December 2015 Full SFGIT Meeting
Takeaways and potential actions

Oysters

- Six tributaries selected in Maryland and Virginia with active restoration underway (Harris, Tred Avon, Little Choptank); Piankatank, Lafayette, Lynnhaven, GW?
- Oyster Summit (February 18-19th)

- *Dashboard: what is the list of selected tributaries and what is their restoration status?*
- *Initiate conversation on Potomac River*
- *Ensure plans are in place for long term monitoring of projects*
- *Shell limitation and hatchery capacity are challenges*
- *Connect oysters to other restoration efforts and challenges (wetlands, SAV, climate change, water quality)*

Forage

- Forage workshop report released.
- Indicators
    - Prey abundance (pelagic, demersal and benthic invert)
    - Diet
    - Prey to Predator ratios
    - Consumption to prey ratios and Nutritional profiles being developed by CBL by early 2016.
- Long-term, correlated shifts in prey abundances linked to environmental factors
- Decline in total predatory demand driven by lower predator abundances
- Suite of indicators important

- *Prioritize prey based on management objectives*
- *Identify primary drivers of forage changes and links to predators*
- *Shallow water sampling limiting factor*

Cownose Ray

- New report highlighting what we know about cownose rays and recommendations from scientists coming out in January 2016.

- *Jurisdictions review and utilize report for conversations within their management entities in coordination with Fish GIT*
- *Look at wildlife management approaches for models (deterrence, timing)*
- *Engagement with shellfish industry important*
- *Map out human interactions and use to guide conservation*

Blue Crab

- 2012 juvenile year class was strong based on analysis of multiple surveys
- Mortality more significant in northern regions; factor undetermined
- *Improve temporal resolution to determine if low relative survival at specific time (month)*
- *Look into Bay SAV data paired with blue crab spatial data, 2011 striped bass, storm sedimentation, rate of temperature decline.*

Invasive catfish

- Smaller catfish omnivorous and show shift to fish as they grow (500m). Similar to patterns seen in VA.
- No clear preference for Alosa sp. Flatheads showed higher occurrence of Alosa sp.
- Created a new fishery and supporting fishermen

- *Need population size estimates for blue and flatheads (mark recapture studies)*
- *Availability of prey may be an issue. Connect with Eric Hilton at VIMS CPUE work in Chickahominy*
- *What biomass supports fish outside spring months? Follow up on summer and fall diet studies.*