

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE**

**ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION**

**HORSESHOE CRAB MANAGEMENT BOARD**

**Crowne Plaza Hotel - Old Town**  
Alexandria, Virginia  
May 3, 2012

**Approved October 24, 2012**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Call to Order .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Approval of Agenda.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Approval of Proceedings .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Public Comment.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Election of Vice-Chairman.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Transfer Request from North Carolina to Georgia .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>FMP Plan Reviews and State Compliance Reports .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Technical Committee Report on Tagging Program.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Update on the ARM Framework Implementation Schedule .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Other Business.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Adjournment .....</b>	<b>7</b>

## INDEX OF MOTIONS

1. **Approval of Agenda** by Consent (Page 1).
2. **Approval of Proceedings of February 9, 2012** by Consent (Page 1).
3. **Move to accept the transfer request from North Carolina to Georgia** (Page 2). Motion by Louis Daniel; second by Adam Nowalsky. Motion carried (Page 2).
4. **Move to approve the plan review and compliance report summary and the de minimis requests** (Page 3). Motion by Bill Adler; second by John Duren. Motion carried (Page 4).
5. **Motion to adjourn, by Consent** (Page 7).

## ATTENDANCE

### Board Members

Douglas Grout, NH (AA)	Roy Miller, DE (GA)
Dan McKiernan, MA, proxy for P. Diodati (AA)	Bernie Pankowski, DE, proxy for Sen. Venables (LA)
Bill Adler, MA (GA)	Tom O'Connell, MD (AA)
Rep. Sarah Peake, MA (LA)	Bill Goldsborough, MD (GA)
Jocelyn Cary, MA, Legislative proxy	Russell Dize, MD, proxy for Sen. Colburn (LA)
Robert Ballou, RI (AA)	Rob O'Reilly, VA, proxy for J. Travelstead (AA)
Mark Gibson, RI, Administrative proxy	Louis Daniel, NC (AA)
Rick Bellavance, RI, proxy for Rep. Martin (LA)	Mel Bell, SC, proxy for R. Boyles (LA)
Dave Simpson, CT (AA)	Spud Woodward, GA (AA)
Steve Heins, NY, proxy for J. Gilmore (AA)	John Duren, GA (GA)
Peter Himchak, NJ, proxy for D. Chanda (AA)	Aaron Podey, FL (AA)
Adam Nowalsky, NJ, proxy for Asm. Albano (LA)	Derek Orner, NMFS
Tom Fote, NJ (GA)	Jaime Geiger, USFWS
David Saveikis, DE (AA)	

(AA = Administrative Appointee; GA = Governor Appointee; LA = Legislative Appointee)

### Ex-Officio Members

Jeff Brust, Delaware Bay Ecosystem Technical  
Committee Chair

### ASMFC Staff

Vince O'Shea	Mark Robson
Robert Beal	Kate Taylor
Danielle Chesky	

### Guests

Stewart Michels, DE DFW	Alan Burgenson, Lonza Walkersville, Inc
Steve Meyers, NOAA	Benjie Swan, Limuli Laboratories-Dias Creek

The Horseshoe Crab Management Board of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission convened in the Presidential Ballroom of the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Alexandria, Virginia, May 3, 2012, and was called to order at 10:30 o'clock a.m. by Chairman David Simpson.

### CALL TO ORDER

CHAIRMAN DAVID SIMPSON: Let's get started for the Horseshoe Crab Board. It's a few minutes early but I think we have the necessary quorum. We have a fairly brief agenda, a hour's worth of working we're hoping.

### APPROVAL OF AGENDA

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: We need to approve the agenda. Are there any changes to the agenda? Seeing none, we'll consider the agenda approved.

### APPROVAL OF PROCEEDINGS

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: The proceedings of the February 9 meeting; any issues or problems with that? Seeing none, we'll approve the proceedings.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Is there any public comment on issues not on the agenda? I don't see any.

### ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: The next agenda item is to elect a vice-chair. Tom.

MR. THOMAS O'CONNELL: You know, when you don't come to meetings you get penalized, so I would nominate Jim Gilmore from New York.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Thank you, Tom. Is there a second to that nomination of nominating Jim in absentia? I'll take Steve Heins. Any objection to that motion? **Seeing none, I will welcome Jim as my sidekick since this is my first meeting as chair.**

### TRANSFER REQUEST FROM NORTH CAROLINA TO GEORGIA

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: The next agenda item is the transfer request from North Carolina to Georgia. Danielle.

MS. DANIELLE CHESKY: As part of the 2011 compliance reports that came in, North Carolina requested a transfer of crabs from Georgia. North

Carolina had exceeded its quota in 2011. The quota currently is set at 24,036 crabs. The overage came as bycatch in the blue crab trawl fishery.

New proclamation authorities to help control the bycatch went into effect actually April 1, 2011. However, according to the request the overage had occurred prior to the date. The request was for 3,500 crabs from Georgia. This request was reviewed by both advisory panels, the Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee, and the comments of these reviews were reviewed by the plan review team and summarized here.

The main comments that were made and summarized reflect the fact that this should be a one-time request, that future continued transfers would in fact be a de facto quota redistribution. There was some uncertainty raised in terms of the populations with the genetics of how related the two stocks were. This information came from Dr. King's work.

There are shorebird populations that overwinter and utilize the beaches in Georgia and North Carolina although all of it indicates that they are not likely eating horseshoe crabs down there and likely eating other bivalves. There is no biomedical impact that was noted as neither state has biomedical companies or harvest. Finally, there was a little bit of concern in terms of pushing the fishery demand elsewhere, especially with the focus on Delaware Bay.

However, the final conclusion would be that the PRT would recommend approval of the transfer request given the small number of crabs and the regulatory steps that North Carolina has taken to provide greater control of the fishery and the harvest. The PRT and the committees would warn against potential future transfer requests; and if those would occur, to consider having those mediated through deductions in the state's quota. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Any questions? Pete.

MR. PETER HIMCHAK: I just had two quick comments. That's amazing, three conference calls and all these reports and correspondence; it shows you what a premium the commission puts on 3,500 horseshoe crabs. I'm fully supportive of the transfer. One thing that really caught my attention is in the Shorebird AP Report on the transfer – and they talk about hundreds to thousands of red knots feeding in North Carolina and Georgia on their way to their breeding grounds.

Now we see red knots feeding in Florida; Virginia; Maryland; New Jersey; Jamaica Bay, New York. I mean, this has gotten a rather – this picture has gotten a lot more complex and what I believe years ago where they all had to come to Delaware Bay or they weren't going to make it. That really caught my attention and it just points out there is a lot more to this life strategy of red knots than we can imagine.

DR. JAIME GEIGER: Pete's comments are right on. As part of the red knot status review we're certainly identifying much more locations due to increased monitoring and assessment activities on populations of migratory shorebirds included red knot. We're seeing them not only in the locations where has mentioned but also I believe on the Texas Gulf Coast as well.

Again, I think part of that is the increased focus on the relationships between red knots and migratory shorebirds and quite frankly a lot of it is due to the emphasis of management on horseshoe crabs and the inclusion of the shorebird community in the horseshoe crab management plan that this commission has undertaken.

I do think we need to get a little more serious about some of the genetic implications of quota transfer. I know the genetics are not well laid out, but again as we all know the biomedical industry and some of the issues of returning horseshoe crabs back to their less than native or collection points may have compromised some of the genetics of horseshoe crab populations. We really don't know but we need to do obviously some more work on that, and I would urge the commission to be always cautious when we're looking at these quota transfers related to genetics of a population. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Any other comments or questions on this? Is there a motion relative to this? Louis.

DR. LOUIS DANIEL: **Move to accept the transfer.**

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Is there a second; second from Adam. Any discussion? Is there any need to caucus? **All those in favor raise your hand, 14 in favor; opposed, none; any abstentions, none; any null votes, none.** Okay, thank you. Louis.

DR. DANIEL: I just want to say thanks to Georgia for accommodating our request; I appreciate it.

## FMP PLAN REVIEWS AND STATE COMPLIANCE REPORTS

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Okay, we have the FMP Plan Reviews.

MS. CHESKY: The compliance reports for horseshoe crab from the states were due March 1, 2012. The plan review team looked over them and has provided for you the compliance report summary as well as this FMP Review, which we will review today. The yearly total harvest, you can see on the graph the bait harvest in gray and the biomedical harvest is in the darker black.

The bait harvest itself was a little bit up this year from last year, but you can see it's pretty on par with where we have been over the past few years. The bait fishery itself had about 650,000 crabs harvested this year; and I said it's a little bit up but pretty well on target over the past five years. These increases incurred in Massachusetts, Delaware, New York and North Carolina.

In terms of the biomedical harvest about 628,000 crabs were brought to biomedical facilities this year. This included both bait and biomedical crabs that were used. It was about a 28 percent increase over the past five-year average continuing the trend of an increasing biomedical harvest. Over 82,000 crabs were used this year as both bait and biomedical. That's an 11 percent increase as well.

In terms of coast-wide mortality for biomedical harvest, that was estimated at 80,827 crabs. As part of Addendum III the board included a threshold trigger to consider actions set at 57,500 crabs. As part of the recommendations the PRT would recommend that the board consider action on including continuing work on and implementation of the best management practices.

There was a document that was prepared and presented to the board at the annual meeting in Boston. It included what I think the board termed a skeleton outline of best management practices. As part of the direction from that meeting the board tasked this group to continue working on those best management practices.

Dr. Dawson from the Associates of Cape Cod in Massachusetts has volunteered to work with the other biomedical companies over these next few months to further develop those and see what they can flesh out in terms of more details on them. We're hoping to be

able to report back to the board potentially some time this fall at least on the terms of the status of that.

In terms of state compliance the PRT did recommend that all states be found in compliance. The PRT does note for the board that the District of Columbia did not submit a compliance report. As in years past, the PRT would recommend that DC as well as the Potomac River Fisheries Commission take the necessary steps to be removed from the board as Pennsylvania and Maine have done.

This would relieve the administrative burden on both DC and PRFC and this board. The PRT also wanted to note that Virginia's overages which have been a topic of discussion over the past few years have been fully accounted for. Other concerns that have been highlighted is mainly the importation of Asian horseshoe crabs for bait. The board heard about this via memo last August, I believe.

Also then also at the annual meeting I believe Rick Robins came up and gave some information to the board. This continues to be of concern not only because the Asian horseshoe crab populations are in severe decline and struggling but also the potential for invasive species interactions and just other things we don't know about coming in. The PRT would recommend that the board continue to monitor and investigate management opportunities for this.

Additional concerns that have been included, gender of catch recording; according to Addendum III if a state's catches are under 5 percent of the total coast-wide harvest, it is not required to record gender. However, the PRT would recommend that states do consider including this on their catch reporting as it would help to indicate the total gender harvest coastwide.

The PRT does note that there is a continued need for data from the Virginia Tech Trawl Survey, especially with the implementation of the ARM Framework due to come in 2013. Finally, the PRT recommends that all tagging programs, which need to generally be approved by the states under scientific collection permits, coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Tagging Program, which you will hear more about in the next presentation. I apologize for the repeat on the Asian Horseshoe Crabs, but it is a large issue.

Finally, Maine, New Hampshire, the Potomac River Fisheries Commission, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida all requested de minimis. New Jersey qualified but did not request it. The PRT

recommends that all requests for de minimis be granted. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Any questions for Danielle? Bill.

MR. WILLIAM A. ADLER: In one of the slides you said that the Potomac River Fisheries Commission should be removed from the board, and then later on it said they're requesting de minimis status. What is the different here?

MS. CHESKY: It is more of an administrative difference. It would relieve them of having to submit a compliance report every year, and it would relieve the PRT of continuing to recommend to the PRFC that its compliance report follow the outline with all the different components.

MR. ADLER: All right, so which do they want? Do they want to be removed from the board and/or de minimis status?

MS. CHESKY: Sorry for the confusion; the PRFC has not asked to be removed from the board. They have asked for de minimis status be granted. The plan review team recommended that PRFC and the District of Columbia take the necessary steps to be removed from the board to relieve those administrative requirements.

MR. ROB O'REILLY: It's really just a comment, Mr. Chairman; but in consideration of what Danielle indicated about the Virginia quota overages, this is an ongoing process with a quota that is probably about 10 percent of maybe the harvest or the landings in the past. Industry is working well with Virginia, with VMRC, and we will have new information coming up in our regulations. You have to be very aggressive to monitor this quota.

What Virginia has done is established gear-based quotas now, so each gear-based quota is monitored, and there can be shutoff individually which helps aid the monitoring overall. Other states may have had similar difficulties in trying to address lag times with reporting, and you really do have to be very aggressive.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Thanks, Rob. Any other comments? **We need a motion then to approve the plan review and compliance report summary and the de minimis requests.** Bill.

MR. ADLER: I will so move.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: And, John, you're seconding? Okay. Any discussion on this motion? Any objection to it? **Seeing none, we'll consider it approved.** Next is the technical committee report.

## TECHNICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON TAGGING PROGRAM

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Next is the technical committee report.

MS. CHESKY: Penny Howell from Connecticut is now the Horseshoe Crab Technical Committee Chair but was unable to make it due to some scheduling, so I'll be giving the summary of the technical committee report today. Our technical committee met in April in Baltimore.

They considered the transfer request from North Carolina as well as the Horseshoe Crab Tagging Program and discussed some other issues that came up with the proposed ARM implementation for next year. In terms of discussing the ARM implementation, the technical committee discussed that there have been past concerns about the external impacts of the horseshoe crab management in Delaware Bay and the impacts that it has had.

Most notably New York and Massachusetts have seen their harvest of horseshoe crabs go up in response to decreases of harvest in the Delaware Bay. Considering moving forward with the ARM will be a complete new management strategy for this board, the technical committee is recommending that the board task the technical committee and the stock assessment subcommittee to gather, review and summarize the available coastal and state indices with data through 2012.

That would give a before picture of the status of the indices along the coast prior to ARM implementation in 2013. The technical committee would anticipate that this would occur next spring. Most of these indices are reported as part of the state compliance reports already, so the technical committee members felt this wouldn't be a large task in terms of work for them.

Additionally, John Sweka, who received the award the other day, would be the one who would be inputting the data into the modeling, and he has indicated that it would not be a large effort on his part. The technical committee feels that this could be done with relatively minimal time and effort moving forward.

The other main topic of conversation was the tagging program at this technical committee meeting. The program was established through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to be able to have a standardized tagging program along the coast. The requirements for the program weren't necessarily standardized, though. The data were originally intended to be used for a stock level analysis. The program was established originally back in 1999 and it has grown from about 10,000 tags a year to over 30,000 tags a year distributed in 2011.

Just a quick summary, almost 200,000 tags have been released with about 28,000 recaptures, which is pretty good considering. The issues with the current program that have been identified was that the tags have been supplied free of charge to the programs that have been putting them out, and the costs are becoming too large for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to support this increasing trend.

The program itself, as I've mentioned, has no current set requirements for recording in terms of who gets to put out the tags, what tags and where they're putting them out or why they're having a tagging program of these different groups. Additionally, the technical committee noted that the resighting efforts are inconsistent and often given much less consideration than the tagging effort, and to have a successful tagging program there needs to be effort on both putting the tags out and then also resighting and recording the data.

These resighting issues include not only the effort that is being put out but also the phone calls that are coming in require considerable staff time by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Office. Additionally, those who report crabs have been awarded a pewter pen in the past. The Fish and Wildlife Service indicated that they've got enough stock left over from previous years to continue to this reward program for 2012, but they are investigating options for future work.

Additionally, being able to use this tagging and resighting data and the mechanisms for using it have not necessarily been established. We ran across this when looking at the tagging data for use in the ARM Framework in terms of allocation among the states. As part of this revised program guidelines, the technical committee has indicated that the tag requests will be made on an annual basis from the different providers.

However, added to this will be the fact that tagging programs would be required to submit a study design that meets at least one of the following objectives;

either determining sub-population structure along the coast; estimating movement and migration; and then also potentially estimating survival and mortality.

The technical committee felt that being able to prioritize these objectives would help with the use of these data in management efforts by this board. Additionally, resighting effort is required to be proportional to the initial tag release effort, which just means that if you're going to be planning for tagging one year you need to be able to provide resighting effort for a year as well, so that's during that season, and then also a year-end summary report would be required.

There was a lot of support from the technical committee members who said you might get a really thorough report or perhaps just a couple of paragraphs, but either way it would help to be able to track what the programs are doing with the tags and the efforts that are being made. Additionally, the technical committee is recommending a geographical distribution for the tags with a large focus in the northeast and Delaware Bay, but still keeping a coast-wide focus on it as well by recommending smaller levels but still levels along the New York/New Jersey coast and then in the southeast.

The strata in terms of the numbers were based on current demands for tags and the data, and they can be altered to meet future management needs as these are only included as recommendations within the guidelines. In terms of recommendations that have come from the technical committee regarding the tagging program, they would recommend that the board accept the revised program guidelines for use by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

They are also recommending – and you heard this recommendation during the FMP Review Report – that all states when considering scientific collection permit applications encourage and/or require applicants to work through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Tagging Program to maintain the consistency in this coast-wide tagging effort.

Finally, the technical committee recommended that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service print the web address for reporting the tags on the tag itself. In working with Sheila Eyler, who runs this program in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, she has indicated that is likely going to be a real possibility, so hopefully that will also help with the phone calls that folks are receiving.

In terms of some additional considerations that were included, the technical committee recommends that the board continue to support and promote this coast-wide tagging program. Consistency is vital to the future use for management purposes as well as public interest is vital to the resighting efforts.

There is a possibility the technical committee included for expansion of the tagging program beyond this 20,000 tag cap, but that would be on a case-by-case basis, working with Sheila and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in terms of estimating additional costs that would need to be covered to cover these efforts. As a note, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was part of this meeting in terms of creating these program guidelines moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Any questions for Danielle? There were some recommendations coming from the group. Any thoughts on those?

MR. STEWART MICHELS: Danielle, the technical committee is willing to be tasked basically by the board to kind of update the trend analysis from like the last stock assessment?

MS. CHESKY: That's correct.

MR. MICHELS: Would we need a motion for that or can we just simply –

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: I think we can do it without objection. Do we need to take any action on their recommendations; accept the revised program guidelines and all states considering in their application permit encouraging or requiring the applicants to work through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Tagging – we also have the tagging protocols for the commission; does that come into play at all here? Presumably the Fish and Wildlife is consistent with it already.

MS. CHESKY: Yes, those play directly into the tagging program and are consistent. They were developed through the technical committee and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the former Horseshoe Crab Tagging Subcommittee, I believe it was called.

DR. GEIGER: Mr. Chairman, it would be very, very helpful to the Fish and Wildlife Service for the board to accept these recommendations. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Do we need a motion to that effect or do you – what is the pleasure of the

group? Is there any objection to accepting these? Okay, great.

## **UPDATE ON THE ARM FRAMEWORK IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE**

MS. CHESKY: Just one last thing, I wanted to give the board an update on the ARM Framework. Originally the Delaware Bay Technical Committee and the ARM Working Group had anticipated being able to give the harvest output recommendations to the board in August at its meeting.

However, being able to get the shorebird data from 2012 through the QAQC process and input into the model would be a bit of a tight timeline. The Delaware Bay Technical Committee met with the ARM Working Group and with folks who collect the shorebird data. Those data will be ready and provided to the board at its annual meeting. I just wanted to give you folks a heads up. The technical committee members indicated that this would not be an issue in being able to implement the management regulations in time for the 2013 season. Thank you.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Any questions or comments on the ARM? Is there anything else for the Horseshoe Crab Board? Dan.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

MR. DAN McKIERNAN: I am wondering if the plan review team or the technical committee could consider in the future reporting on the demand within our states for horseshoe crabs as bait. We as marine fisheries regulators are responsible – most of us are as you know – for the whelk pot fisheries, which is as I understand it the number one demand for horseshoe crabs.

The eel pot fishery, which is obviously waning given the status of eels, but it is very much related to the increase I think that we saw in the Massachusetts bait harvest. In Massachusetts we saw an increase of about 50 percent in pots fished for conch – in Massachusetts we have a specific conch pot permit, and we define the gear as a conch pot and we also have limited entry; and we have a pot limit of 200 pots.

I'm wondering if it would be useful for the states to reveal the trends within their state about the setting of whelk pots and maybe eel pots so that we can understand the growing demand for this bait product

and sort of getting a total picture of where the trends in the fishery are.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Yes, I can see where that would be important. Can you help with the envisioning of how that information would be collected? Would it be through some measure of effort in the whelk fishery or a more direct method of measuring bait sales into a state?

MR. McKIERNAN: No, I was thinking more of the performance of the pot fishery as a proxy for demand. In your state, mine and Mark's, we have trip level reporting. Presumably if the harvesters are reporting accurately to their activities, they might tell us on a given day they hauled so many pots for purposes of harvesting whelk, and so those trap hauls could be segregated from lobster trap hauls.

I think in Southern New England whelk has become the crutch or the safety for lobstermen. In fact our landings in Massachusetts for the channeled whelk are valued at \$6 million now, which is about three times more than our lobster landings. People don't fear that this is a growing monster. We have seen a leveling off of effort and of landings so I don't expect it is going to continue to spike, but it might be spiking elsewhere and that might be accounting for why this increased demand for bait crabs.

MS. CHESKY: I think the PRT would be more than happy to collect that data from states if they would be able to provide it and we could put together a summary of trends or landings, if that would be helpful to the board.

MR. O'REILLY: I think there might be some complications. For example, in Virginia we can tell you exactly the type of fishery there is and the requirements. When it comes to the overall fishery, it is about 90 percent from federal waters so that the requirements are limited to how much can be landed in terms of bushels and also a possession size limit.

Some of that information would have to be refined by the PRT for exactly looking at each state and how much is federal and how much is state waters. That would be the start because the federal waters part is really just based on the landing itself and not so much on pot control or anything else.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Yes, it is interesting that we've had the same quota in place for several years now. I've lost track of how many, but that whelk fishery has really grown and so it sort of begs the

question of how those two things sync up. I think it's worth looking into. Mark.

MR. MARK GIBSON: I'll just back up Dan's comments. The whelk fishery is really taking off. In fact, it is placing great demands on the horseshoe crab bait. We have already closed this year and incurred a significant overage because of the landings coming in or the bait being taken at a rate faster than our reporting interval.

It may be that this fishery is going to extinguish itself on an official basis. If we keep recurring overages, there is going to be no quota at some point, but it begs the question of where are these whelk fishermen getting the bait.

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Yes, I think that's a good point. Is there anything else for the Horseshoe Crab Board? Danielle.

MS. CHESKY: Thinking about the complications that have come up, if all states would be able to report landings of conch or whelk; would that get at some of those questions that you were asking about in terms of demand from state to state?

MR. McKIERNAN: I think if you just asked each jurisdiction to provide some evidence or trends in those fisheries, I think we'll take what we can get. And then if we want to refine the data collection in future years, we'll do that. Just to follow up on Mark's point as an anecdote, we emulated Rhode Island's regulations on the spawning moon closures.

We thought it was a great conservation strategy, but we never anticipated they would be spawning in April, but the warm year we had there was some significant harvest in April, but now we're into that May and June period, which is the traditional time to protect the crabs during spawning moons.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

CHAIRMAN SIMPSON: Okay, and maybe Bob Glenn on your staff and some of the others that have worked a lot on whelk could provide some guidance to the horseshoe crab committee in terms of what kinds of sort of indirect measures might be helpful. If there is nothing else, I'll entertain a motion to adjourn. Moved by everybody. All right, thank you.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 11:05 o'clock a.m., May 3, 2012.)