

**River Herring Technical Expert Working Group (TEWG)**  
**Species Interaction Subgroup Webinar/Conference Call**  
**November 18, 2014**  
**2:30 - 3:30 pm**

**Summary**

**I. Overview**

The Species Interaction Subgroup of the River Herring Technical Expert Working Group was established to “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)” in order to help contribute to the expected products of the TEWG. Eric Schultz, chair of the Species Interaction Subgroup, convened a call on November 18, 2014. The draft agenda included an overview of the access database for river herring predation and a discussion on the utility of the research to-date spreadsheet. Meeting materials included the most recent version of the Spreadsheet Evaluating Past Studies (Spreadsheet). 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 Fisheries Subgroup members or the public on various overarching topics:

- The Multi-Species Virtual Population Analysis (MSVPA) Access Database created for Atlantic menhaden by Micah Dean will be a valuable tool for the Species Interactions Subgroup. The Subgroup will continue to modify the database and incorporate studies from the Spreadsheet to the extent possible.
- The Spreadsheet will be useful as a reference for future stock assessments. It will also be the basis for inputting new information in the Access Database.
- The Subgroup will provide a list of additional work that is recommended to determine the extent to which natural predation and other species interactions might influence sustainability of river herring populations.

**I. 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. Data Gaps

- Information on predation at all life stages of river herring (including frequency of predation and/or relative amount of predation). Research to-date will be included in the Access Database, and the Spreadsheet will inform what specific life stages lack information.

b. Information To Be Considered (e.g., published papers)

- Predation by piscivorous birds and pinnipeds might be included in the Access Database

**II. Next Steps**

The Species Interaction Subgroup discussed the following next steps:

- Marin will complete the Species Interactions Spreadsheet.
- Eric will summarize the information in the spreadsheet in a separate document, to be reviewed by the committee upon completeness.
- Eric will send around information about the Access Database to gather feedback from the Subgroup.
- Wilson and Jim will work to gather the information on predation by piscivorous birds, to be shared with the Subgroup.

**III. Participants**

a. Subgroup Members

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

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

Eric Schultz  
Jim Hawkes

Joseph Gordon  
Theo Willis

Wilson Laney

b. Public

Purcie Bennett-Nickerson

c. Staff

Marin Hawk

**IV. Meeting Materials**

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

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

a. Draft Agenda

b. Species Interactions Spreadsheet Evaluating Past Studies

December 8, 2014