

MINUTES

SHELLFISH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SMAC) MEETING

APRIL 12, 2017

Members Present

John DeMaria
Tommy Kellum
Roy Insley
Tommy Leggett
Dan Dise
Ben Johnson
Ernest George
Richard Harding, Jr.
Donald Porter

Members Absent

A. J. Erskine
Lake Cowart
Wayne France
J. C. Hudgins
Richard Green
Kevin Wade
Jeffrey Hammer

VMRC/VIMS Staff

Andrew Button
Ben Stagg
Jane McCroskey
Rob Berryman
Jeff Copperthite
Missy Southworth
Kathy Leonard

and others.

1. Discussion on the prohibition against carrying dredge gear through an oyster sanctuary:

SMAC voted (8-1) that they should be allowed to transit sanctuary areas with dredge gear "unhooked" and requested that 7 additional poles be placed to mark the Wreck Shoals Sanctuary area to make it more visible as to where the area is located when working nearby. There was close to an hour of discussion on this matter. SMAC recommended that staff submit a report to the Commission to act on concurrently with the Report to House Committee.

2. Discussion of crowded handscrape areas:

This was discussed in length and some good consensus was reached on a number of plausible options, including, additional or modification of rotation areas, change in gear type, and the timing of opening certain public grounds.

3. Legislative Issues that will impact shellfish industry:

Recent Code Section changes were mentioned and briefly addressed overall the impact to the industry should be minimal.

4. Update on 2017 Replenishment Plan:

SMAC was informed that shell dredge is not changing hands this year. Some other minor changes in replenishment plan were discussed including movement of some proposed replenishment activities, such as the transplanting of shells from Byrd and Marshall Rocks to Cod Harbor in the Pocomoke Sound and Tangier Sound.

5. Additional Business:

Motions were made and received in support of more positive press releases made by VMRC and to look into changing regulations on the re-harvest of James River seed, specifically the requirement that re-harvest not begin until June 1st.