

Sustainable Fisheries GIT Executive Committee

Meeting Minutes

April 24, 2017 from 1:00pm-3:00pm

Materials: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/24965/>

Participants

Bob Beal	Bruce Vogt	Chris Moore	Dave Blazer	David Maginnes
Emilie Franke	Kara Skipper	Karl Blankenship	Lynn Fegley	Marty Gary
Matt Ogburn	Nancy Butowski	Peyton Robertson	Rob O'Reilly	Sean Corson

Presentation

➤ **Evaluating the Recreational Blue Crab Harvest in Maryland using Mark-Recapture Methods – Matt Ogburn (SERC)**

- Previous recreational creel surveys (telephone surveys, intercept surveys at docks, and interviews with homeowners with docks) found 4.8% to 7.0% of the total commercial harvest.
- SERC's study involved mark-recapture methods, which distributed caught and tagged crabs at locations throughout the Maryland portion of the Chesapeake Bay. Calculations of the recapture rates incorporated spatial variability to develop estimates of commercial harvest and recreational blue crab harvest at sites throughout the Chesapeake Bay.
- It was recommended that blue crab fishery managers should shift their recreational estimate to using 8% of the total harvest in Maryland instead of 8% of the male harvest estimate. The male harvest has likely been underestimated for the past few years.
- Discussion
 - Members were interested in the gears represented in the study. Of the commercial recaptures, approximately 75% were trotlines, 25% were crab pots (likely influenced by release sites). Of the recreational recaptures, approximately 60% were trotlines, 18% were crab pots, 12% were collapsible nets, and 5% were hand-lines and dip nets.
 - Matt will present this study at the June Fisheries GIT meeting.

Decisional

➤ **Biannual Sustainable Fisheries GIT Meeting**

- Ex Comm members reviewed the two proposed meeting agenda.
- Discussion:
 - Members came to the consensus that having a stronger focus on inshore and offshore connections would be preferable for the June meeting.
 - Members agreed that we would address oyster topics at the December full GIT meeting.
 - The Ex Comm evaluated how we could incorporate MAFMC's unmanaged forage amendment, and a TNC tool that is currently in development to assess benefits for SAV and salt marsh into the conversation.

➤ **Catfish Symposium**

- Bruce discussed the results of the most recent Catfish Symposium planning meeting. Members of the Invasive Catfish Task Force are looking to develop a symposium in October, which will bring the

latest science on invasive catfish to fishery managers, and will allow the task force to evaluate their performance on the recommendations provided in the [2014 Invasive Catfish Report](#).

- The Invasive Catfish Task has developed a [framework](#) for the meeting and is considering logistical factors at this time.
- Discussion:
 - Rob wanted to ensure that the team was clear about the difference in harvest numbers vs. landings in their communications.
 - Dave noted the USDA rules, which are set for full enforcement in September 2017 and suggested that we provide a forum to discuss developments regarding these rules at future Ex Comm calls.
 - Sean received support from the Ex Comm for his suggestion to develop a memo on the USDA rules, which he would then circulate to the Ex Comm before releasing to the full Sustainable Fisheries GIT.

➤ **Fish Habitat Strategy Review System**

- Bruce previewed the Fish Habitat Strategy Review System (SRS) presentation to the Ex Comm, noting how the Fish Habitat Action Team has evaluated their workplan, noted challenges and priorities, and developed an ask to the Chesapeake Bay Program's Management Board to accelerate their progress on the Fish Habitat Outcome.
- Discussion:
 - The focus for the Fish Habitat Action Team will be on the impacts of shoreline hardening and land use on fish habitat.
 - We will be addressing forage, blue crab and oysters at the Strategy Review System quarterly meeting in August.

➤ **Blue Crab Survey Results**

- Press releases were released by the jurisdictions last week. CBSAC will be meeting in May to prepare the 2017 Blue Crab Advisory Report.
 - A data reporting error in previous (2015-prior) Blue Crab Advisory Reports was corrected last year (data chart at end of report). This error did not impact calculations.
 - MD is having meetings with their tidal fish advisory and industry group in the near future.
 - PRFC met with their blue crab advisory group on April 26th and will continue to work with Maryland and Virginia in terms of harvest options and consistency.
 - Virginia's crab management advisory committee will meet in May before the full commission meets at the end of May.

➤ **Ex Comm Updates**

- VMRC does not have mandatory reporting on blue crab economics.
- In Virginia, it appears that the dockside value has increased.
 - Bruce stated that we might be able to reach out to Jorge Holzer to determine if there has been a large dockside value increase, and if so, to what extent has it increased.
- The Maryland Legislature passed a bill, which requires Maryland DNR to develop a fisheries management plan for cownose rays by December 2018.
 - Maryland DNR will be utilizing information from the Cownose Ray Workshop report to inform their efforts.
- Colonial Beach experienced a straight-line wind shear with winds reaching above 75 mph that caused damage to properties.

- Sean offered to forward along a presentation on a similar event that occurred in Annapolis for those who are interested in learning more about these types of events.
 - A seafood tour was held recently where congressional staffers visited Bevin's, Omega Protein, and additional processing and seafood locations through tidewater Virginia. Seafood marketing experts discussed federal issues on seafood marketing and other pertinent topics.
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Informational

➤ **Confirm upcoming Ex Comm meeting dates**

Monday, May 22nd, 1pm-3pm – Conference Call

Monday, June 19th – Tuesday, June, 20th – Full GIT Meeting in VA

Monday, July 24th, 1pm-3pm – Conference Call

➤ **Press Releases on Blue Crab Survey Data**

Maryland Press Release:

<http://news.maryland.gov/dnr/2017/04/19/survey-finds-resilient-chesapeake-bay-blue-crab-population/>

Virginia Press Release:

http://www.mrc.state.va.us/news_releases/2017/VMRC_2017_Crab_WDS_Survey_Results.pdf