

Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team Meeting
Virginia Commonwealth University
June 2nd – 3rd 2016

Actions from Day 1

Forage

- Based on MAFMC presentation, consider how their policy for unmanaged forage could apply to the Bay. Start with comparing their list of unmanaged forage species to our list of forage species. – Convene action teams (kickoff meetings for workplan actions)
 - MAFMC
 - MAFMC held a meeting on July 6th with their Ecosystem and Ocean Planning Advisory Panel to discuss the recommendations for final action on the Council's Unmanaged Forage Omnibus Amendment.
 - The amendment will prohibit the development of new and expansion of existing directed commercial fisheries on unmanaged forage species in Mid-Atlantic Federal waters until the Council has had an adequate opportunity to both assess the scientific information relating to any new or expanded directed fisheries and consider potential impacts to existing fisheries, fishing communities, and the marine ecosystem. Final action on the amendment will be taken at the Virginia Beach meeting on August 8-11th.
 - Peyton volunteered to attend the MAFMC August meeting to represent the SFGIT Ex Comm (pending jurisdiction approval – July Ex Comm)
 - Does Ex Comm think it would be useful to support MAFMC?
 - Do they agree that the current forage outcome is similar to MAFMC policy?
 - Do we want to coordinate with MAFMC?
 - Should Ex Comm add a statement that Bay jurisdictions agree to not open any unmanaged forage fisheries?
 - Common species between the [STAC Forage Workshop report](#) recommendations and the [MAFMC list of Unmanaged Forage Taxa](#) (4/14/16) include:
 - Bay anchovy
 - Atlantic silverside
 - Copepods, amphipods, isopods and any other species under 1 inch as adults
 - Common species between the [STAC Forage Workshop report](#) recommendations and the [MAFMC Forage White Paper](#) (November 2014):
 - Atlantic menhaden
 - Blueback herring (*Alosa* spp.)
 - Bay anchovy
 - Atlantic silverside
 - Oyster indicator ready by December 2016 (August - draft complete)

- Luke Argleben (NOAA policy intern) developed a mock-up of the Oyster Dashboard, which will provide the oyster indicator (as acres of in-water implementation of oyster restoration) in a format that will help interested parties navigate and compare progress of the selected tributaries. This mock-up has been discussed with the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) web team as well as the Status and Trends Workgroup to further refine the Oyster Dashboard.
 - Forage and Fish Habitat (mid to late June)
 - Forage Action Team met on June 27th to provide status updates on current forage workplan actions, a review of near-term actions and priorities, and to establish a regular check-in schedule.
 - Fish Habitat Action Team met on June 28th to learn about the completed TetraTech/Fish Habitat project, which compiled fecundity information for selected species (lesser-studied species throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed chosen by the Fish Habitat Action Team in a previous project with TetraTech). The team also discussed next steps for completing workplan actions and established a regular check-in schedule.
 - GIT funding suggestions?
 - Solicited proposals from full SFGIT in June. The GIT received 11 proposals which were sent to the Ex Comm for ranking.
 - Rankings have been tallied with the top three proposals being as follows:
 - Shell/habitat loss rates in oyster restoration and fishery management
 - Blue crab stock assessment
 - Recreational blue crab harvest estimates
 - Recreational blue crab harvest estimates would be duplicative of efforts by SERC in Maryland (still need to evaluate potential for VA and PRFC). A summary of the SERC project status is included as an additional July Ex Comm material.
 - The next highest rated proposal following the recreational blue crab harvest estimates, was to “Investigate the potential effects of near-future climate changes on forage”. After discussing this project with Tom Ihde, the CBP lead for the current GIT-funded project on drivers of forage trends, some of the requested information from this proposal will be included in the current GIT-funded project. However, we can combine some concepts from this proposal with another suggested proposal on the “Evaluation of the forage-habitat relationship in the Chesapeake Bay”
 - **Ex Comm comments on submitted proposals?**
- Separate our list of forage species into managed vs unmanaged species and focus on compiling available data on the managed species, starting with spot, croaker and shad/river herring. Look for ASMFC stock assessments on those species.
 - Forage Action Team with Ex Comm input – this summer
 - **Would MAFMC like us to provide an overview of indicators work to them at meeting? Share data and help with sharing information. Could present to MAFMC and ASMFC.**
- Bill Goldsborough – Consider Fish GIT commenting on the shad/river herring ocean bycatch issue.

- Bill G will provide background information on the issue and draft a position statement for the Fisheries GIT to run by the team.
 - Bill Goldsborough has agreed to draft a position statement and present this statement at the July Ex Comm conference call.
 - **Does Ex Comm endorse position statement?**

Blue Crab **DECISIONAL ITEM ON AGENDA**

- Explore proposal for Baywide male crab minimum size limit of 5 ¼ "
 - Ex Comm will discuss this proposal at the July Ex Comm conference call. Will determine if this regulatory change is wanted, feasible, and if desired, how it will be implemented.
- Plan a meeting among jurisdictions to discuss the desired outcomes and need from the next blue crab stock assessment
 - Ex Comm will have opportunity to prioritize and discuss desired outcomes for blue crab stock assessment.

Oyster Restoration

- Plan a conversation to discuss Baywide oyster restoration moving forward including selecting the next tributaries and lessons learned from restoration thus far.
 - **Upcoming meeting in Fall, develop full understanding of methods by jurisdictions**
 - Bring in the MD and VA Interagency teams and include Potomac partners, USACE Colonels, state Secretaries and fishery managers.
 - **Prior to workshop, do individual interviews with jurisdictions**
 - Amy Freitag can make phone calls to find out expectations and determine main objectives
 - **Use this as an opportunity to figure out next tributaries**
 - Could do management framework session in October, Oyster outcome attainment at December SFGIT meeting
 - Summit did not cover management – how to learn about this? What can be proposed?
 - **Could have working session at SFGIT December meeting to select remaining tributaries.**
 - Address issues that are holding up restoration - Corps, Elections, etc. are factors
 - Peyton can reach out to Colonel Chamberlin, prepare for next legislative session

Fish Habitat

- Placeholder to explore the Potomac as a focus area.
- Look at coastal GEMS mapping to support these efforts. (VEVA layer)

Climate

- Inventory climate efforts addressing impacts on fish and shellfish and post on Fish GIT website

Blue catfish

- Clarify and resolve USDA processing rule by getting activity update from each jurisdiction and inviting USDA representative to explain requirement at Excomm
- Continue to track science and fishery
 - The Senate passed S.J. Res. 28, which was a Congressional Review Act resolution which overturns the USDA Catfish Inspection rule mandated by the 2008 and 2014 Farm Bills. This vote occurred on May 25th in the Senate, with a vote of 55 to 43.

Sturgeon

- Continue to track science (Carter presentation on Navy research)
- Maintain array (CBC w GIT)
 - The Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) is accepting public comments on the proposed Critical Habitat for Atlantic Sturgeon. Suggested units in the Chesapeake Bay include portions of the:
 - Susquehanna River
 - Potomac River
 - Rappahannock River
 - York, Mattaponi, and Pamunkey Rivers
 - James River

Blue Crab

- What happened 2012-2014?
- Identify near term priority from CBSAC list of data needs
 - Improve harvest reporting
 - WDS gear efficiency (density to abundance)
 - Catchability
 - Other sources of fishing mortality (discards, peeler, recreational)

Everything above are actions for the meeting, below is staff

GIT Funding (identify up to 3 Topic ideas; use poll to solicit team input)

- Synthesis of climate change on fisheries (small funding)
- Top TOR(s) for assessment (need jurisdictional meeting first)
 - In process – Ex Comm has identified their top three rankings, rankings have been reviewed by Chair, and top three proposals will be submitted on 7/15

Principals Staff Committee October 2016 (Agenda ideas)

- Habitat needs
- Policy needs, where they operate