

Shad and River Herring Technical Committee

CONFERENCE CALL

March 5, 2009

Participants:

Robert Sadzinski, Chair (MD)	Russ Allen (NJ)	Reid Hyle (FL)
Mike Stangl (DE)	Sara Winslow (NC)	Phil Brady (MA)
Michael Brown (ME)	Kathy Hattala (NY)	Ellen Cosby (PRFC)
Don Harrison (GA)	Ruth Haas-Castro (NMFS)	Andy Kahnle (PDT)(NY)
Phil Edwards (RI)	Jacqueline Benway (CT)	Kathy Rawls (PDT)(NC)
Mike Hendricks (PA)	Larry Miller (USFWS)	Kate Taylor (ASMFC)

The Shad and River Herring Technical Committee met via conference call on Thursday, March 5, 2009 at 10 a.m. The purpose of the call was to give an update on Amendment 2 (River Herring) and to develop recommendations for the Shad and River Herring Plan Development Team on Amendment 3 (American Shad).

Amendment 2 Working Group Update

- Update on Matt Cieri's observer work -Bycatch estimates approximately two million pounds in the sea herring and small mesh fishery
- Rough estimates made placing coastwide stock at 30-50 million
- Working group believed that bycatch may not be significant, but acknowledge that origins of ocean river herring are unknown and bycatch may be disproportionately impacting some systems.
- The working group recognizes that bycatch of river herring occurring in the ocean is outside the jurisdiction of the ASMFC to control and is drafting a letter to the NE and MAFMCs which will contain specific recommendations on time/area closures, monitoring programs and management options including bycatch caps.
- The working group is developing adequate and applicable definitions of sustainable fishery and excessive bycatch (within the context of river herring management)

Amendment 3 Discussion

1. Consistency
 - Need better consistency between Amendment 2 and Amendment 3
2. Unit Stock Program (USP)
 - PDT comments
 1. Promote meaningful management
 2. Adaptive management approach
 3. Identifies unit stocks
 4. Recognizes unit stock as important in and of themselves as well as collectively
 5. Develop an idea of historic and current habitat

6. Recognize many items not under ASMFC/state control to change but gives attention to issues
7. Can aid in identifying research needs
8. Enable Board to open dialogue with other agencies in order to make them aware of impacts
9. To create a unified voice to talk about costs (e.g. from habitat impacts) to user groups
10. Allows for "I have no clue" answers, but reasons behind need to be stated (e.g. too expensive, just don't/can't know...)
11. Board recognizes limited financial situation of states, but if Amendment only includes what states can afford to do then there will be no place to go in the future.
12. Allows for prioritization of resources
13. Should we manage on the population level? What is involved in that management?

- TC Comments

1. It is important to note that the TC affirms the need for this Amendment and that the requirements may be mandated for many years
2. Seems to be a lot of habitat requirements rather than recommendations
3. Writing letters (Board/states to other agencies) will not accomplish anything
4. How do you determine the level of impact?
5. USP is essentially the compliance report. States shouldn't have to duplicate work.
6. Shouldn't be required.
7. If not required no one will do.
8. What is timeline for implementation?
9. Won't be well received by the Board
10. We don't have the resources to implement
11. By just applying cost benefit analysis states could quickly find themselves in a place where they determine it's not worth the money to generate the info needed to be in compliance and will say just shut the fishery down.
12. Going to cause problems when some states implement and other states don't. Needs to be a blanket statement
13. Need to look at long term. This is a 10-15 year plan for shad.
14. Need to put a qualifier in there that this is not mandatory right now, but it could be at some point.
15. Instead of focusing on what we think are the major problems, we are trying to solve everything; should focus limited resources on what we can realistically accomplish.
16. How can we tackle climate change impacts?
17. Climate change already effecting Hudson (lobsters, smelts).
18. What are the impacts from culverts? This should be in the river herring plan not American shad.

Consensus: Keep section as a recommendation. Proceed with the USP pilot program to see if it is possible. Reorganize structure to remove redundancies with other plans. Develop timeline for implementation.

3. Bycatch - Two issues: State waters and ocean waters

- PDT Comments
 1. Board guidance asked for cooperative coordinated efforts to help reduce bycatch
 2. Bycatch is reducing the spawning stock
 3. Can add in-stream estuaries – monitoring would be the responsibility of the states.

- TC Comments
 1. Brings up consistency with Amendment
 2. States can't do this all alone
 3. Someone needs to check on the ACCSP bycatch module
 4. Of states that have closed fisheries, are there any bycatch/discard estimates?
 5. Need to know impact by gear type
 6. Need to look at Canadians (Bay of Fundy)

4. Overfishing Definition

- TC Comments
 1. The way this reads now is that if other outside sources of mortality are impacting then the fishery would need to be shut down or reduced.
 2. Need to develop rebuilding rates
 3. The TC agrees that a benchmark Z is a reasonable approach but should include all human-induced causes and account for possible increases in predation

5. Monitoring

- PDT Comments
 1. Need to have shared responsibility

- TC Comments
 1. Can't tell sister agencies what to do
 2. Need to have increased coordination between marine and freshwater divisions
 3. 90% Juvenile Recruitment rate is obituary
 4. Change shall to should: "If any JAI shows juvenile recruitment failure for three consecutive years, then appropriate action shall be recommended to the Management Board"

Consensus: Agree to use 75% Juvenile Recruitment level. Will look into ways to increase communication between marine and freshwater divisions.

The TC agrees that A-3 should be a concise document and not go to the Board until the purpose of the amendment is fulfilled and the TC fully agrees with its content and overall format.