

Sustainable Fisheries GIT Executive Committee

Meeting Summary

February 22nd, 2016 from 1:30pm-2:00pm

Materials: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/calendar/event/23604/>

Call Participants:

Bob Beal

Bruce Vogt

Dave Blazer

Emilie Franke

Kara Skipper

Karl Blankenship

Marty Gary

Nancy Butowski

Peyton Robertson

Rob O'Reilly

Decisional

➤ **Oyster Summit**

- Bruce opened up the discussion on the Oyster Summit which took place the previous week on February 18th – 19th. Topics consistently brought up during the Summit discussions included the importance and necessity of alternative substrate, the benefits of developing a broader communication network across the Bay to address concerns about oysters, and the impressive efforts completed by community groups inspired by passionate individuals and innovative ideas.
- **Discussion:**
- Potential next steps:
 - Cultivate more discussion on how we can work to reduce the costs of alternative substrate and how to address water quality issues in hatcheries.
 - Work towards development of an oyster stock assessment and potential biological reference points to explore for the Bay. Learn from the efforts in Delaware Bay and consider how to apply aspects of their work to the Bay (maybe on a smaller tributary scale?).
 - Develop a review of the successes and failures of oyster aquaculture, harvest, and restoration management across the country to learn from experience in other regions.
- Further exploration:
 - Marty noted that one of the biggest questions is hatchery capacity and scaling of infrastructure for hatcheries.
 - Dave Blazer wants to explore the New Jersey case study in more depth to determine if their management plan has potential applications in Maryland.
 - Peyton noted his interest in the New Jersey case study, in particular how the bushel tax is paid by the industry instead of the buyer. He expressed that we need to explore other management models.
- Available Information:
 - Rob mentioned that Roger Mann had started an effort to develop biological reference points and suggested that we should revisit this work.
 - The aforementioned work was funded by the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office. SFGIT staff and NOAA staff will revisit the project final report.
 - Studies have suggested that dredging does not improve oyster growth.
- Near-term Actions:

- Peyton suggested an oyster work session, in which we would bring everyone up to speed on research and efforts occurring in different jurisdictions.
- Rob suggested updating the oyster management matrix that provides information on oyster management in each jurisdiction. The Ex Comm agreed. Emilie will initiate this update.

➤ **March and April Ex Comm Calls**

- February Ex Comm Call – Monday, February 22nd
- March Ex Comm Call – Monday, March 28th

➤ **Ex Comm Updates**

- Members of CBSAC and jurisdictional managers will review and provide input on the blue crab materials sent out by Emilie. She will follow up with:
 - Timeline of advisory committee input in the evaluation of an allocation framework.
 - Chart of each jurisdiction's blue crab regulations-update for 2016.
- The SFGIT staff will send out the recent paper by Dean Grubbs, "[Critical Assessment and Ramifications of a Purported Marine Trophic Cascade](#)"
- Members noted that there is a big cownose ray bowhunting contingent in the Gulf States, and that New Jersey is developing a bowhunting fishery to control mortality.
- The Maryland legislature currently has a bill ([HB 1519](#)) to stop bowhunting on a seasonal basis.
- There was a suggestion for [VMRC's Commission Day](#) to freeze the user fee for new oyster licenses. The number of users has increased from 600 to 916 in the past 13 months. Maryland has experienced similar growth.

Informational

➤ **Confirm upcoming meeting dates**

Ex Comm Call (Mondays from 1:00-3:00pm)

March 28th, 2016

April 25th, 2016