Chesapeake Bay Fish Habitat Assessment

Sustainable Fisheries GIT Meeting
Horn Point Laboratory, Cambridge, MD
June 26, 2019

Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment

- Quantity and quality of inshore and offshore habitats from Maine to NC/SC border
- Led by MAFMC, NEFMC, NOAA and others including ACFHP
- Workplans are developed, data collection and analysis expected July 2019-2022
- Habitat Areas of Particular Concern, fisheries management, EAFM

Atlantic Coast Fish Habitat Partnership Northeast Assessment

- Prioritization of diadromous and estuarine dependent fish habitat from Maine to Virginia
- Based on the scoring of existing data layers
- Led by ACFHP through ASMFC
- Kick off meeting May 2019, final product expected by December 2019
- Identify project priority areas

Chesapeake Bay Regional Fish Habitat Assessment

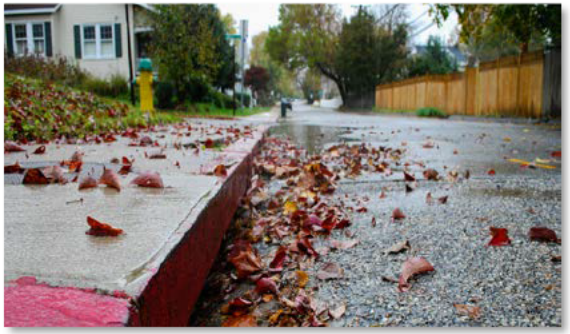
- Data-driven approach using biological, stressor and habitat information at best available spatial resolution
- Led by Sustainable Fisheries GIT
- GIT Supported Contractor Began May 2019
- Guide conservation and restoration including land use planning and BMPs

Habitat Climate Vulnerability Assessment

- Scoring of vulnerability (exposure and sensitivity) of key habitats (rock cobble, salt marsh, riverine water column) to climate stressors from Maine to North Carolina
- Expert opinion process and scoring rubric
- Led by NOAA Fisheries
- Pilot scoring began April 2019

2014 Ches Bay Agreement - Fish Habitat Outcome

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



Chesapeake Bay Fish Habitat Assessment Uses

- Improve restoration and conservation project siting. For example, Best Management Practices and shoreline protection.
- Identify and influence factors affecting fish resources outside the authority of fishery managers.

Project Team

Bruce Vogt

- NMFS/Chesapeake Bay Office, and CBP Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team coordinator

A.K. Leight, Suzanne Skelley, Erin Markin

- NOAA/National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science/Cooperative Oxford Laboratory

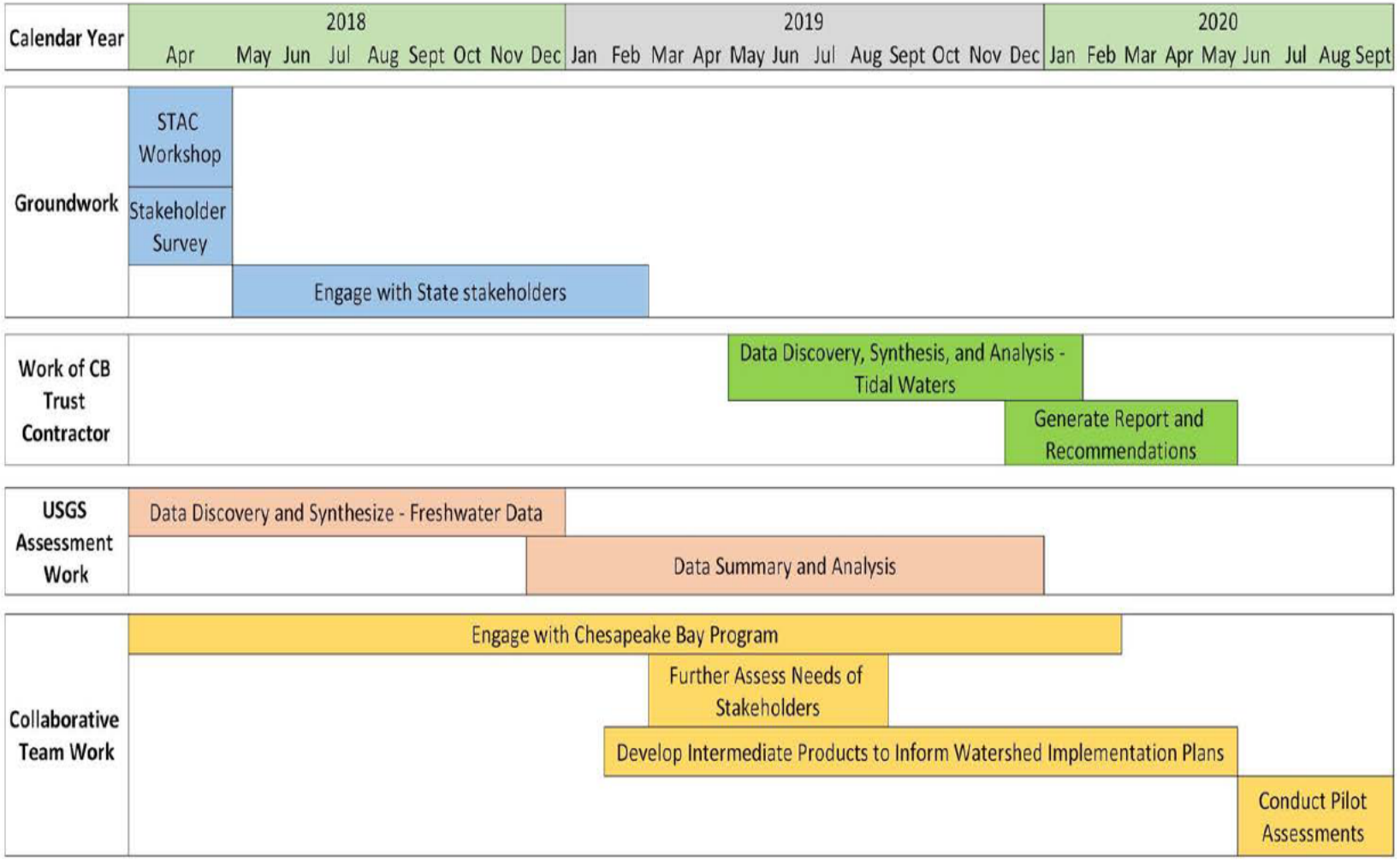
Stephen Faulkner, John Young, Kelly Maloney, Kevin Krause

- USGS Leetown Science Center/Aquatic Ecology Laboratory

Gina Hunt

- MD DNR Fisheries Service and Chesapeake Bay Program Fish Habitat Action Team coordinator

Project Schedule



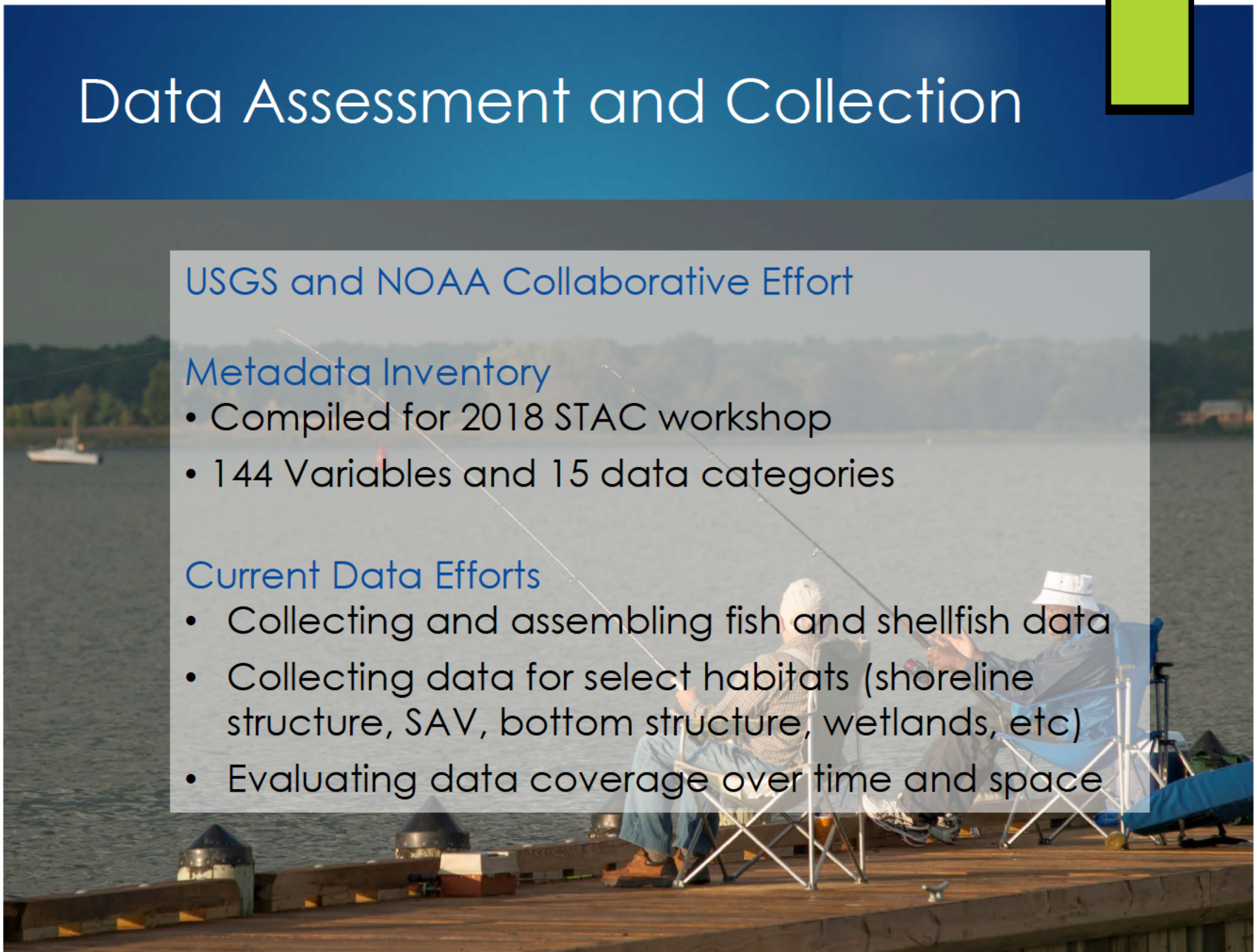
Chesapeake Bay Fish Habitat: Stakeholder Engagement

Guiding principle for the assessment is that it should:
support planning and management decisions

- User-needs questionnaire through survey monkey
  - 19 Questions
  - 148 individuals responded to the questionnaire
  - Responses from every State/jurisdiction in the watershed
  - 41% work in local government

- Stakeholder Interviews
  - Summer of 2019
  - In-person meetings with natural resources managers and land planners
  - Product: white paper describing commonalities and differences

Data Assessment and Collection



USGS and NOAA Collaborative Effort

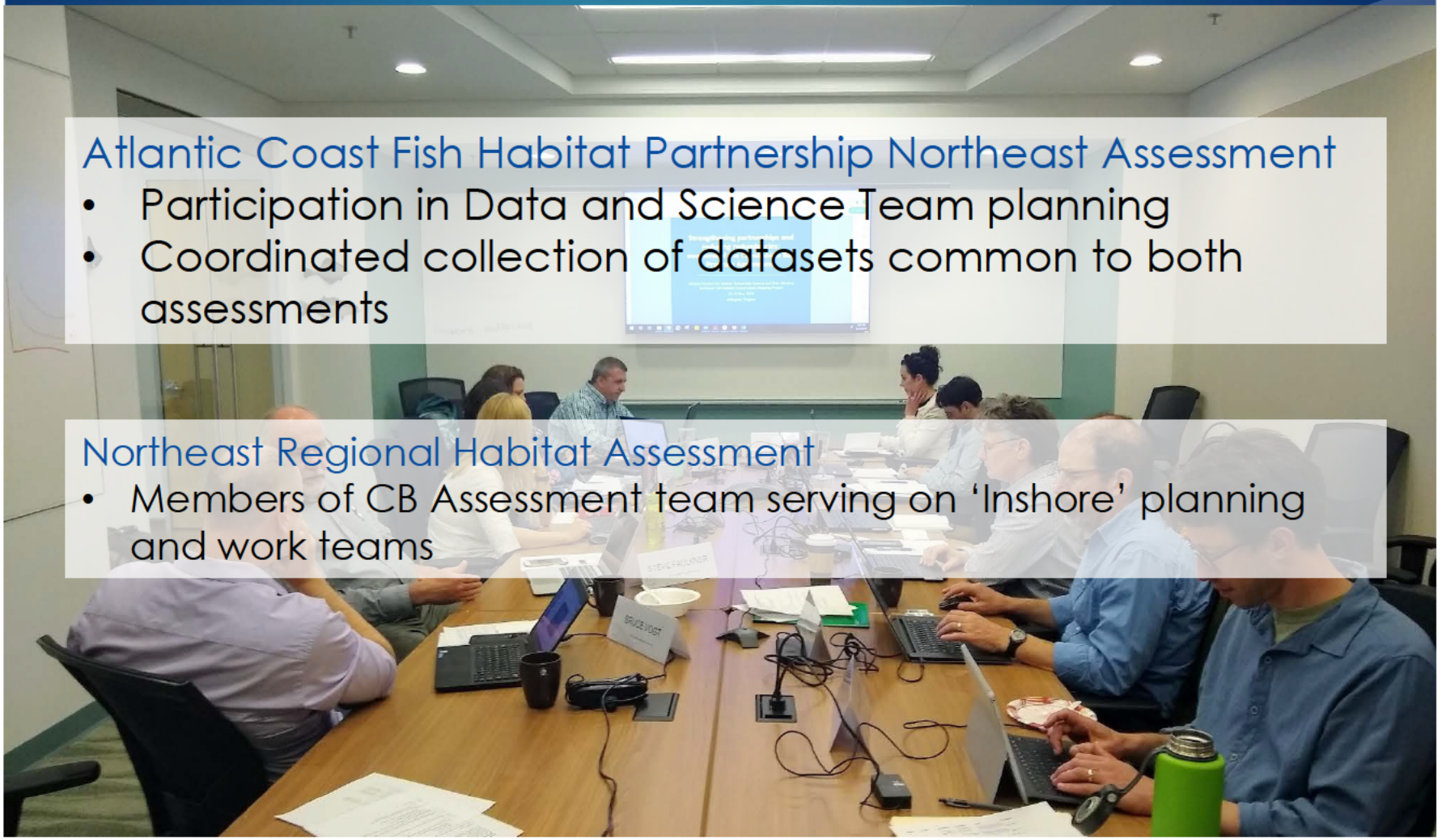
Metadata Inventory

- Compiled for 2018 STAC workshop
- 144 Variables and 15 data categories

Current Data Efforts

- Collecting and assembling fish and shellfish data
- Collecting data for select habitats (shoreline structure, SAV, bottom structure, wetlands, etc)
- Evaluating data coverage over time and space

Coordination with Other, Ongoing Fish Habitat Assessments



Atlantic Coast Fish Habitat Partnership Northeast Assessment

- Participation in Data and Science Team planning
- Coordinated collection of datasets common to both assessments

Northeast Regional Habitat Assessment

- Members of CB Assessment team serving on 'Inshore' planning and work teams