



Invasive Catfish Workgroup Meeting Agenda

July 19th 2023 12-2pm

2 Hours

Purpose: Discuss the future of the ICW.

Introduction and Roll Call – Bruce Vogt (10 minutes)

Attendees

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| • Bailey Robertory (CRC) | • Alexa Galvan (MRC) |
| • Bruce Vogt (NOAA) | • Christine Densmore (FWS) |
| • Mandy Bromilow (NOAA) | • Christian Moore (Reel Country) |
| • Beth Brewster (CCPS) | • Chris Moore (CBF) |
| • Christopher Ottinger (USGS) | • Tory Tuckey (VIMS) |
| • Allison Colden (CBF) | • Ingrid Braun (PRFC) |
| • Kellie Hinkle (St. Mary's County) | • Margaret Whitmore (DWR) |
| • Mary Fabrizio (VIMS) | • Mike Hutt (VDACS) |
| • Stone Slade (MDA) | • Patrick Hudson (True Chesapeake Oyster Co) |
| • Noah Bressman (Salisbury) | • Stone Slade (MDA) |
| • Yan Liao (VT) | • Brent Hunsinger (Friends of the Rappahannock) |
| • Mike Ostrander (Discover the James) | • Dave Secor (CCA MD) |
| • Danny Ryan (DC DOEE) | • Doug Austin (CBP) |
| • Johnny Moore (Delaware) | • Jaclyn Higgins (TRCP) |
| • Keith Bolt (EPA) | • Martin Gary (PRF*) |
| • Mike Bednarski (VDWR) | • Mike O'Brien (UMD) |
| • John Page Williams (Chesapeake Bay Magazine) | |

*Martin Gary will be leaving for a new job up in New York and will be missed. Thank you for everything, Marty!

Action Items:

- **All:** Leave feedback on [Jamboard](#) or send via email to bailey.robertory@noaa.gov
- **All:** Plan on quarterly meetings with 1-2 a year being in person
- **Mike Hutt and Alexa Galvan:** Provide group (can email to Bailey) a list of processors who might want to join the ICW
- **John Page Williams/ Mike Hutt:** Discuss catfish in Virginia (legislation, budget, governor)
- **Allison Colden:** Share senate report language with Noah Bressman and John Page Williams
- **Bailey Robertory:** Get emails for contacts Marty Gary suggested reaching out to

Meeting Minutes:

ICW Roles Review – Bruce Vogt (5 minutes)

ICW Interview Results – Bailey Robertory (15 minutes)

Group discussion on future of ICW (20 minutes)

Question 1: What is your reaction to feedback? What is missing?

- There is a need to get all stakeholders together to discuss values and find common ground before addressing issues.
 - o This should occur at an in-person meeting.
- Look at membership and assess what stakeholders are underrepresented.
 - o Important to get more fishermen involved, representation may be disproportionate.
 - o Include stakeholders who represent everyday citizens who may be impacted by catfish.
 - o Include processors and commercial watermen in the group as well.
 - o Mike Hutt and Alexa Galvan to provide names for some processors.
- Need to educate and put information in front of people. Reduce the numbers and maintain a balance system.
 - o Question: Why aren't Blue Catfish on the menu in most places? Why don't seafood stores sell them? Who processes catfish in Virginia?
 - o John Page Williams and Mike Hutt to connect and discuss legislative initiatives (preliminary, need for VA budget).
- Potential stakeholders to add to group
 - o Processors (Bailey will ask for contacts)

Question 2: What has limited progress?

- Lack of Action
 - o Lots of great information
 - o Difficulty getting catfish on the menu, still need to convince people they are safe to eat.
 - o Looking at byproducts from fish for use as fertilizer

- o Comment: High demand for byproducts of catfish in different locations (Boston, for example). How do we get that demand here?
- Misinformation
 - o Language in Senate Appropriations Bill is negative on catfish
 - o Tough challenge ahead with misinformation
 - o Question: Whose role is it to move issues forward through legislature?
 - Response: CBF works on it, but there are other issues they have to address as well.
 - Response (Noah Bressman): I have been talking to senators and can continue doing so
- Economic Factors
 - o Need to create a valuable market for blue catfish
 - o Economic value for trophy blue catfish. Need to look at this value and consider it as well.
 - o Question: Is there information out there on the value for recreational and commercial fishing of blue catfish
 - Response (Mike Bednarski): It is all spread out and I am working on trying to assimilate the information.
- MDE hiring an invasive species manager
 - o Comment: We are trying to get in touch with someone at USDA to get catfish on the formulary so mass quantities can get out.
 - o Noah Bressman and John Page Williams asked for Senate report language from Allison Colden
- Need to get news updates on blue catfish as things are occurring
- Question: Does ICW have any budget?
 - o Response: No. NOAA has stepped back from catfish.
 - o Response: Federal funding and attention would help
 - o Response: The real connection is more about if we had more information on how catfish impact federal managed species.
 - o Response: We have a report on what they are eating (blue crab, menhaden, etc.)
 - o Response: We know that those interactions are happening but it hasn't been quantified at a level we need yet.
 - o Response: we have some of that data and are working on combining and it may not be ready till next year.
 - o Response: No official invasive catfish outcome in Bay Program Watershed Agreement so it is difficult to get funding.
 - o Response: may be some crossover in Beyond 2025
- Stay focused on how management strategies stay the same with new information. Focus on goals as opposed to studying
 - o Response: Research can be used to justify funding
 - o Response: Need more stock assessments

- o Response: Have discussed estimating fishing mortality for catfish and need a clearer objective. There is interest in a fishery around catfish.
- o Response: When you approach the USDA they want to know if you have a volume of a product that is sustainable and large enough. We are not at a large enough scale yet to get it in the pipeline.

Should the ICW continue to exist?

- All members say yes!
- Members have committed to holding a future in-person meeting with the goal of finding common ground and creating a common goal

What is the best role for the ICW moving forward?

- Information exchange and coordination
- An in-person meeting to have discussion and see where we stand
- From groups like this USGS gains knowledge on what resources to put towards science. This committee helps decide where resources go
 - o Response: What type of information is needed for that?
 - o Response: Effects of blue catfish on blue crab can help
- Gain information on fishing mortality and biological sampling. Biological sampler to tackle blue catfish.
- Group could play a key role in helping identify specific science needs. We need to frame science needs around specific management needs/actions. We need to monitor if targets are being met.
- We need a group coalition to educate federal people on this problem and get everyone on the same page and the same voice/message. From the entire ICW group. Bigger voice, have a plan of what it will do to create jobs, have an impact on the economy, and educate them with the right message.
- Develop consistent messaging
- We, as a team, need a solid, education message for delegates/federal level.

How should the ICW operate moving forward? Membership, sub workgroup, meeting frequency?

- Quarterly meetings, at least once a year (preferable twice) in person.
- Reach out to retailers.
- Reassess sub groups and most efficient way to run them
- More clarity of actions at workgroup level
- Lots of people in the group with lots of diverse interests. Some people may not be as interested in some things rather than other. Might need to reverse structure. Have group identify actionable items and then create workgroups to address those.
- Keep momentum going and keep issues on the front burner.

- Have workgroups address specific actionable items. Maybe some workgroups might be beneficial in person. There should be a focus on getting the right support.

End of Meeting. Thank you to everyone who attended!