

TEWG Species Interaction Subgroup Conference Call

28 May 2014

I. Opening business

A. Welcome and introductions

B. Role of chair

II. Charge of working groups and subgroups

A. TEWG (from RH TEWG Mission Statement and Products 04222014.pdf)

The primary objective is to develop and implement a dynamic conservation plan to help restore coastal river herring populations.

Expected Products

1. Identify data gaps and threats to river herring (alewives and blueback herring) throughout their range.
2. Create and monitor a list of conservation actions to address critical threats and associated costs.
3. Create and monitor a list of research projects and associated costs to fill existing data gaps.
4. Provide/compile information (e.g., updates on research projects or conservation actions) for NMFS/ASMFC to use in a dynamic, long term conservation planning effort.

B. Species Interaction Subgroup

1. National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) August 12, 2013 river herring listing determination (78 FR 48944, as described in summary of 3/27 meeting rh_tewg_conf_call_summary_final.pdf)

Research needs include: Continue investigating predator prey relationships

2. Threat assessment scoring (river herring threats assessment ranking sheet_blank.xlsx) required under Section 4(a)(1) of the ESA includes disease and predation

Disease and predation are combined in a factor to be evaluated under the ESA, NMFS ranked these separately

3. ASMFC River Herring Stock Assessment (2012)

Research needs include: Summarize existing information on predation by striped bass and other species and quantify consumption through modeling (e.g., MSVPA), diet, and bioenergetics studies.

4. Research Priorities and Recommendations to Support Interjurisdictional Fisheries Management, Special Report No. 89 of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (2013)

Research needs include: Ascertain how abundance and distribution of potential prey affect growth and mortality of early life stages of alosines.

5. Description of subgroup in 3/25 e-mail from Diane:

Consider issues surrounding the interactions between river herring and other components of the ecosystems they occupy rangewide (includes trophic interactions and ecosystem services in freshwater, estuarine and marine environments).

6. River Herring Ecosystem Integration Committee

This will be an overarching committee comprised of chairs/co-chairs from the 6 river herring TEWG subgroups. Many of the issues that the subgroups will be addressing are interrelated, and therefore, the work of one subgroup may be very relevant to another. This committee will ensure that the work of the subgroups is fully integrated to facilitate subgroup and TEWG discussions, as well as conservation planning development. In order to successfully restore river herring, it is important to increase the resilience of both species, and as such, the full array of interactions within the ecosystems that they occupy must be considered. Thus, this committee will make sure that an ecosystem perspective is taken by providing a forum to integrate information across the subgroups to inform the overall conservation strategy for these species.

C. Discussion of subgroup charge and subject area

III. Process to clarify data gaps and data assimilation gaps

A. Discuss Predation and Disease Excerpt of Endangered Species Act Listing Determination for Alewife and Blueback Herring

B. Discuss data gaps related to predation, disease, trophic interactions and ecosystem services

C. Develop method for analyzing coverage of existing empirical studies

- 1. Geographic location of study**
- 2. Habitat of study**
- 3. Method of assessing interaction**
- 4. Temporal scope of study in seasons/years**
- 5. Ontogenetic scope: age classes/life stages**

D. Review modelling studies: process to clarify data assimilation gaps

IV. Closing business