and sensitive species conservation work.

2) Also from Seth Berry at NSF Indian Head:

a. Annual physical, chemical, and biological surveys are conducted at twelve streams at Indian Head and Stump Neck Annex involving stream channel, riparian buffer and habitat assessments. Collection surveys were also completed of the macroinvertebrates and fish species in each of the twelve streams. The potential impacts of watershed wide impervious surface, Installation Restoration (IR) sites, and Industrial Waste (IW) outfalls were considered during the assessment. The streams at Stump Neck had no IR or IW outfall site impacts and had the least impervious subwatershed. Additionally, both streams contained group one macroinvertebrate taxa - the most pollution intolerant group, had the highest reach condition indexes, and were calculated to have the highest finfish Index of Biological Integrity (IBI). The survey provides baseline data for tracking stream health and further solidifies the correlation between impervious development and stream degradation.

b. Seth is also conducting two fish blockage/stream restoration projects that will take place this year. One will restore approximately 100 lineal feet of erosion along a 300 lineal foot stretch of non-tidal, perennial stream (eel are present). A vernal pool will also be created in one of the meanders during relocation of the stream channel in one location. The other project will restore approximately 250 lineal feet of non-tidal, perennial stream (eel also present) and create two forested vernal pools (different location/not for fish). Both streams are tributaries of the Mattawoman Creek.

3) Additional planning level fish and habitat surveys are being performed this year at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Fort Belvoir and Army Adelphi Laboratory Center.

Oyster Restoration:

1) Dr. Rom Lipcius at VIMS coordinated with Tom Olexa at Naval Weapons Station Yorktown and Adam Wright to submit a DoD Legacy Program pre-proposal. The project would design and build oyster reefs in the York River that would also serve as structural barriers to prevent unauthorized small craft from coming ashore at the installation. Ideally, habitat improvement for multiple species, as well shoreline protection from extreme weather events will also be achieved.

2) The Navy's Lafayette River Annex is working with NOAA and Elizabeth River Project personnel to consider expanding the oyster reef in the Lafayette River just off shore of the Annex. Talks began after DoD personnel attended the Virginia Interagency Oyster Team meeting hosted by USACE in Norfolk in March 2017.

3) The following DoD installations participate in oyster gardening initiatives with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Elizabeth River Project, Chesapeake Beach Oyster Society, and/or other local groups:

- Naval Support Activity Annapolis
- Naval Research Laboratory, Chesapeake Beach
- Joint Base Little Creek-Fort Story
- NSA Hampton Roads/Lafayette River Annex
- Norfolk Naval Shipyard