

## **Sustainable Fisheries GIT Executive Committee**

### **Meeting Agenda**

November 26, 2018 from 1:00pm – 3:00pm

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#### ***Participants***

Rob O' Reilly	Sean Corson	Bruce Vogt	Sara Coleman
Lynn Fegley	Marty Gary	Bob Beal	Nancy Butowski
Morgan Corey	Dave Blazer	Pat Geer	

#### **Decisional**

##### **➤ Invasive Catfish Next Steps**

- Letter from Invasive Catfish Task Force (ICTF) to the Fisheries GIT asks for guidance from Ex Comm on future need and focus of the task force.
- **Background:**
- ICTF was established in 2012 by the Fisheries GIT to reduce the spread of invasive catfishes into currently uninhabited waters and minimize the ecological impacts of invasive catfishes on native species in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
  - A report was drafted in 2014 summarizing the issue, and recommendations were reviewed by the Fisheries GIT Executive Committee.
  - The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office invested in researching invasive catfish.
  - A 2017 Science Symposium was held to discuss the latest research, highlighting the multiple user conflicts around harvesting invasive catfish, and the final report with recommendations will be released within the next few weeks in coordination with the Chesapeake Bay Program.
- ICTF can continue to play a coordination role and share information as current research is available, however the role of ICTF is uncertain without a clear goal for moving forward. A comprehensive bay-wide plan could help balance the competing interests of stakeholder groups, but would require significant time and resources to create such a plan that may have limited utility without support from states.
- **Comments:**
- There are some existing general invasive species plans; Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species has not recommended specific actions for catfish
- General feeling that invasive catfish are not viewed as a pressing issue right now, apathy has set in
  - The magnitude of impacts to native species are still uncertain
- Plenty of information exists, but has not been fully disseminated
- Need a public outreach component to understand different sectors interests
- A baywide management plan has no regulatory power by itself
  - Would require a more clearly-defined, specific goal (reducing biomass by X)
  - We may want to approach by monitoring species of concern (e.g. alosines, blue crab), our responsibility is to prioritize issues

- Agreement that we need to document a clear decision stating we are concerned about predation effects of invasive catfish to other species and stick with an information-sharing approach, continue to synthesize research updates on a regular basis and provide updates to Fish GIT and other appropriate audiences
- **Action:** Fisheries GIT leadership will draft a memo in response to ICTF letter documenting concerns about the issue and defining the future role of ICTF.

#### ➤ Review Decision Items for December Fisheries GIT Meeting

- **Decision 1:**
- Executive Committee members will vote to formally approve the tributary selection of St. Marys River in Maryland.
  - In VA we signed off as GIT before blueprints were ready with the understanding that plans could change if evidence was produced to suggest change, different process in MD – Is DNR comfortable with us voting to support St. Marys as 4<sup>th</sup> tributary?
    - Yes, St. Marys blueprints are moving along, should be good to vote on
    - Manokin is not ready yet
  - This group has to sign off in order to meet Chesapeake Agreement goals
- **Decision 2:**
- Executive Committee members will vote to endorse interim research methods for monitoring in selected tributaries.
  - VA partners carrying out monitoring by trying to align with MD methods; ORP research was commissioned to standardize monitoring protocols
    - Historically cost ~\$250K per year to implement monitoring methods; now with multiple restored tributaries requiring check ins every 3 and 6 years, need for more cost-effective monitoring solutions
  - Options to maintain statistical integrity include using stratified random sampling design – MD workgroup adopted due to fall monitoring schedule
  - Need to work closely between the states to standardize monitoring programs and plan for long-term monitoring costs
    - \*\*\*Reworded to recognize *interim* methods that could change in the future as needed
- **Decision 3:**
- Executive Committee members will determine next steps and better define the role of the Invasive Catfish Task Force.
  - Discussed above
- **Decision 4:**
- Executive Committee members will formalize the process for blue crab stock assessment updates.
  - Annual stock assessment update report will be finished December-January, CBSAC will act as reviewers of report
    - At what point would a benchmark stock assessment ever be needed? What are the triggers for action?

- Given that we have annual advisory reports, the annual winter dredge survey, and are in a good position where the population has been stable and responding to management structure over the past 10 years – feeling that we may not need to conduct *annual* stock assessment updates
  - We have the freedom to do things differently than with finfish
  - Benchmark stock assessment may not be certain to provide a return in investment (significant cost and resources required)
- We are responsible for reporting out to Chesapeake Bay Program and GIT, but sounds like we are on track for maintaining 215 million goal
- **Action:** Morgan will continue to revise and finalize agenda for December meeting

#### ➤ **Ex Comm Updates**

- Dave: Oyster stock assessment is out, legislative report will be out soon – success!
- Rob: blue crab management plan ongoing at VMRC, will be posted on Legislative and Advisory Services site by Dec 15 – Rob can share a copy once finalized
- Marty: ongoing commercial license renewals
- Bob: striped bass benchmark stock assessment going through peer review at Woods Hole now, due out in early 2019
  - Could hear a brief update on January Ex Comm meeting

#### **Informational**

- Please **RSVP** for the December 2018 Fisheries GIT meeting, taking place December 17-18 (Monday-Tuesday) in Newport News, VA at the Mariner's Museum.