

Minutes

Shellfish Management Advisory Committee Meeting, January 11, 2017

Members present

A. J. Erskine	John DeMaria	Tommy Kellum
Wayne France	J. C. Hudgins	Ben Johnson
Ernest George		

Member Absent

Tommy Kellum	Roy Insley	Kevin Wade
Jeff Hammer	Don Porter	Tommy Leggett
Roy Insley	Dan Dise	Richard Green
Richard Harding		

VMRC Staff

Jim Wesson	Vernon Rowe	Vas Dunston
Andrew Button	Kathy Leonard	Jane McCroskey
Rob O'Reilly	Ben Stagg	

VIMS Staff

Roger Mann	Missy Southworth
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Others

Kim Huskey	Mike Oesterling
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Jim Wesson opened the meeting with a discussion for the first item on the agenda which was the 2017 Oyster Replenishment Program Plan.

He explained that it was proposed for James River seed moved to the Potomac River area, which is an area that does not get a natural strike. This has continually been done each year.

He said that for the Piankatank and Great Wicomico River seed oysters is to be allowed to be harvested by leaseholders in the spring for planting on their private oyster ground leases. There will be 20,000 bushels of seed oysters (Piankatank) and 10,000 bushels of seed oysters (Great Wicomico) made available from the two rivers. The leaseholders will be issued a contract and be required to make arrangement to have the shells planted, two bushels of shell for each bushel of seed oysters harvested. These shells will be planted on the areas where the harvest took place and planting of shell will be supervised by VMRC Staff.

He said that fossil shells are proposed to be utilized for the shell planting of public grounds in various areas on the western side of the Bay, dredging and transplanting of shells is proposed in the Pocomoke-Tangier Sound area and also on the Seaside of Eastern Shore. Staff is concerned with the fact that the unique dredge that has been used for many years for mining, sorting, and cleaning the fossil shells is now on sale since the owner has put it on the market. If there is no buyer or it is bought for other uses, this dredge may no longer be available and this would mean alternate cultch materials will have to be utilized, such as crushed concrete or granite. This has been done in a small amount in the last couple of years in two rivers to see if this would work and it has been found to work if the size of the concrete or granite is very small, such as rock size.

For the second item on the agenda, Mr. Wesson explained that there had been two meetings for the subcommittee to discuss SAV and leased oyster grounds in Virginia. There was no resolution and this will have to be revisited. There is an effort being made to get this information on maps at VIMS.

The final agenda item was a discussion requested by A. J. Erskine for the Committee on various legislative bills now being introduced to the General Assembly:

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 5:40 pm.