Fish Habitat

Sustainable Fisheries GIT

Fish Habitat Action Team

Presenter: Bruce Vogt

PROPOSED DRAFT OUTCOME LANGUAGE:

Achieve and maintain suitable shallow water fish habitat in tidal and non-tidal areas for key species through focused water quality, conservation and restoration improvements informed by a synthesis of fisheries science and habitat assessments.

EXISTING 2014 AGREEMENT OUTCOME LANGUAGE:

Continually improve effectiveness of fish habitat conservation and restoration efforts by identifying and characterizing critical spawning, nursery and forage areas within the Bay and tributaries for important fish and shellfish, and use existing and new tools to integrate information and conduct assessments to inform restoration and conservation efforts.

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PROPOSED TARGET	New Target / Update of Existing Target	Date estimate for target being developed
Measure (or score) shallow water fish habitat conditions in the 92 tidal segments by 2026 to prioritize areas for water quality improvements, conservation and habitat restoration. Continually assess changes in fish habitat conditions through 2040. [under construction]	New target	2025
Develop status and trends of structured fish habitat including oyster reefs, SAV, tidal wetlands, and shoreline condition within the 92 bay segments by 20xx. [under construction]	New target	2025
Annually evaluate and communicate indicators of forage status and trends that provide information to inform management on the availability of food for key predator species as environmental conditions change. [under construction]	Updated target	2025
Annually (or Continually) track, analyze and communicate the movement and habitat use of striped bass and other species to inform restoration and fishery management decisions.[under construction]	New target	2025
Use the Nontidal Fish Habitat Assessment as output for fish habitat condition. This can be measured as a % improvement from xxxx baseline. [under construction]		
Acid Mine Drainage (share output with Brook Trout) [under construction]		

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- Current efforts to improve water quality and restore nearshore and aquatic habitats in the Chesapeake Bay are aimed at improving conditions for fish, however, we don't currently assess and track the condition of fish habitat well.
- The CESR report suggested that more emphasis on improving conditions in shallow water could enhance outcomes for living resources.
- This outcome and associated targets aims to improve fish habitat assessments, inform fishery management, prioritize areas for habitat restoration and support implementation of tiered TMDL.