

RHODE ISLAND MARINE FISHERIES COUNCIL
Minutes of Shellfish Advisory Panel
January 27, 2010 4:30 PM
Ft. Wetherill Marine Laboratory
Jamestown, RI

MFC Members Present: J. King (SAP Chair)
SAP Members Present: R. Bercaw, S. DiPetrillo, J. Gardner, J. Grant, D. Goebel, O. Kelly, M. McGiveney, G. Schey, J. Vivari (alt. for Kennedy)
SAP Members Absent: D. Brayton, W. Cote, P. Kennedy, J. Migliore, J. Mullen
Scientific Advisor: D. Leavitt
NRCS: J. Tuthill
CRMC: D. Beutel
DEM Marine Fisheries: D. Erkan, N. Lazar, R. Satchwill
Public Present: R. Beresford, R. Hopkins, J. Russo, and 3 unidentified

1. Oyster Harvest Moratorium Bissel Cove/Fox Island

Erkan/Tuthill outlined procedures for oyster restoration/enhancement efforts. Oyster moratorium rather than establishment of new sanctuary suggested to facilitate continued quahaug harvest. Oysters are not to be placed behind pollution line per Water Resources/Health. Intent is reestablishment of self-sustaining population and habitat. Discussion ensued. Contracts, monitoring, sunset clause, duration of project/grower contracts, reporting requirements, alternatives sites all discussed. **SAP voted to support project with a moratorium on oyster harvest until 2015 with continued monitoring and evaluation of success. Revisit as necessary.**

2. Potter Pond Spawner Sanctuary (Sycamore Cove)

Proposed closure of all shellfishing in Sycamore Cove (20 ½ acres). Discussion as above. A number of individuals opposed to the project attended the meeting. Claims of intensive regular recreational and commercial shellfishing. Marine Fisheries staff does not concur (Potter steamer Survey found low quahaug densities, depth and soft areas inhibit recreational access, few residences abut Sycamore Cove). Intent is establishment of an undisturbed oyster reef and broodstock. **SAP voted to oppose proposal (recommended seek alternative site).** (Despite recommendations, Whale Cove known to be unsuitable).

3. Increase fishing period for Bristol Harbor and Bissel/Fox Shellfish Transplant Areas

After discussion tabled until consideration of 2011 harvest period.

4. Sean Patch Aquaculture Lease proposal – Ninigret Pond

After presentation by Beutel, discussion ensued. Primary concern was non-resident status of applicant. Assumption by SAP that leases could only be held by R.I. residents. SAP voted 5 to 4 to support lease but submit to MFC for review due to concerns about non-resident status of applicant. Advice to CRMC was to approve lease with modifications developed in PD process and address residency requirement.

Adjourn: 7:15 PM

Minutes prepared by Erkan & King