

Assessment Committee Final (?) Meeting
November 13th, 2019
SMAST West (UMass Dartmouth/DMF)

Attendance: *Need to confirm attendance

Committee Member	Affiliation
Jeff Kennedy	Chair
Dan McKiernan	State
Ginny Parker	Citizen
Lindsey Williams	Sea Grant
Liz Lewis	Municipal
Mark Begley	Grower
Melissa Sanderson	NGO
Michele Insley	SPAT
Nancy Civetta	Municipal
Renne Gagne	Municipal
Ron Bergstrom	Municipal
Steve Kirk	NGO
Suzanne (Phil) Phillips	Grower
Todd Callaghan	State

Supporting Staff: Sean McNally, Chris Schillaci

Other: Mike Hickey, Josh Reitsma, Seth Garfield

Meeting began at 1:11PM

Jeff thanked everyone for joining today and quickly reviewed and thanked everyone for providing comments and edits to the report. He opened the floor and the committee members introduced themselves to everyone in the room.

1. Overview & Committee Discussion

Chris Schillaci provided an overview of the scoping committee efforts and how comments are being organized and reported on in a future scoping committee document. Schillaci also informed the AC that the task force meeting will be postponed until January.

Gagne asked if the scoping committee comments will be placed into the AC report?

Schillaci replied that the two reports will remain separate, but the scoping committee report will reference the AC report to make meaningful recommendations. The reports will stand alone with the AC report informing the scoping committee report.

Kennedy stated that it will be up to the task force where this process goes next and what the recommendations will be in the next year. Most likely will outline a strategic process for shellfish resources in the state. The goal of this meeting is to finalize the report so that we can pass the report the task force as a situational outlook on shellfish resources in the state. Are we at a point that we are comfortable with the report as is with the edits incorporated?

Kennedy asked the room if anyone on the committee has any major concerns with the report.

Gagne asked about making changes to the document to avoid redundancy.

Mark Begley brought up the 1995 strategic plan that was focused aquaculture – but it would be a good idea to figure out where a summary of the original 1995 report will be placed and identify where some of the issues have been addressed and what we haven't tackled yet.

Mike Hickey – there is a separate executive summary of the 1995 report that outlines

Soares – the one concern is that document is specific to aquaculture across the broad spectrum – there is some relevance to the MSI document but only addresses a small part

Mike Hickey – most of what we are dealing with today was addressed in the 1995 document

Steve Kirk – I think that is group should focus on the executive summary – I think that the document itself is good – focus our time together now on that specific question

Kennedy – the 1995 aquaculture report is extremely pertinent but where does it belong in this specific report.

Mark Begley– it needs to be considered somewhere

Liz Lewis – what has been done historically and what needs to be done now

Schillaci – it is a good reference for the scoping committee

Soares – from the perspective from what has changed and what hasn't changed since 1995 in relation to aquaculture and propagation activity at the municipal level.

Kennedy asked for a copy of the executive summary that Mike pointed to and brought up the changes and edits that have been submitted to him into a master document.

Soares – asked is there any way to get any kind of range of recreational numbers, economics, value, etc. Is there anyway to frame that stuff?

Gagne – there are equations (national park?)

Schillaci – we struggled to find a correct economic multiplier

Josh Reitsma– NMF (national marine fisheries) uses 1-4%

Soares – let's put a value on recreational harvest past just a multiplier on commercial harvest

Josh Reitsma– we have a report on file from the 90s about recreational value for shellfish focused on the cape

Kennedy – one of the problems with the municipal survey we lost exact numbers

Mike Hickey– town data is reported on so differently that it is almost impossible to compare them to one another

Scott Soares – there is a cost for municipalities to collect granule data – is it worth the cost to get consistency in reporting – this process is whiteboard thinking and we have the chance to put this up to the task force – we don't have good numbers – is it important for the task force to recognize to give towns great support to do the work

Schillaci – the point of the data is to highlight how important the fishery is – thinking about ways to capture those numbers would be the actual recommendation

Gagne – recreation for recreation sake should at least be mentioned – there is value on the activity itself – the report does not fully reflect that

Schillaci – specific sidebar comments on how to do that would be helpful from the committee

Rob O'Leary– I think it's an important part of the business (rec) – what about the possibility of having communities that self-report – like a website

Mike Hickey – we've been trying to do this for years and it's a hard topic to tackle, we need to recognize the high value of the recreational activity and the challenges between programs

Steve Kirk– in the report were rec permit numbers issued by towns requested through the survey?

Schillaci – recommendation to the task force to identify the gaps in this report and identifying them as a recommendation to the task force

Phil Phillips– lets not focus so much on monetary value and focus on the cultural and societal value and not worry about getting down to quantities so much – the monetary value is not the real value.

Bulleted observations – trends – limited availability to get at the true value of recreational type harvest –

Liz Lewis – highlight the inter connectedness of the resources themselves – cohesion and high interdependency

Steve Kirk – clarity and readability

Liz Lewis – picture books

Distill trends and gaps

Josh Reitsma – bulleted list – breakdown of observations of current industry and simplify the glaring observations

Phil Phillips – future challenges especially as it relates to changing environmental factors – a lot of people in the general public don't know about it – the task force needs to know about these challenges

Mark Begley– add more pictures, Venn diagram, something that indicates that we are all connected

Lindsay Williams – executive summary have subsections that match the report and then have pictures that highlight that pattern and they still get underscored

Soares – summary of assessment needs – ask for Scott to send that list

Liz Lewis – we only have so much area – one of the biggest things is we want to support local business but there is only so much acreage to go around and it is limited by all the other stakeholder involved

Mike Hickey – the state has an obligation to ensure that every citizen has shellfish available for his or her personal use – we are mandated by law to ensure – at time the state licensed aquaculture and it was a disaster – the so called quahog laws that occurred in SE MA and RI – that was when the license of shellfish aquaculture as handed over to local towns – licensing of aquaculture is not mandated by the state it is not a right it is a privilege- the cities and towns need to think about it in those terms –

Liz Lewis– add something that shows that there are differences across the board

Phil Phillips – there are a lot of people out there that do not understand that some of the towns don't have aquaculture every where

Jeff Kennedy– we need a presentation to the task force that focuses on the interpretation and is needed to point out to the task force

Simplify the language – this is not a report for a peer reviewed article – this is a report for the public and for people in public office for people to read and understand – it has to be in plain English and readable

Here is what really is important – and is in a format that people can pick it up and understand it

Summary

Discussion focused on tuning up the executive summary for the report to provide clear and specific observations that were made by the Assessment committee's work. Draft executive summary moving that frames observations rather than 'recommendations'.

Reference to undervaluation of what is expected to be the significant value of recreational shellfishing – group agreed to emphasize value and frame inability of the assessment committee to get a good and accurate measure of value – several mentioned efforts made at individual municipalities, state's effort in the past. On suggested collecting such detailed data, not a high priority among the broader range of responsibilities at the town level