



Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
Joseph P. Gill, Secretary
Frank W. Dawson III, Deputy Secretary

Meeting of the MD DNR Artificial Reef Committee (ARC)
Tawes Building, C-1 Conference Room, Annapolis, MD
Wednesday, October 30, 2013
2:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

(Staff Contact: Erik Zlokovitz ,MDDNR Artificial Reef Coordinator -ezlokovitz@dnr.state.md.us)

ARC Members in Attendance: Chairman Monty Hawkins (OCRF), Vice-Chairman Dave Dansberger (Rec Fishing Community, Upper Bay), Ed Liccione (MARI Treasurer/CCA), David Sutherland (USFWS), Capt. Rick Younger (DNR/MGS), Clint Waters (MSSA), Kate Meade (MES), Capt. Karl Willey (CBF).

ARC Members not in Attendance: Doldon Moore (BPW), Gary Setzer (MDE), Norm McCullough (MD Hydronauts), Stephanie Westby (NOAA-Chesapeake Bay Office), Richard Webster, Gail Blazer (Town of Ocean City), Greg Madjeski, Curtis Johns, Jamey Danford, Bill Huppert, Mark Galasso, Bruno Vasta, Darryl Del Pino, Tom Ireland, Richard Berich.

DNR-Fisheries Staff in Attendance: Erik Zlokovitz, Karen Knotts, Linda Barker

Motions:

Motion for election of the ARC Chair and Vice-Chair to 2-year terms. Motion to re-elect Chair, Monty Hawkins and Vice-Chair Dave Dansberger for 2 year terms. Motion passed with all in favor, 0 against, 0 abstained.

Action Items:

- DNR Artificial Reef Coordinator will provide the text from the monitoring section of the Maryland Artificial Reef plan. ARC will use this as a guideline for developing a document for the development of a basic monitoring plan which will provide guidance of funding levels to allocate to monitoring. ARC Chair Monty Hawkins agreed to develop first draft of this document. Capt. Rick Younger and Ed Liccione offered to assist. When draft is complete, DNR Artificial Reef Coordinator will send to ARC and request feedback. (Monitoring section sent to ARC- **Done.**)
- ARC identified the existing permitted "fish haven" off Love Point as their priority site for the next reef project. Their recommendation is deployment of large material (boulders) by the end of the 2013 calendar year. The DNR Artificial Reef Coordinator will get a cost estimate of deploying rock material at this site from marine contractors and report to ARC and the MARI Treasurer.
- The DNR Artificial Reef Coordinator will designate an additional 1 acre box at the Memorial Stadium reef site (upper Bay) for placement of additional reef balls in May of 2014.
- The DNR Artificial Reef Coordinator will provide the ARC with regular updates on status of MARI projects via email (every other month).

Summary of discussion items:

MARI Treasurer's Report – Ed Liccione (MARI Treasurer) gave an update on status of existing funds in MARI 501(c)(3) account. The account currently has \$244,574.65 which is enough for the Hail Cove Project and maintaining a match of \$200K for new bond Bill funding. Capt. Rick Younger noted that 2 invoices for fuel charges would be sent for processing in the near future. Ed also provided an update on status of 2013 MARI Bond Bill (\$200K). MD DNR-Fisheries has signed off and we are waiting for DGS to finalize paperwork. The next step is getting scheduled onto the agenda for a BPW meeting. The remaining dates for BPW meetings in 2013 are 11/20, 12/6 and 12/18. Ed believes a 5 year plan will help MARI with future funding and volunteered to develop a draft plan by the March 2014 ARC meeting. Plan will describe what has been done and what the ARC would like to do in the next 5 years.

Action Item Update (from July 2013 conference call/webinar) - DNR Staff briefed the ARC on the status of a proposal from December 2007, that Fisheries Service allocate \$500,000 in Special Funds (FR&D) to replenish monitoring funds (wetlands mitigation funds) that were used to cover Woodrow Wilson reefing project debt. Briefing report included spreadsheets/balance sheets. The proposal was never approved. The Committee had no feedback and agreed the proposal was 'water under the bridge.'

Discussed allocation of new bond bill funds (% for Bay construction, ocean construction, and monitoring). The DNR artificial reef coordinator suggested a "first cut" at allocating new bond bill funds as 60% for Bay Construction, 20% for Ocean Construction, and 20% for monitoring. There was an extended discussion of monitoring needs and funding levels for different types of monitoring. The ARC chair currently serves as the president of OCRF and would like to buy one barge load of material for \$50,000 (25%). This would change the proposed allocation total to 60% Bay construction, 25% Ocean construction and, 15% monitoring. No specific allocations were approved by the group.

Artificial Reef Volunteer Angler Logbook Survey and Monitoring update – Dr.Linda Barker, MD DNR Fisheries Service provided a presentation to update the ARC on status and initial findings of 2013 Angler Logbook pilot study (Fall 2013). She recommended continuing the Logbook Survey in 2014 if ARC will assist with the outreach necessary to expand participation. Dr. Barker then led the ARC through a discussion of monitoring and based on their comments, she recommended a framework for the Committee to develop a plan which describes its goals for monitoring. The components the committee agreed to include are 1) Physical; 2) Fishing Success; and 3) Ecological Value. Chair Monty Hawkins will draft the plan with assistance from Capt. Younger and Ed Liccione. Based on the plan, Dr. Barker and Erik Zlokovitz will provide cost estimates for continuing the Angler Logbook survey, along with cost of side scan sonar and dive surveys.

2013 reef construction project updates – MD DNR Fisheries Service Staff and ARC member provided reef construction project updates on the following reef construction projects

MARI funded:

- Hail Cove, with USFWS (\$40K existing MARI funds + \$40K USFWS). Provided an update on the Hail Cove Reef project in partnership with FWS. A site visit was conducted on October 28th with a private contractor and staff is awaiting a cost estimate from the contractor. The target date for completion is June 2014 (end of state Fiscal year).

Non-MARI funded projects:

- Choptank River Bridge Piers,(Bill Burton Pier Reef-South/Dorchester), deployed by CBF.
- Memorial Stadium Reef Ball Site (annual May deployment), deployed by CBF, reef balls built by MSSA volunteers.
- Reef ball deployment at Cedar Pt. with Howard County girl scout troop

OCRF funded (including projects with supplemental MARI funds):

- Ocean Reefs, coral castle blocks, Capt. Monty Hawkins(deployed with OCRF funds + supplemental MARI funds. Ocean Reefs, larger material deployed from OCRF barge, non-MARI funded

Looking ahead, planning for 2014 reef projects – MD DNR Fisheries Service, Discussed plans and funding for 2014 reef construction projects.

MARI funded:

- Hail Cove completion, David Sutherland, USFWS
- Existing reef sites: Options for location and material. ARC agreed Love Point is highest priority and recommends deployment of large materials on existing permitted site.
- Bottom survey needs and funding, developing priority list for pre and post construction bottom surveys.

Non-MARI funded:

- Choptank River Bridge Piers (Bill Burton Pier Reef-North/Talbot). Discussed as a site option for 2014, but not confirmed.
- Memorial Stadium Reef Ball Site, with CBF and Bill Huppert, MSSA-Perry Hall chapter (Annual May deployment), reef balls built by MSSA volunteers and deployed by CBF. DNR staff will follow up with with Bill Huppert and Capt. Karl Willey to recommend Love Point as a preferred location. As a back-up, DNR will designate an additional 1-2 acre box for reef balls at the site.

OCRF funded with proposed supplemental MARI funds:

- Larger material deployed from OCRF barge (OCRF with supplemental MARI funds)
- Coral Castle Blocks (OCRF with supplemental MARI funds)
- Note- Monty Hawkins discussed materials deployed in 2013, but exact amounts of materials for 2014 are not known yet.

DNR Artificial Reef Coordinator Erik Zlokovitz described his plan to begin sending regular email updates to the ARC. He also discussed plans for 2014 outreach to support MARI reef building and monitoring. Outreach is ongoing with social media (Facebook, Angler's Log), presentations to local fishing clubs, and appearance at winter shows such as the Pasadena Sportfishing Group winter flea market.

Next Meetings – March 26, 2014 (Wednesday) and October 29th (Wednesday), 2-5 PM in the Tawes State Office Building, Annapolis, MD.