Fish Habitat Priorities and Approaches

Developed at the February 10th Fish Habitat Meeting in Annapolis, MD

Tidal Saltwater

Habitat Classification	**Species of Interest**	**Factors Influencing (* indicates factors with the most votes for each section)**	**Approaches**
Sub-tidal (<10m)	• Bay Anchovy • Atlantic Sturgeon • Blue Crab • Oyster • Spot • Croaker • Summer Flounder • Striped Bass • Forage (general)	• Water Quality (specifically DO and sedimentation)* • Land use change/urbanization* • Bottom type/loss of habitat structure * • Shoreline hardening • SAV availability • Climate change • Fishing activities (dredging, etc)	1. Comprehensive spatial mgmt. for competing bottom uses. 2. Proactively identify high quality productivity areas. 3. Integration and synthesis of habitat information. 4. Determine quantity of available habitat and thresholds for species.

Intertidal/Nearshore	• Juvenile sciaenids
	• Horseshoe Crab
	• Mummichog
	• Juvenile Crabs
	• Grass Shrimp
	• Detrital production
	• Nursery utilization
		• Land use change/urbanization*
		• Shoreline hardening*
		• Climate Change*
		  o SLR
		• Water Quality (DO and turbidity)
		• Vegetation cover
		  o SAV
		  o Wetlands
			1. Proactively identify high quality productivity areas.
			  a. Benthos
			  b. WCH
			2. Show differences between hardened and natural shorelines.
			3. Maximize value of living shorelines (BMPs).

Freshwater

Habitat Classification	**Species of Interest**	**Factors Influencing (* indicates factors with the most votes for each section)**	**Approaches**

Non-tidal—**Cold**	• Brook Trout
	• Trout (general)
		• Land use change/urbanization*
		  o Impervious surface
		  o Loss of forest cover
		• Climate change
			1. Cold water stream not a top priority for this group, but this team would identify overlaps with interests of groups like EBTJV.
			2. Identify other priority cold water streams that benefit other trout species in addition to brook trout.

Non-tidal—**Warm**	• Freshwater Mussels
	• Black Basses
	• Shad
	• Eel
	• River Herring
		• Land use change/urbanization*
		  o Impervious surface
		• Water Quality (specifically nutrient and sediment loads)*
		• Fish Passage
		• Climate change
		• Gas and mineral extraction
			1. Identify high priority areas for conservation/protection (use MBSS/IBI).
			  a. Link to PA Conservation Regulations
			  b. Link to SWAPs
			2. Promote activities to restore affected areas.
			  a. Link to Water Quality GIP (BMPs)
			3. Outreach to public and decision-makers.

Tidal	• Striped Bass
	• Atlantic Sturgeon
	• Largemouth Bass
	• Shad
	• River Herring
	• American Eel
		• Land use change/urbanization*
		• Water Quality (specifically turbidity)*
		• Loss of wetlands*
		• Climate Change*
		  o SLR
		  o Salt water intrusion
			1. Identify areas with restoration potential.
			2. Identify and map critical spawning and nursery areas for conservation.
			3. Develop criteria for healthy

	• White Perch • Yellow Perch	• Predatory invasive species	habitats . 4. Develop protection policies/regulations.