

River Herring Technical Expert Working Group (TEWG)

Fisheries Subgroup Webinar/Conference Call

August 15, 2014

10:00 am

Summary

I. Overview

The Fisheries Subgroup of the River Herring Technical Expert Working Group was established to “consider the impacts from state and federal fisheries rangewide” in order to help contribute to the expected products of the TEWG. Jason Didden and Mary Beth Tooley, co-chairs of the Fisheries Subgroup, convened a call on August 15, 2014, to continue discussions and develop outcomes for the TEWG. The draft agenda for the meeting included topics such as: 1) review available information on data needs and gaps related to fisheries and river herring; and 2) discuss potential fishery conservation recommendations. This meeting summary includes the primary discussion topics and outcomes to contribute to future TEWG discussions. The information provided below reflects individual expert opinion and not consensus.

II. Key Topics

Following is a list of individual expert opinion provided by Fisheries Subgroup members or the public on various overarching topics. Some ideas have been combined where appropriate.

- The subgroup reviewed the research needs and data gaps identified to date (e.g., through ASMFC, NMFS, Councils) to obtain individual expert opinion on what may be missing, changed, etc.
- Enhancing catch estimates from all fisheries to better understand river herring populations is important and should be an emphasis of this subgroup.
- One member noted that species ID training information has been developed, and there are river herring identification placards available.
- A small portion of the river herring that are caught in mid-water fleets is discarded (most are retained). The bottom trawl fishery has a higher discard rate that could be due to factors such as inability to sell or possess, and/or differences in vessel operations.
- For the purposes of this document, catch refers to all catch (targeted or non-targeted/incidental). Catch may be retained/landed or discarded. The word bycatch is generally avoided because it has a variety of common and legal usages which can lead to confusion.

- The subgroup discussed how large of a scale do they want to look at (e.g., pelagic fisheries, small mesh fisheries, all fisheries, etc.). As the TEWG is charged to look at all impacts, the subgroup tried to capture all fisheries that catch river herring.
- Shoreside monitoring provides important information on what is happening offshore, and some members noted this should be increased. Members discussed the importance of observer coverage as well, with different opinions expressed regarding the level needed.
- The future NOAA Fisheries and ASMFC river herring request for proposals was noted (e.g., the importance of specific priorities was noted). Other sources of funding (i.e. Research Set-Aside (RSA)) were considered.
- Although shad is not the focus in this initiative, any benefits can be noted.
- There needs to be more coordination with Canada as river herring is also caught as incidental catch.

III. Key Outcomes

Below is a list of individual expert opinions provided by participants related to specific threats, data gaps, research projects, conservation actions, information to be considered and/or monitoring (i.e., the identified research projects and/or conservation actions). Some ideas have been combined where appropriate. These outcomes are listed in no particular order, and those related to other subgroups are also included in the “Cross-Cutting Issues” section below).

a. Data Gaps

- Please see Didden and Tooley’s Draft Data Gaps and Conservation Ideas Document

b. Research Projects

- Please see Didden and Tooley’s Draft Data Gaps and Conservation Ideas Document

c. Monitoring

- Please see Didden and Tooley’s Draft Data Gaps and Conservation Ideas Document

d. Information to be Considered:

- For the recommendation to test fishing gears, it was suggested that existing literature on the subject should be considered first.

IV. Next Steps

The Fisheries Subgroup discussed the following next steps:

- Didden and Tooley’s will provide an updated draft document summarizing the subgroup discussions on data gaps and conservation ideas for any additional comments.

- The co-chairs would like to hear some suggestions from the members on what direction this subgroup should go in the future.
- NOAA Fisheries and the ASMFC will provide some input into what their vision is for the larger conservation project.

V. Cross-Cutting Subgroup Issues

The following cross-cutting subgroups issues were discussed and will be further considered by the TEWG and its Ecosystem Integration Committee.

- The relationship between catch and impact on stocks would be the primary domain of the TEWG Stock Status Subgroup.
- Members stressed the importance of continuing the genetic work to link the catch to the stocks (Genetics and Stock Status Subgroups).
- There was a recommendation to evaluate mortality on transboundary stocks in order to add a Canadian mortality component (Stock Status Subgroup).
- General life history information (e.g., migration).

VI. Participants

a. Subgroup Members

The affiliation of each member can be found on the subgroup roster available at the TEWG Fisheries Subgroup website:

<http://www.nero.noaa.gov/protected/riverherring/tewg/fisheries/index.html>

Michael Bailey
 Diane Borggaard
 Kiersten Curti
 Jason Didden
 Claire Enterline
 Ruth Haas-Castro
 Jon Hare
 Marin Hawk
 Pingguo He
 Jeff Kaelin
 Wilson Laney
 Peter Moore
 Carrie Nordeen
 Jeffrey Pierce
 Lori Steele
 Mary Beth Tooley

- b. Public
 - Purcie Bennett-Nickerson
 - Edith Carson
 - Steve Meyers
 - Derek Orner
 - Brad Schondelmeier

VII. Meeting Materials

The following materials were provided to support the meeting. Additional information can be found at the TEWG Fisheries Subgroup website:

<http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/protected/riverherring/tewg/fisheries/index.html>

- a. Draft Agenda
- b. Draft Data Gaps and Conservation Ideas document