

**Sustainable Fisheries GIT Executive Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

March 27, 2017 from 1:00pm-3:00pm

Materials: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/24967/>

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***Participants***

Bruce Vogt	Emile Franke	Kara Skipper	Karl Blankenship
Marty Gary	Peyton Robertson	Rob O'Reilly	Roger Mann
Sean Corson	Susan Conner		

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**Presentation**

➤ **Shell/Habitat Dynamics in Oyster Restoration and Fishery Management - Roger Mann (VIMS)**

- Roger Mann discussed the project goals and provided multiple scenarios to demonstrate the stability or instability of shell dynamics in the Chesapeake Bay.
- The conceptual model illustrated processes that help build reef (recruitment, replenishment, natural mortality) and processes that degrade reefs (fishing mortality, loss to burial, loss to biological degradation and chemical dissolution) and noted how these processes contribute to the full system.
- This study will develop salinity dependent shell budgets for tributary-scale restoration sites in Maryland and Virginia (including an analysis of the systems in the Little Choptank, Harris Creek, Tred Avon, Lynnhaven, Lafayette, and Piankatank Rivers).
- The study will also include estimates of future shell resource needs for different areas and/or management approaches that can be accessed through a database and geospatial interface.
- Discussion
  - Members emphasized the value of using this study's findings to evaluate shell dynamics in selected oyster restoration tributaries and potential applications for the next tributaries selected for oyster restoration.
  - Jurisdictions are interested in seeing the spatially explicit results across the Bay and the difference in shell processes in different salinity regimes and applications to fishery management decisions.
  - Members discussed the need to fully understand how to use the database at the conclusion of the study in order to share the results.

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**Decisional**

➤ **New Forage Strategy**

- The Forage Outcome states that we will develop a strategy to assess the forage base available as food for predatory species in the Chesapeake Bay.
- To address this outcome goal, the Forage Action Team developed and revised a forage strategy that will guide the team in a structured approach that utilizes foundational science to assess factors influencing forage, develop indicators, and ultimately develop management advice. The strategy is built to allow for adaptive management and incorporation of new knowledge.
- Discussion:

- Next steps for the Forage Action Team will be to gauge management needs and determine what data/information gaps need to be closed to provide managers with essential information.
- The Ex Comm will be asked to approve this strategy this summer prior to the Forage report-out to the Chesapeake Bay Program Management Board in August.

➤ **Biannual Sustainable Fisheries GIT Meeting**

- The Fisheries GIT will host their June full GIT meeting on Monday, June 19<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup> in Virginia. Staff are currently arranging the venue and other logistics.
- Discussion:
  - Proposed topics include:
    - Drivers of forage population trends (Ryan Woodland-UMCES)
    - Recreational blue crab harvest limits (Matt Ogburn-SERC)
    - Blue crab Advisory Report (Glenn Davis-MDDNR/CBSAC Chair)
    - Critical Habitat Designation for Sturgeon (Julie Crocker-NOAA)
    - Fish Habitat Recap (Gina Hunt-MDDNR)
      - Impervious surface and shoreline hardening research
    - Review oyster metrics considerations for Virginia implementation
      - Potential for breakout groups
    - Updates from Oyster BMP Expert Panel (Julie Reichert-ORP)

➤ **March Fish GIT Newsletter**

- Kara provided a preview of the Fish GIT newsletter and requested comments and edits from the Ex Comm.
- Decision:
  - Ex Comm will contribute feedback on the draft newsletter
  - Final newsletter will be sent out to the Full GIT – COMPLETE (sent 3/29)

➤ **Ex Comm Updates**

- Marty noted three issues for the Potomac River Fisheries Commission:
  - Mallows Bay Marine Sanctuary Designation – Commercial fishermen are concerned that the National Marine Sanctuary designation might institute changes that could impact fishery management in the area during the 5-year re-evaluations of the potential sanctuary.
  - Planting oysters in the Potomac – A proposal by PRFC was accepted to plant spat-on-shell in the Potomac over a 5-year period. PRFC is working with Tom Miller (UMCES-CBL) and will begin planting this month.
  - Catfish Regulations – Marty has been reaching out to multiple contacts and representatives about the USDA regulations on catfish inspection. He still needs further clarification on the implications for processors and watermen.
- Virginia Marine Resources Commission's Finfish Advisory Committee met last week and included discussion on cobia.

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**Informational**

➤ **Confirm upcoming Ex Comm meeting dates**

Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup>, 1pm-3pm – Conference Call

Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1pm-3pm – Conference Call

Monday, June 19<sup>th</sup> – Tuesday, June, 20<sup>th</sup> – Full GIT Meeting in VA

➤ **March 2017 Fish GIT Newsletter**

Final newsletter is available [here](#).