

Feb 7, 2017

Regular Monthly Provincetown Shellfish Committee Meeting

Called to Order: 5:02 Members present: Alex Brown, Dave Flattery, Bob Hazard (Sec), Rick Macara (Acting Chair) and Nancy Ann Meads

Also Present: Steve Wisbauer (Shellfish Constable), Kathy Ward (Banner reporter).

Public Comments: None

Previous Minutes: Jan 3 minutes were reviewed. Motion to accept by D. Flattery, Second N. Meads. Vote 4-0 approve ,1 abstained (A. Brown)

Old Business:

Shellfish Constable Report:

Shellfish department February 7, 2016 update

- For the remainder of the 2016-2017 season the shellfish area east of the West End Breakwater is open to the public. This is now the most popular of the open areas. Plentiful oysters and clams are easy to find which is impressive seeing that the area was dug out last season. Many of the deeper placed relay clams from the west end seem to have migrated to the area.
- New grant applications ;Grant applications will move forward this month. They have been delayed due to the fact that the Town has been looking for a new secretary to the BOS as well as conservation agent.
- Status of current grant holders up for renewal; The next group of licenses up for ADA renewal expire April 13, 2017. These total 6 acres held by 3 people. I expect that 2 of these grant holders will not meet the requirements for renewal (only one performing).
- Propagation and Seed: Areas we can Propagate: *(proposed distribution by members)
 - East End *(oyster on shell in rock jetty)
 - West End *(Contaminated relay)
 - East of Breakwater *(Spat on shell)
 - West of Breakwater *(contaminated relay)
 - Hatches Harbor *(cultch at rock formation
- Methodes Available:
 - Contaminated relay
 - Small oyster singles, R2 (3-4mm) - \$12.75/1000 from ARC
 - Big oyster singles, R8 (12mm+) - \$49.50/1000 from Cape Cod Oyster
 - Quahog/hard clam seed, R1.5 (2-3mm) - \$12/1000 from ARC

- Oyster remote set - \$15/bag (bags to be supplied by towns this year)
- Towns can as always piggy back on these prices if they want to. Do we want to offer these options to growers? Motion by D. Flattery, second by N. Meads to allow growers to piggy back on town buy, if correctly payed to supplier. Vote 5-0 approve.
- Response from Army Corp of Engineers and DMF of request to keep gear floating in tidal flats: DMF: After reviewing some of the responses from growers it seems like floating the cages help deal with sedimentation and possible burial of animals on the bottom trays, as well as helping to keep crabs away from the oysters in the cages. There is still serious hesitation on the protected species side to allow floating gear with 12-15' vertical anchor lines and I am still hearing "why isn't this a problem" for the 100's of other intertidal growers in ECCB. I am wondering if there is a compromise that can be reached but I am not sure it is even feasible. So try to picture a string of oystergros anchored on either side by 12-15' vertical lines. The cages float to the surface at high tide and sit on the flat at low tide. What if those lines two vertical anchor lines were 1.5' long. So the Oystergros would stay submerged at high tide but would not be sitting on the bottom. I think you'd need a third anchor and line in the middle of the string or you'd create a n shape with the middle of the string higher than to two sides. Do you think the anchors would hold or would there be too much positive buoyancy from the floating cages? The condition would be something like vertical lines may not extend more than 2 ft off the bottom. The other option would be to anchor/staple a horizontal chain or line to the bottom and run 2ft lines from the horizontal line to each oystergro. They would stay submerged at high tide but be floating off the bottom. Just thoughts to reach a rapid compromise. Massachusetts has always been ahead of NOAA on marine mammal protection issues and this is one area that the people who have been working closely with the fixed gear industry on entanglement prevention feel strongly.

Any feedback on that thought? Another question. People have fabricated PVC legs for oystergros, do you think that would suffice? It would be cheaper than weak links. This pic is from CCS Red dots are right whales white are any other baleen.

Me: The idea of having them float only slightly is not going over well because you're trying to submerge a buoyant cage and they would need to be tied completely differently and it causes stress on the system. We still like the idea of weak links on the cages. If ice came they would pop off like grapes and leave the mainline behind.

Other feedback is that the important time for them to float would be mid-March on. This would be after any ice threat. I will talk about the PVC but it doesn't suffice for anti-fouling.

Did you get any feedback on the week links or eligible grants only above a certain depth

Single dot: Do you have any more information about the one and only sighting inside the area in question? Without CCS explaining that sighting and dating it seriously does not seem like a whale in good health is up on that sand. Other than that the area is whale free. There is a steep drop off to 60 feet right there and the dot appears to be on the deep side.

Any other Old Business: None

New Business: None

Next Meeting Date: March 7th

Motion to Adjourn: by D. Flattery, Second by B. Hazard to adjourn at 6:15. Vote 5-0 approve
B. Hazard, Secretary