

River Herring Technical Expert Working Group (TEWG)

Habitat Subgroup Webinar/Conference Call

April 29, 2014

1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Summary

I. Overview

The Habitat Subgroup of the River Herring Technical Expert Working Group was established to “consider the impacts from various factors affecting river herring habitat including, but not limited to, connectivity (e.g., fish passage), water quality/quantity, and appropriate habitat characteristics”. Alison Bowden and Jeffrey Pierce, co-chairs of the Habitat Subgroup, convened a call on April 29, 2014, to begin discussions with the group. The draft agenda focused on the organizational structure and process for the subgroup. 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

The below includes a list of individual expert opinion provided by Habitat Subgroup members or the public on various overarching topics:

- Members provided input on which framework is best to identify the threats facing river herring. Examples brought up include NOAA’s Estuarine Living Marine Resources database and the Endangered Species Act listing determination
- Breaking threats down by expertise, either regionally or categorically, could provide the resolution necessary for this process; the spreadsheet showing threats by region developed by the NOAA Status Review Team (SRT) used during the listing decision may be a useful starting point
- Pacific salmon research and models may be applicable to the Habitat Subgroup

III. Key Outcomes

The below includes 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). 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. Information To Be Considered (e.g., published papers)

- Hasselman *et al* 2014; Human disturbance causes the formation of a hybrid swarm between two naturally sympatric fish species
- Anadromous Alosa symposium; American Fisheries Society 1994

- Palkovacs *et al* 2013; Combining genetic and demographic information to prioritize conservation efforts for anadromous alewife and blueback herring
- Sara Turner (Karin Limburg's student) just defended her PhD studying river herring coastwide. She used otolith chemistry to discriminate among stocks -- very similar to genetic analysis/complementary. She also used the otolith chemistry to back-estimate the size at emigration from inland waters to the ocean, coastwide. Dissertation will be open access, once filed.
- ASMFC 2012 stock assessment
- NOAA 2013 listing decision
- [Atlantic Coast Diadromous Fish Habitat: A Review of Utilization, Threats, Recommendations for Conservation, and Research Needs \(January 2009\)](#)
- Rulifson et al. 1992; Status of anadromous fisheries in southeastern U.S estuaries

IV. Next Steps

The Habitat Subgroup discussed the following next steps:

- Roger and Trevor will work on a spreadsheet outlining everyone's work and research, which includes monitoring.
- Marin will compile the papers discussed and work on a system to allow everyone access to the document online.
- Alison will work with NOAA staff to identify products from Pacific salmon recovery plans that may be useful models.
- We will post the SRT threats spreadsheet Dan Kircheis reviewed for the group; potential additions/refinements include urbanization and hardening of shorelines.

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.

- Genetics and consequently the Genetics Subgroup may play a role in the habitat of river herring; this will be investigated further as the Habitat Subgroup expertise document is compiled.

VI. Participants

a. Subgroup Members

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

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

Alison Bowden
Dan Kircheis
Eric Hilton
Fritz Rohde

Ben Lenz
Dennis Logan
Eric Schultz
Jeff Pierce

Karin Limburg
Kim de Mutsert
Michael Piehler
Peter Kube
Roger Rulifson
Tara Lake
Theo Willis
Marin Hawk

Kevin Sullivan
Matt Ogburn
Mike Bailey
Phil Edwards
Steve Gephard
Trevor Avery
Alan Weaver

b. Public

Andrew Jones

c. Staff

Diane Borggaard

VII. Meeting Materials

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

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

a. Draft Agenda

b. Draft Working Spreadsheet