

SEG Striped Bass and Fisheries Committee Meeting Summary

Date: December 12, 2001

Time: 1:00 P.M.

Place: USACOE Savannah District Office

Members Present:

Ted Will	Georgia Department of Natural Resources WRD
Carl Hall	Georgia Department of Natural Resources WRD
Terry Stratton	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Bill Bailey	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Ed Eudaly	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Larry Keegan	Lockwood Greene
Tom Reinert	UGA-Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit
Cecil Jennings	UGA-Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit
Judy Jennings	Sierra Club
Prescott Brownell	National Marine Fisheries Service
Will Berson	Georgia Conservancy
Mark Collins	Marine Resources Research Institute, South Carolina DNR
John Paffert	Georgia Department of Natural Resources CRD
Bridget Callahan	Applied Technology and Management
Bo Ellis	Applied Technology and Management
Kostas Kalimtgis	Applied Technology and Management

AGENDA:

OPEN - Ted Will

SUMMARY OF PAST MEETINGS

Fisheries Committee - Will Berson

Striped Bass Committee - Ted Will

BRIEF DISCUSSION (15-20 minutes)

- (1) Update for the 1135 Project - Terry Stratton
- (1) Update on Fisheries Studies - UGA
- (2) Update on Striped Bass Monitoring - Ted Will

MODEL PRESENTATION - Bo Ellis

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - Open

CLOSE

MINUTES:

SUMMARY OF PAST MEETINGS

Fisheries Committee- Details pertaining to Mark Collins report on shortnose sturgeon were discussed at the last fisheries committee meeting. Also, the committee agreed to sequester a facilitator. Since that time, Will Berson agreed to take on the role as the fisheries committee's facilitator.

Striped Bass Committee- The striped bass committee last met on June 8, 2001. From that meeting several study ideas were mentioned. As the meeting neared a close, Larry Keegan mentioned the idea looking back at past Savannah River striped bass data collections and studies, and then synthesize this information into a report. The intent of this synthesis is to document our present knowledge, the avenues we considered to improve the present status of the population, and the rationale for the path the researchers and resource managers are now taking. By putting everything on paper, it may be easier to spot something that we've overlooked. It would also provide support for why we recommend a given action whenever we get to that point in the process. Terry Stratton has since took the initiative under the 1135 project to complete a striped bass synthesis document.

BRIEF DISCUSSION (15-20 minutes)

1) Update for the 1135 Project - Terry Stratton

We were unable to get Terry's update during the meeting; however, Ted emailed Terry some questions based on the committee's discussion. Ted's questions and Terry's answers are listed below.

Question: Is ATM's report "Evaluation of Existing and Historic Velocities and Salinities in Back River for Striped Bass Restoration Project" complete?

Answer: Yes, the report is complete. I will get copies out on CD ASAP!

Question: What is the status on the striped bass synthesis research, and what is your best guess for a completion date?

Answer: Synthesis is approximately 80% complete. Expect to have it completed by 18 January 2002.

2) Update on Fisheries Studies - Tom Reinert and Mark Collins

Studies are going along well. The University of Georgia has collected about 80 species of fish and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources has collected about 60 species. Very few if any samples have been missed. To achieve the proposed two year sampling period, a two month extension for field sampling procedures will be needed.

3) Update on Striped Bass Monitoring - Ted Will

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA-DNR) received their otolith samples collected from age 2 fish in spring 2001. Of the 40 fish collected about 15% were naturally recruited. This was higher than the 6% natural recruitment estimate reported from fish collected in spring 2000. Natural recruitment estimates previous to 2000 have ranged from 15 to 30%.

The GA-DNR will continue their standardized sampling of striped bass in the Savannah River in spring 2002. GA-DNR will also complete a two year mark-recapture population study for striped bass in the Savannah River in spring 2002.

MODEL PRESENTATION - Bo Ellis

Bo Ellis gave an excellent presentation on ATM's models, how they work, and the type of outputs we could expect from the models. His presentation was well received by the committee's, which in turned generated a excellent discussion.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS - Open

There was an extensive question and answer period. There was much discussion on critical life stages of fish and fish species of concern. It appears to be a complicated process of matching biological observations/studies of fish species with a deterministic model that only wants specific inputs. Given the complexity of this situation it was determined that we first focus on striped bass. More specifically, the committee's hope that the avenues used to evaluate striped bass will help in assessing other fish species of concern.

Before the meeting ended Ted agreed to send everyone an email in January soliciting ideas on how we could use ATM's model to assess impacts of the various deepening scenarios on the striped bass population. After thoughts and ideas were gathered we would meet again and discuss appropriate criteria to be evaluated using ATM's model.