

Minutes from Black Bass Advisory Sub-Committee (BBAS) Meeting March 30, 2017

Prepared by Roger Trageser (Vice-Chair)

Meeting Location: Tawes Office Building, 580 Taylor Avenue, Annapolis, MD 21401

Called to order at 6:07 PM

Subcommittee Members in Attendance:

Dennis Fleming (Chair), Keith Barker, Thomas Bateman, Steve Chaconas, Nicholas Kuttner, Scott Sewell, Roger Trageser, Steve Weimar, and John Wheeler.

BBAS Guideline Updates

Dennis Fleming opened the discussion regarding the approval of the minority report procedures and incorporating them into the BBAS meeting guidelines.

Roger Trageser requested some clarification on the reasonability of meeting minutes by the Vice Chairperson and/or designee which were also to be included into the meeting guidelines. Steve Chaconas emphasized the need for the subcommittee members and not the DNR to be the driving force behind setting the agenda(s) that the BBAS would address.

Guideline updates were approved with a vote of nine (9) yeas and one (1) nay.

Thirteenth Subcommittee Member

Members discussed the need to bring the subcommittee member total back to a thirteen member panel.

Members present agreed that filling that position with an individual with knowledge and a passion for the issues was paramount.

The DNR agreed to prepare an application process with an SFAC review to fill this position.

Haul Seining

Natural Resources Planner Bob Sadzinski presented a video of a haul seining study performed on the upper bay in 1996. The study was primarily done to witness the effects on grasses as a result of deemed that these activities had little to not negative impact on established grass beds.

While informative, BBAS members pointed out that the conclusions of this study were not particularly relative to the concerns haul seining activity has on the black bass fishery pointing out that early springtime seining may impact new emerging grass and certainly has the capacity to destroy any existing black bass spawning beds.

Roger Trageser had introduced this concern to the SFAC at their meeting in January. The SFAC requested that the BBAS and the DNR look into the possibility of obtaining some regulatory authority.

The DNR currently lacks the regulatory authority to impose any seasonal or area restrictions on this activity. To accomplish this a Bill would have to be sponsored by a delegate then introduced and approved by the General Assembly. Complicating this is the fact that the DNR has no real science currently at their disposal to support these particular negative activities. Nick Kuttner suggested

that a dialogue be established with the commercial waterman to see if a mutual understanding could be reached on this matter.

Habitat

Environmental Specialist Tom Parham gave a power point presentation that provided information on water quality monitoring that takes place across the entire state. Up to date information can be obtained at <http://eyesonthebay.dnr.maryland.gov/>.

Tom emphasized that in many locations water quality has been improving. However land development and agricultural practices still pose threats to a healthier bay system. A power point presentation was provided to the subcommittee and was formatted to a *.pdf and uploaded to meeting website. The information contained within the presentation provide reviewers the information needed to access water quality data, report habitat problems to the State, and become involved in management decisions. The presentation will be delivered electronically to subcommittee members.

He encouraged that individuals get involved in proposed development issues. A habitat subcommittee will look at ways that the BBAS can be more involved with these issues. This subcommittee will consist of David Blazer, Joe Love, Tony Prochaska, Steve Chaconas and Roger Trageser.

Next Meeting Agenda

Continue haul seining and habitat discussions. Education and NRP enforcement.

Closing Remarks

Dennis Fleming spoke about the PRFC multi-jurisdictional black bass meeting held February 8 at the District of Columbia's Aquatic Resources Education Centre. State of the Fishery reports for the Potomac River were provided by Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia agencies. The PRFC is working on a program that would incorporate multiple yearly interagency meetings.

Scott Sewell requested that the DNR look into the possibility of lifting the springtime "no possession" rule on non-tidal fisheries in Maryland noting that making some of these fisheries available as potential tournament sites may take some of the springtime pressure off the river systems. This issue will become an agenda topic for a later meeting, possibly in 2018.

Meeting Date

A doodle poll will go out to set the next BBAS meeting date with an eye on an early October meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:50 PM