

Shellfish Advisory Panel
October 11, 2017, 4:30PM
URI Bay Campus, Coastal Institute Building, Large Conference Room
218 S Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI 02874

MEETING SUMMARY

RIMFC members: D. Monti (SAP Chair, in place of J. Grant)

DEM: C. McManus; E. Schneider; P. Barret; C. Hannus (Water Resources)

SAP members: K. Eagan; M. McGiveney; R. Tellier; D. Ghigliotty; M. Sousa

Science Adviser: D. Leavitt

CRMC: D. Beutel

Public: G. Watson, W. Kemp, N. Lazar, G. Carvalho

1. **Proposed Modification to the Warren River Shellfish Management Area**

E. Schneider, D. Leavitt, and W. Kemp explained the Warren River project in seeding oysters in approved waters along Jacob's Point south of the Warren River Shellfish Management Area boundary. They explained the goals of this work, including short-term enhanced opportunities for commercial and recreational harvest, long-term potential for increased sustainability of the resource, as well as a strong educational tool for school children and the general public. *G. Carvalho* suggested this proposal be a new shellfish management area from the Warren River shellfishing management area, even though they share a boundary, given differences in how Water Resources classifies them. *M. McGiveney* and *D. Ghigliotty* explained a similar seeding project conducted on a smaller scale in Greenwich Bay to benefit future commercial harvest. *K. Eagan* asked the proposed area had to be so big if the seeding was confined to the shoreline and only 50,000 oysters, and why Bristol was not included in the proposal conversations given one point of the proposed area is on Bristol town land. *C. McManus* asked *K. Eagan* if she knew what shellfishermen who work this area thought of the proposal, and if she thought the reduced commercial harvest amount of 1 peck would impact the industry. *K. Eagan* said the resistance from shellfishermen in the area was based on the size proposed and management action, and not specific to the harvest restrictions on oysters. *C. McManus* noted that the new proposal presented was a vast improvement over the last version, which addressed the concerns that industry presented last time (i.e. the size of the proposed area is much smaller now, excluding highly used fishing grounds, and only applies to oysters). ***M. McGiveney* motioned to show the SAP's support of the project and the idea of the proposed management area, but that the area should be reduced to a smaller size that is more reflective of the project's size. 2nd by *M. Sousa*. The motion passed 5-0.**

2. **Review of Aquaculture Applications:**

a. **Application # 2017-07-021, Watson, Narragansett Bay (Rome Point):**

D. Beutel provided a brief overview of the proposal. He offered that his site survey revealed a low density of quahaugs, and that multiple objections were received. He offered that there were objections about the impacts to recreational boating and recreational fin-fishing, one of the latter coming from Rhode Island Saltwater Angler's Association. **Motion made by *M. McGiveney* to no recommend objection to the application; 2nd by *M. Sousa*. The motion passed 3-1-1 (*R. Tellier* voted against the motion, *K. Eagan* abstained).**

3. **Discussion on Noon-Time Openings for Conditional Areas:** *C. McManus* offered that commercial quahoggers had expressed concerns to him and *J. Grant* about health concerns that may arise with noon-time openings. The theoretical scenario described was that if a shellfishermen fished in the afternoon after a Conditional Area opened, but missed the operating hours of a dealer at the end of the day, and elected illegally to hold shellfish overnight longer than the permitted period and dishonestly labeled the tags for the next day to sell them, this could cause health concerns. Members of the SAP explained that this is likely a non-issue and is at most an individual issue, not a pervasive industry-wide issue that can be easily fixed with a management decision. *M. McGiveney* noted that several industry members had asked him why the closure is 7 days and not 6.5 days, noting other states have a shorter period. *C. Hannus* described that each state's rules are specific to their bodies of water, given that circulation and water sheds are different across the states and can influence the residence times differently. As a non-voting item, the SAP suggested no further action or discussion needed.

Prepared by: C. McManus