

Chesapeake Bay Program Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team

March 2016 Update



Our Vision

The Fisheries GIT provides a forum to discuss fishery management issues that cross state and jurisdictional boundaries. Connects science to management decisions and creates a framework for implementing ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management.

Accomplishments



Blue Crabs

- The Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee (CBSAC) met in Dec. 2015 to further discuss survey data [analysis](#) and reproductive output. Glenn Davis (MDDNR) was approved as the new CBSAC Chair.
- Scientists and fishery managers are finalizing the assessment plans after clarifying the terms of reference. Funding is TBD.
- After the Winter Dredge Survey results are released this spring, CBSAC will meet to draft the 2016 Blue Crab Advisory Report.



Oyster Restoration

- [Preliminary monitoring data](#) show that all reefs seeded in Harris Creek in 2012 meet the Oyster Metrics threshold for oyster density, and half of those reefs meet the target for oyster density. A full report is expected in late Spring.
- Restoration progress [updates](#) on the selected tributaries are posted from the December meeting.
- The NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office hosted an [Oyster Summit](#) to discuss shared goals and challenges among oyster stakeholders from multiple sectors.



Invasive Catfish

- A study was completed which tested the effectiveness of experimental collection gear electrofishing harvest efficiency of invasive blue catfish in Virginia. The average catch-per-unit-effort was 26.8lbs per minute. The methods tested were effective and resulted in no unintended bycatch, however it did not increase harvest efficiency as expected.



Forage Fish

- The Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) will fund a project through the Chesapeake Bay to investigate potential environmental drivers that influence forage population and predator consumption patterns. This project will build off [previous work](#) on forage trends and indicator development by researchers at the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science-Chesapeake Biological Lab.



Fish Habitat

- The Fish Habitat Action Team received funding from the CBP to expand a previous project with TetraTech. The project will synthesize information on fish habitat threats and stressors to early life-stages for lesser studied species.

CBP Updates



Watershed Agreement: Final Workplans

- Fisheries GIT workgroups and action teams developed 2-year [workplans](#) for the four fishery outcomes in the 2014 Watershed Agreement. The final workplans will be posted in late April 2016.

Forage Presentation in April

- On the [April 14th CBP Management Board](#), Tom Ihde (ERT/NOAA) and Bruce Vogt (NOAA) will discuss the forage management strategy and the recent forage indicator work.

Executive Committee

Executive Committee Monthly Meetings

At monthly Fisheries GIT Executive Committee meetings Bay scientists and policy administrators discuss various topics:

- [A study](#) was performed to develop a fish health indicator for Striped Bass. Findings from the study suggest that the force-of-infection increases with age and that apparent prevalence is correlated with water quality variables including total suspended solids, nitrates, and phosphates.
- [The OysterFutures research project](#) was developed in an effort to integrate oyster stakeholder objectives with natural system models. This project seeks to promote sustainable natural resource policy by using a stakeholder-centered and science-based approach to make recommendations to managers regarding oysters in the Choptank River. The first [OysterFutures meeting](#) was held in late February.

Project Updates



Cownose Rays

After a successful [workshop](#) on Cownose Rays in October, the Fisheries GIT and the NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office compiled the research, scientific recommendations and workshop discussions into a comprehensive [workshop report](#).

June 2016 - Full GIT Meeting

First Week of June

Virginia Location TBD

SAVE THE DATE!

Find meetings, presentations and other information [here](#)