PLANNING FOR 2025 AND BEYOND

Chesapeake Bay Program

Outcome Review Meeting

Outcome Presentations

February 13, 2025

Oyster Outcome

OUTCOME DISPOSITION ADVICE TO MANAGEMENT BOARD:

UPDATE

OUTCOME: Continually increase finfish and shellfish habitat and water quality benefits from restored oyster populations. Restore native oyster habitat and populations in 10 tributaries by 2025 and ensure their protection.

- GOAL: Sustainable Fisheries
- LEAD: Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (GIT 1) - MD & VA Oyster Restoration Interagency Team

- Update current outcome with focus on restoration

- Continued momentum - partner consensus on need to restore more reef habitat
- Continue conserving the 10 restored tribs
- Increase education & community outreach
- Better define “ensuring protection”

RECENT PROGRESS
INCREASE

OUTLOOK
ON COURSE

Presented by: Bruce Vogt - NOAA

Blue Crab Management Outcome

OUTCOME DISPOSITION ADVICE TO MANAGEMENT BOARD:

REMOVE

OUTCOME: Manage for a stable and productive crab fishery including working with the industry, recreational crabbers and other stakeholders to improve commercial and recreational harvest accountability. By 2018, evaluate the establishment of a Bay-wide, allocation-based management framework with annual levels set by the jurisdictions for the purpose of accounting for and adjusting harvest by each jurisdiction.

- GOAL: Sustainable Fisheries
- LEAD: Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (GIT 1) - Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee

- Current management framework is sufficient- no need to further explore alternate management approaches

- Management Board approved the completion of this outcome

RECENT PROGRESS
NO CHANGE

OUTLOOK
COMPLETED

Presented by: Bruce Vogt - NOAA

Blue Crab Abundance Outcome

OUTCOME DISPOSITION ADVICE TO MANAGEMENT BOARD:

UPDATE

OUTCOME: Maintain a sustainable blue crab population based on the current 2012 target of 215 million adult females. Refine population targets through 2025 based on best available science.

- GOAL: Sustainable Fisheries
- LEAD: Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (GIT 1) - Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee

- Update outcome language - adaptive to changes

- Outcome has been used to drive cross-jurisdictional management for a sustainable blue crab population
- Environmental changes can influence abundance in the long term

RECENT PROGRESS
DECREASE

OUTLOOK
ON COURSE

Presented by: Bruce Vogt - NOAA

Forage Outcome

OUTCOME DISPOSITION ADVICE TO MANAGEMENT BOARD:

REMOVE

OUTCOME: Continually improve the Partnership's capacity to understand the role of forage fish populations in the Chesapeake Bay. By 2016, develop a strategy for assessing the forage fish base available as food for predatory species in the Chesapeake Bay.

- GOAL: Sustainable Fisheries
- LEAD: Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (GIT 1) - Forage Action Team
- Consolidate under Fish Habitat Outcome
- Strong support for continued work on Forage
- Support shallow water recommendations and be used to assess how living resources are responding to climate change.

RECENT PROGRESS
INCREASE

OUTLOOK
ON COURSE

Presented by: Bruce Vogt - NOAA

Fish Habitat Outcome

OUTCOME DISPOSITION ADVICE TO MANAGEMENT BOARD:

UPDATE & CONSOLIDATE

OUTCOME: 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.

- GOAL: Sustainable Fisheries
- LEAD: Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team (GIT 1) - Fish Habitat Action Team

- Habitat suitability model scoring 92 tidal bay segments for habitat quality (water quality and other parameters)
- Multi-species

- Update & Consolidate with the Forage outcome
- Revised outcome language with focus on shallow water habitat

RECENT PROGRESS **INCREASE**

OUTLOOK **ON COURSE**

Presented by: Bruce Vogt - NOAA

FISH PASSAGE

OUTLOOK ON COURSE

OUTCOME DISPOSITION ADVICE TO MANAGEMENT BOARD:

UPDATE

GOAL: Vital Habitats. LEAD: Habitat Goal Team (GIT2)

OUTCOME: Continually increase access to habitat to support sustainable migratory fish populations in Chesapeake Bay freshwater rivers and streams. By 2025, restore historical fish migratory routes by opening an additional 132 miles every two years to fish passage, with restoration success indicated by the consistent presence of alewife, blueback herring, American shad, hickory shad, American eel and brook trout, to be monitored in accordance with available agency resources and collaboratively developed methods.

Recommend updating the outcome to include an increase from 132 to 150 miles every two years, because this increase is achievable, and incorporate all fish (resident and migratory), and other aquatic dependent organisms (freshwater mussels, reptiles, amphibians, etc.).

- Reduced federal funding will impact the number of restored miles. There will be fluctuations in achievement, but the current rate of miles added averages well above 150 miles. Therefore, we believe the goal is achievable.

- Recommend expanding fish passage to be inclusive of other aquatic species in the watershed and create healthy streams with high biological diversity and resiliency.

- Recommend expanding scope to include barriers other than traditional physical barriers. This could include thermal and chemical barriers such as acid mine drainage.

Presented by: Ray Li

Local Leadership

OUTCOME DISPOSITION ADVICE TO MANAGEMENT BOARD:

UPDATE

OUTCOME: Continually increase the knowledge and capacity of local officials on issues related to water resources and in the implementation of economic and policy incentives that will support local conservation actions.

GOAL: Stewardship
LEAD: Enhance Partnering, Leadership and Management Goal Implementation Team (GIT 6) - Local Leadership Workgroup

RECOMMENDATION: Updates should focus the Partnership's work to empower local governments to take actions that benefit their environment and economy. The outcome should be positioned to support state partners and all GITs and Workgroups in effectively engaging with local officials. These efforts are continuous, so milestones could be used to create quantifiable targets.

KEY FACTORS:

- Local leaders are essential to meeting our clean water and living resource goals
- Engaging local officials through trusted networks has proven to be successful
- Key Accomplishments demonstrate the importance of the work
- What we have learned highlights why efforts are continuous

Presented by: Les Knapp