

**Sustainable Fisheries GIT Executive Committee
Meeting Minutes**

August 18, 2014 from 1:00pm-3:00pm

Materials: <http://www.chesapeakebay.net/S=0/calendar/event/21836/>

Call Participants: *Peyton Robertson, Tom O'Connell, Rob O'Reilly, Bryan King, Marty Gary, Toni Kearns (for Bob Beal), Joe Grist, Nancy Butowski, Tom Murray, Jack Frye, Ann Swanson, Bevin Buchheister, Marel Raub, Bob Greenlee, Susan Conner, Bruce Vogt, Andrew Turner, Karl Blankenship, Emilie Franke*

Decisional

➤ **Invasive Catfish Commercial Electrofishing Project Update – Tom Murray (VIMS Marine Advisory Services)**

- *Update 10 min; Discussion 15 min*
- Background: [Fishery Resource Grant Program](#)
- Fisheries GIT member Tom Murray gave an update on the status of the commercial catfish electrofishing project that is funded by a Virginia Fishery Resource Grant.
 - These Fishery Resource Grants are funded annually to support fisheries research to improve the technologies and value of the commercial industry.
- This catfish project funding paid for the electrofishing gear (~17K) for one commercial waterman to harvest blue catfish on the James River via electrofishing for the 2014 summer season.
- The project is advised by a small group of catfish scientists/experts from VIMS, VDGIF, and VCU. The waterman is also accompanied by an observer on his trips to note any bycatch.
- The waterman has been submitting progress reports and Sea Grant will produce a final report for the project in October.
- Discussion and questions:
 - Bycatch rates from the gear? – Little to no bycatch; only catfish
 - Prices? – price range of 35-70 cents per pound
 - Catch amount? – through the end of June (19 trips), the waterman caught ~40,000 pounds total
 - Research coordination – waterman is working to coordinate fishing locations with researchers to minimize overlap
 - Additional work: processing infrastructure and product development
 - Product development – yield %? Nutrition? – need to get more specific information in order to build a bigger market

Action: Tom will share the project final report when it becomes available in October.

➤ **CBC Meeting September 4-5th – CBC Staff (Ann S., Jack F., Bevin B., Marel R.)**

- Handout: *CBC Agenda Sept 2014 DRAFT II*
- CBC staff briefed the Ex Comm members on the fisheries-related topics that will be presented at the upcoming CBC meeting at Tangier Island:
 - Presentation on the status of blue crabs, oysters, and striped bass to be presented by Bill Goldsborough.
 - Fisheries Enforcement discussion.

- CBC staff and Ex Comm discussed the Fisheries Enforcement discussion and how the discussion and presentation should be organized. CBC asked what the Ex Comm members' highest priorities are for enforcement that could require CBC action.
- Discussion:
 - CBC agenda and proposed activities will allow for both formal and informal discussions among CBC members and fisheries managers.
 - Ex Comm members discussed high enforcement priorities including fishing license violation policy and grounds for revocation (MD), concerns about oyster poaching from restoration sites, and funding and manpower.
 - CBC asked if Peyton could bring up the high investment value of oyster restoration at the meeting. Susan Conner offered the same support from USACE.
 - Peyton offered insight from the stakeholder discussion session at the December 2012 Fisheries GIT meeting on Tangier Island. At that meeting, watermen expressed concerns about seafood marketing and lack of protection against foreign products entering the market.

Actions:

- **CBC staff will send around their final fact sheets (blue crabs, striped bass, oysters) and set up a separate call with Bill G. to discuss his presentation.**
- **GIT staff will send CBC staff the December 2012 meeting summary from Tangier and the recent news articles on blue crabs.**

➤ **New Agreement Management Strategies**

- Handout: *FishGIT MgmtStrat Guide_8-15-14; Fisheries GIT Reorganization 8-11*
- Staff presented a Management Strategy Guide intended to:
 - Keep Ex Comm and the Fisheries GIT informed and up-to-date on the development of each management strategy.
 - Document who will be participating in strategy development and how the process will work.
 - Be regularly updated with new information, questions and drafts of each strategy.
- Peyton emphasized that while the GIT staff will provide drafting and coordination support, the jurisdictions and partners will need to dedicate staff and resources to develop these management strategies to meet the commitments made by each jurisdiction as signatories of the New Agreement.
- Staff presented options for changing the Fisheries GIT's organizational structure to better incorporate the new Agreement outcomes. Ex Comm members came to consensus on Option #1 which is the simplest structure adding forage and fish habitat action teams to the GIT's existing framework.
- Discussion:
 - How many management strategy documents will there be? – There will be four documents: one for each outcome with the blue crab outcomes combined into one.
 - Ex Comm members agreed that Option #1 for reorganization (adds forage and fish habitat workgroups to the existing structure) is the most simple and logical way to address management strategy development.

Actions:

- **Staff will update this guide to be clearer on the end product and resulting strategy documents.**

- Staff will propose leads and participants for the new forage and fish habitat teams, working with the Habitat GIT), action teams who will work on the associated management strategies.
- Staff will incorporate the Ex Comm’s decision to add new actions teams for forage and fish habitat (Option #1) into the GIT structure.

➤ **Fisheries GIT Charter**

- Handout: Fisheries GIT Charter_8-13
- Staff will presented updates made to the Fisheries GIT charter. The charter was last updated in 2011.
- The charter was originally written based on close collaboration and partnership with the Maryland Sea Grant EBFM project. The proposed edits make necessary changes to the charter since the EBFM project no long exists.

Action: GIT staff will incorporate information on the New Agreement and management strategies into the charter edits. The charter will be sent via email for Ex Comm review of edits.

➤ **September Ex Comm Meeting Date**

- Handout: 2014 Calendar
- A CBP Principals’ Staff Committee meeting was just scheduled for September 22nd. Peyton will be attending. This meeting will be important in discussing Management Strategies.
- Peyton proposed a new September meeting date and subsequent dates for October and November.

Decision: Ex Comm members agreed to the following meeting dates: September 29th, October 20th, and November 17th

➤ **Ex Comm Updates**

- Executive Committee members’ updates and discussion of management issues.
-

Informational

➤ **CBP GIT Funding Update**

- CBP is finalizing the details for the GIT funding. Fisheries GIT projects most likely receiving funding are forage metric development, CBSAC priorities, and striped bass health indicator development. Preliminary project proposals can be found [here](#).

➤ **Forage Workshop**

- The Steering Committee of the STAC Forage Workshop has continued to have monthly conference calls to plan for the workshop. They are currently finalizing the participant list and working to ensure that necessary scientific and management expertise is represented at the workshop.
- The workshop is scheduled for November 12-13th, 2014 at the Chesapeake Biological Lab in Solomons, MD.

➤ **CBSAC Updates**

- CBSAC is planning fall in-person meeting(s) to discuss summer survey data analysis, the gear selectivity pilot study, and the future stock assessment.
- **Invasive Catfish Updates**
 - The Scientific and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) is currently reviewing the Catfish Task Force's final report. A few STAC members as well as experts from outside the region are conducting the review. They anticipate the review will complete by October.
- **Confirm upcoming meeting dates**
 - Ex Comm Calls (Mondays from 1:00-3:00pm)*
 - September 29th (NOTE date change)**
 - October 20th**
 - November 17th**