

**MARYLAND STRIPED BASS  
STAKEHOLDERS SUMMIT:**

**SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS OF PRE-SUMMIT  
INTERVIEWS, SUMMIT RESULTS AND *TEAMWORX*  
CONSENSUS**

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## FORWARD

*Maryland is fortunate to have a tremendous abundance of fishery resources in the Chesapeake Bay. Wise stewardship which fosters the continued health of these resources and their role in the ecology of the Bay while providing Maryland citizen's and visitors the opportunity to utilize and enjoy these resources is of paramount importance.*

*Perhaps no other fishery in the Chesapeake Bay evokes more emotion and interest than that of Maryland's state fish, the striped bass. Populations of striped bass in the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic coast declined dramatically in the 1970's and 1980's, forcing a complete closure of the Maryland fishery for over 5 years. Through substantial sacrifices made by the fishing community along the Atlantic coast, particularly in Maryland, combined with the efforts of scientists and managers, striped bass populations have rebounded to a level that is higher than any in recent memory. It is Maryland's intention to manage the fishery so that we never again approach the conditions that forced the drastic closure of the fishing season.*

*Management of fishery resources in Maryland involves a joint effort of the state and citizens. The best way to utilize the striped bass resources for the benefit of Maryland residents is a decision that can only be made through such a cooperative process. From March 24-26, 1997, fifty-seven representative stakeholders in the striped bass fishery participated in a Summit to develop an enhanced ability to work together to manage the fishery for the future. This report captures the events of the summit and the groundwork which has been laid for an improved striped bass management process in the future. What the report does not capture are the significant achievements made in improving the way that each stakeholder group interacts with others. These changed perceptions and new ways of cooperation will ensure that the Maryland striped bass resource is managed primarily for conservation and secondarily for utilization.*

*I want to personally express my appreciation to all of the participants who made this summit, and the resulting management program, a success. Everyone invested a great deal of time, energy and personnel commitment which will pay off with improved management of striped bass in the future.*

**John Griffin**

**Secretary  
Maryland Department of Natural Resources**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

As with many states, Maryland is facing contentious situations arising from the allocation of Chesapeake Bay striped bass stocks. The resolution of these allocation issues annually consumes a great deal of time and resources of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources and of various constituent groups involved in the issues. In an effort to develop a more stable management program, Maryland has embarked on an innovative program to bring constituent groups together to improve long term consensus on key issue of importance to the management and allocation of striped bass. Through the services of consultants independent of the DNR (principally a professional training and consulting firm) the Maryland striped bass community conducted a team building and consensus building program with stakeholders in the management of striped bass. From March 24-26, 1997, fifty-seven stakeholders involved with the striped bass fishery in the Chesapeake Bay gathered in a facilitated summit to develop a more stable direction for this fishery. Included among the participants were representatives from conservation organizations, the charter boat community, commercial fishermen, recreational anglers, fishery managers from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), sporting goods retailers and seafood processors. The state fishery managers and administrators who participated in this program participated as an equal member of the striped bass stakeholder community.

The program included a combination of trust building processes to develop an improved atmosphere for issue resolution in the near and long term and information gathering components. The information gathering consisted of: 1) conducting pre-summit interviews with participants to gather information to better clarify issues of contention; 2) a series of sessions within the summit to identify long term goals for the fishery, and 3) a "voting" process (*TeamWorx*) used to discern general perceptions regarding the relative importance of key issues and performance on addressing these issues.

The summit achieved the primary objectives of 1) establishing criteria to allow the development of a long term (3-5 year) allocation plan for the striped bass resource, 2) providing recommendations for the resolution of fishery regulations for the remainder of 1997-98 and 3) improving a trust-based, constructive environment for resolving future management issues. Additionally, the process has helped to affirm the DNR's role as a partner with others in striped bass management (not simply as a regulator), identified strong consensus that user groups wanted stability in the fishery in terms of harvest limits, seasons, etc. and identified a strong consensus among all users for the need for strong conservation measures above everything else. Participants placed a high priority on good management and feel that the DNR is doing an adequate job at this. Allocation issues were important and ratings of how well they are being handled were mixed between constituent groups. Habitat issues as they relate to striped bass are important, although there is room for improvement in the handling of it. Teamwork among the striped bass community ranked very high in importance although there is room for improvement.

The information summarized in this report provides the Chesapeake Bay striped bass stakeholders much of the information needed to move forward in developing a more stable situation in the allocation of this resource. In all phases of the summit process, stakeholders identified teamwork and cooperation as necessary for future issues. In the coming months and years, these ideals can be put to work to develop this future vision.

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## **MARYLAND STRIPED BASS SUMMIT**

### **SYNTHESIS AND ANALYSIS OF PRE-SUMMIT INTERVIEWS, SUMMIT RESULTS AND *TEAMWORX* CONSENSUS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

As in many states, the state of Maryland is facing contentious and often divisive situations arising from the allocation of natural resources among competing user groups. While resource allocation issues are not new, the growing interest in utilizing resources increases the intensity and frequency of user conflicts. Agencies such as the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) often find the resolution of allocation disputes overwhelming and hindering other components of their mission that are designed to protect and manage natural resources.

Allocation disputes over fisheries in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay between user groups and between other states has contributed to the decline of some fish stocks in the past. Most notably, striped bass stocks along the entire Atlantic coast declined dramatically in the 1970's due principally to over fishing. Only through restrictive management actions has this decline been reversed so that Maryland citizens will experience striped bass stocks and fisheries that are higher than what many people can remember. With this successful management though comes the inevitable and growing dispute over which individuals or groups will harvest these fish.

In a pro-active approach to developing a method of resolving allocation disputes, the Maryland DNR worked with a training and consulting firm (Pecos River/Aon Consulting, Inc.) to conduct a team building and consensus building program with stakeholders in the management of striped bass. From March 24-26, 1997, fifty-seven stakeholders involved with the striped bass fishery in the Chesapeake Bay gathered in a facilitated summit to develop a more stable direction for this fishery in the future. Included among the participants were representatives from conservation organizations, the charter boat community, commercial fishermen, recreational anglers, fishery managers from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), sporting goods retailers and seafood processors. It is important to recognize that the state fishery managers and administrators who participated in this program participated as an equal member of the striped bass stakeholder community.

The broad results of the summit have generally been considered a success. The summit achieved the primary objectives of 1) establishing criteria to allow the development of a long term (3-5 year) allocation plan for the striped bass resource, 2) providing recommendations for the resolution of fishery regulations for the remainder of 1997-98 and 3) creating a trust-based, constructive environment for resolving future management issues. A great deal of additional information that is invaluable to the future management of this resource was also generated

through the results of pre-summit interviews, breakout sessions during the summit and an innovative process of Pecos River/Aon Consulting, Inc (*TeamWorx*) used to discern general perceptions regarding the relative importance of key issues and performance on addressing these issues.

## **ABOUT THIS REPORT**

This report is intended to document the tangible responses of participants in the Maryland Striped Bass Stakeholder Summit. There are immeasurable intangible benefits which have resulted from the Summit which cannot easily be documented and may still be evolving (such as improved cooperation and communication between representatives of stakeholder groups). Every attempt has been made to accurately capture the broad results of this summit in the analysis of all three information areas.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *PRE-SUMMIT INTERVIEWS*

Approximately 2-3 weeks prior to the summit, a cross section of summit participants was surveyed via telephone. Interviewers attempted to contact a representative number of participants from each stakeholder group (except the DNR) with the objective of discerning general issues of importance, identifying areas of needed emphasis during the summit, and establishing an agenda or framework for the summit. In order to maintain the confidentiality of respondents, these results are only reported as the general observations of the two interviewers, encompassing conversations with 25 summit participants.

### *SUMMIT EVENTS*

The Summit consisted of a combination of team building exercises, discerning the pertinent issues to striped bass management and evaluation of these issues. Several aspects of the issue resolution were conducted in smaller “break out” groups or as a larger group. Much of this information has been captured on flip charts, the results of which have been synthesized to a small degree and presented here as they were recorded.

### *TEAMWORX OPPORTUNITY MATRIX*

A tool of Pecos River/Aon Consulting is a system of allowing summit participants to cast confidential “votes” and evaluations of specific issues. Analysis of these results can provide indications of areas of consensus and differences among summit participants. During the striped bass summit, two methods of *TeamWorx* analysis were employed:

- 1) Direct (i.e. yes/no) evaluation of specific issues;
- 2) Paired comparison of importance and program performance in nine areas.

In the paired comparison of issues, summit participants were asked to rank the importance of an issue as it related to a single other issue deemed important for the striped bass management/allocation process. Earlier in the summit, nine issues were identified as being central to striped bass management. Evaluating, one at a time, each issue in comparison to the other issues provides a level of “relative” importance” of the issue.

The second part of the *TeamWorx* matrix involves evaluating the performance of the current striped bass management in each of these nine issue areas. A simple rating scale (1 being low approval, 9 being high approval) was used for each issue.

Plotting the results of the performance component in relation to its relative importance component provides an indication of how each of these issues rank:

- , High Priority, Needs Improvement (Opportunities) -High Importance/Low Performance - indicates an issue which is of high priority and is currently being performed without sufficient time and energy.
- , Lower Priority, Needs Work (Emerging Opportunities)-Low Importance/Low performance- indicates an issue which, although having some importance, is deemed to be lower in priority with respect to others. However, the performance evaluation of activities in this category are below average.
- , Over Emphasis (Overkills)-Low Importance/High Performance - indicates items that the management program may be spending too much time/energy on. It does not indicate that the issues are not of importance!
- , Doing A Good Job (Strengths)-High Importance/High Performance - indicates those issues which stakeholders feel comfortable with in terms of the level of emphasis that is warranted by the level of importance.

## **RESULTS**

### *ANALYSIS OF PRE-SUMMIT INTERVIEWS*

#### *Vision for a fishery:*

*General* - Respondents recognized that the fishery or management will not return to the situation which existed in the pre-moratorium period (prior to 1985) with minimal fishing restrictions and less intensive management activities. Most expressed a general desire for a stable and sustainable fishery. Virtually all expressed a concern for conservation - they did not want to return to the days of a declining stock and moratorium. Many responses indicated a desire to maintain a stock level which could support all user groups. Additional concerns highlighted the need to protect the environment/habitat for the benefit of all fisheries.

*Recreational/Charter* - There was a general consensus that a fishery such as occurred in

the most recent season was somewhat acceptable: fairly small creel and size limits but possibly a longer season and more clarity in the regulations. Charter operators stressed the need for more predictability in seasons in order to facilitate their charter bookings and business opportunities. Some expressed a desire for a “quality” fishery with larger fish available. Most envisioned a reduced or eliminated commercial fishery, possibly indicating that although individuals accept the fishery which they currently have, allocation disputes are arising because the recreational fishing community as a whole sees a potential for growth with more fish. The commercial gill net fishery in particular was not viewed favorably.

*Commercial* - the primary concern seemed to be having a stable baseline quota for the future. Some respondents indicated that in years when more fish could be harvested, these fish could be used as a “bonus” fishery or put towards conservation. As with the recreational sector, there seemed to be a general satisfaction with the fishery. Many respondents stressed that all groups have a place in the fishery.

### *View of the Department*

There appeared to be a split in the opinions. *Disregarding* allocation issues, most respondents felt that the Department was doing an adequate job managing the fishery. However, concerns were raised by some about the current effectiveness of law enforcement (citing a need for more) and also about problems in communication between those sections that make the regulations and those that communicate with the public (i.e. licensing).

*Data* - Most felt that they had sufficient access to information from the Department on which to base their decisions. A minority of opinions expressed the feeling that the Department was collecting too much information. A majority of opinions did not trust the Department’s estimates of recreational effort and harvest (based on some comments, this may be connected with a lack of understanding of the methods used to arrive at the estimates). A few indicated misgivings about the Department personnel’s handling of the data.

*Allocation* - a general feeling of the recreational and charter was that the DNR tended to favor the commercial fishing sector. Conversely, the commercial sector generally felt that the DNR treated all equally.

### *Public Involvement*

All agreed that the public played an important role in the management process. There was general consensus that the advisory groups were key to this involvement (some felt that there were too many advisory groups).

Those who mentioned the public hearing process felt that the process resulted in little



constructive input but that it was necessary to allow everyone to have an opportunity to speak. Criticisms of the hearing process included: the decisions had already been made prior to the hearing so that the hearings had no effect; departmental policy makers often were not present and they needed to hear the messages; and the short notice of hearing times.

### *Trust Issues*

In general, all stakeholders expressed a degree of mistrust for either the current allocation process or for one of the other stakeholder groups. All desired that opportunities be available to air their concerns and address the issues in a fair and equitable way.

### *Striped Bass Summit*

Virtually all respondents expressed some level of enthusiasm for the upcoming summit, although some expressed reservations about the potential for success. The recreational community (and charter) expressed substantial concern that the timing of the summit (weekdays) precluded the participation of the recreational sector (who had outside employers or were retail businesses) and that it looked like “another Department attempt” to stack the cards in favor of the commercial sector (who are self employed and can afford the time since the season is over). The majority of people have never participated in a facilitated workgroup before and really did not know what to expect. However, several general expectations for the Summit included building consensus for longer term management and to eliminate the year-to-year short term decision making.

## *SUMMIT EVENTS*

The summit consisted of a process which fostered 1) group development of issues of importance; 2) broad concepts important to developing a shared vision for the fishery and 3) a refinement of these concepts into vision statements for the fishery.

Many of the thoughts, perceptions and solutions of individual summit participants were captured through discussions in break out groups and with the group as a whole. These views are detailed below as they were recorded during the Summit. For clarity, in some instances overlapping expressions of views *within* an individual breakout group were combined. However, this is not the case in the instances of overlapping views *between* different break out groups. To accurately portray (as much as possible), the actual train of thought of break-out groups, all views were recorded even if they overlapped with those of other groups.

### **SUMMIT PURPOSE**

(Facilitator)

- , Create a new way of decision making
- , Build trust among user groups/form partnership
- , Create a vision for the future
- , Bring groups together and create a consensus strategy for long-term management

## **ISSUE IDENTIFICATION**

During the pre-summit interviews, participants identified several areas where additional information was needed. Therefore, one-half day was devoted to providing factual information on the status of striped bass, recreational fisheries statistics, law enforcement, and the ASMFC interstate management process (see appendix B). Following these presentations, summit participants broke into eight subgroups to analyze their perceptions of the reliability of this information. Participants were then asked to develop solutions to identified problem areas. A summary of the results of those groups is found below. **For a complete group-by-group comparison of ideas, see Appendix C.**

1) In what areas of this information are you confident?

- , Strong data on status of the stock
- , ASMFC process and Maryland's role in the process.
- , Enforcement IF certain levels/programs are maintained.
- , Advisory system has merit-but Department needs to listen even more.
- , Ability to regulate fishery.

2) In what areas of this information do you lack confidence?

- , Catch monitoring
  - , MRFSS survey needs to be revamped/improved for better recreational statistics.
  - , Unsure about accuracy of commercial statistics.
  - , Catch monitoring for equitable geographic distribution of harvest within the Bay.
- , Interpretation of statistics.
- , ASMFC process - require relevancy and criteria.
- , Ultimate safe level of harvest and appropriate conservation level.
- , By-catch estimates.
- , Long term trend of stocks.
- , Adequacy of enforcement.
- , Use of dedicated funds (i.e. Striped Bass Stamp)
- , Effect of increasing stocks on other Bay fisheries.
- , Potential effect of influx of more fishermen as other fish stocks decline and striped bass increase.

3) What recommendations can you make to close this gap?

- , Improve MRFSS and/or understanding of the application of MRFSS.
- , Improve law enforcement, application of penalties and "self policing" among user groups.
- , Provide more public education and information in a nontechnical manner. Provide better description of fishery management process (including Councils, ASMFC).
- , Use anecdotal information. Log books, etc. to a greater degree.
- , Change "maps" and the way people view issues.
- , Find ways to correct for "error bounds" in data.

## VISIONS FOR FUTURE STRIPED BASS COMMUNITY

Summit participants were asked to provide guidelines in the areas of conservation, interdependence in the management process and how “I am” accountable in the striped bass management process. These guidelines were synthesized into preliminary shared vision statements for the Chesapeake Bay striped bass fishery. **These vision statements are only a “first step” in developing a more cooperative management process and direction for the striped bass summit process. See Appendix D for detailed guidelines, as developed by Summit participants, used in the development of these vision statements.**

### VISION STATEMENTS

- , **CONSERVATION:** Our vision for conservation is a striped bass population at or above historic high levels with stable age/size distribution in balance with other species. This is dependent on quality habitat and effective management. Conservation allows for sustainable allocations that consider consumptive and non-consumptive users and achieves maximum sustainable benefits and quality fishing in a fair and timely manner. Inherent in this vision is a strong conservation ethic embraced by all stakeholders.
  
- , **I AM** willing to share, conserve, to contribute to effective management to protect livelihoods, in order to establish and maintain a stable high quality fishery for all. I am in favor of reasonable seasons and harvest limitations. I am asking DNR to be responsive to user groups by providing leadership, proper management, habitat protection and information. I will support equitable allocations between and within user groups. I would like to see science identify wasteful practices and apply technology to end waste.
  
- , **INTERDEPENDENCE:** All stakeholder groups will receive a fair and equitable share of the striped bass resource. Allocation decisions are determined in open consultation with stakeholders and management decisions will be based on risk averse strategies. Management decisions will recognize the well being of the striped bass resource and habitat dependence. Stakeholders will strive to maintain harmonious, trust-based relationships to achieve a stable fishery for the future. Stakeholders will accept increased responsibility for contributing accurate, timely information and share responsibility for policing and protecting the striped bass resource and dependent fisheries.

## *TEAMWORX RESULTS*

The complete *TeamWorx* responses to the opportunity matrices can be found in the report from Pecos River/Aon Consulting, Inc entitled “Maryland DNR Striped Bass Summit” (attached to this report). Following is a synopsis of these results which highlights (and in some cases attempts to clarify) some of the more prominent aspects of each of the nine identified issue areas and the results of the consensus opinions of summit participants on six specific questions.

### *TeamWorx Participants*

<u>Participant Groups</u>	<u>Number of Respondents</u>
1. Charter	5
2. Commercial	14
3. DNR/other	19
4. Recreational	14
5. Charter/commercial	<u>5</u>
6. *Group* (Total Group Response)	57

**Pecos River/Aon Consulting *TeamWorx* Matrix  
(modified for Maryland Striped Bass Summit)**

Importance	High	High Priority/ Needs Work	Doing A Good Job
	Low	Lower Priority/ Needs Work	Over Emphasizing
		Low	High

Performance  
(How are we doing?)

*ISSUE RANKINGS*

- , High Priority, Needs Improvement (Opportunities) -High Importance/Low Performance - indicates an issue which is of high priority and is currently being performed without sufficient time and energy.
- , Lower Priority, Needs Work (Emerging Opportunities)-Low Importance/Low performance- indicates an issue which, although having some importance, is deemed to be lower in priority with respect to others. However, the performance evaluation of activities in this category are below average.
- , Over Emphasis (Overkills)-Low Importance/High Performance - indicates items that the management program may be spending too much time/energy on. It does not indicate that the issues are not of importance!
- , Doing A Good Job (Strengths)-High Importance/High Performance - indicates those issues which stakeholders feel comfortable with in terms of the level of emphasis that is warranted by the level of importance.

## *TeamWorx Definitions*

Definitions were created through consensus of the summit participants to clarify the *TeamWorx* voting process.

**A=TEAMWORK** - all stakeholders including DNR will participate as equals in an open, honest and trustworthy manner to develop by consensus responsive management protocol based on all appropriate information and actively support and self-police those decisions.

**B=ENFORCEMENT** - effective civil and criminal penalties and prosecution of natural resource violations through the sufficient presence of law enforcement officers.

**C=BUDGET** - to secure additional and adequate budgetary resources to effectively enforce and manage the striped bass resource with active stakeholder support and participation.

**D=ALLOCATION** is the fair division of striped bass harvests among all users combining biological, social and economic factors to achieve mutual benefits.

**E=MANAGEMENT** is a plan-based approach which maintains a sufficient abundance of fish to maximize the benefits to all users and provide long-term stability for the stock. *Seasons*, as a part of management, is the setting aside of segments of time during which harvests can occur to the maximum benefit of the user groups.

**F=HABITAT** - it is critical for stakeholders to ensure the conservation of habitat and manage the striped bass stock in balance with that habitat and other dependent species. (Stakeholders means everyone).

**G=LEGISLATION** advocates support and encourages fair legislation and regulations that ensure the conservation, management and allocation of the striped bass resource

**H=COMMUNICATION** - the open, honest and timely flow of information among all stakeholders.

**I=GEAR TYPE** is the recognized method of harvest based on traditional and technically advanced means which provide sufficient methods and which minimize detriment to the striped bass and other resources.

## STRIPED BASS *TEAMWORX* CONSENSUS OPINIONS

	HIGH PRIORITY NEEDS WORK	LOWER PRIORITY NEEDS WORK	DOING A GOOD JOB	OVER EMPHASIZING	NOTES
TEAMWORK	All Groups				
ENFORCEMENT		Charter, Charter/Comm, DNR/Other, Recreational <b>Group Response</b>		Commercial	
BUDGET		DNR/Other, Recreational <b>Group Response,</b>		Commercial	Charter and Charter/Comm fell in between "low priority/needs work" and "Over Emphasizing".
ALLOCATION	Charter, Recreational, Charter/Comm		Commercial DNR/Other <b>Group Response</b>		
MANAGEMENT			Charter Commercial, DNR/Other, Recreational <b>Group Response</b>		Charter/Commercial fell in between "Good Job" and "High Priority/ Needs Work"
HABITAT	Commercial, Recreational <b>Group Response</b>		DNR/Other	Charter/Comm	Charter fell in between "low priority/needs work" and "Over Emphasizing"
LEGISLATION		Charter, DNR/Other, Recreational		Commercial	<b>Group Response</b> fell in between "low priority/needs work" and "Over-Emphasizing"; Charter/Comm. fell in between "High Priority/ Needs Work" and "low priority/needs work"
COMMUNICATION		DNR/Other, Recreational, Charter/Comm <b>Group Response</b>		Charter, Commercial	
GEAR TYPE		DNR/Other, Recreational, Charter/Comm	Charter, Commercial	<b>Group Response</b>	

See Pages 10-11 for key to issues and issue rankings; pages 2-3 for methods.

Note: **Group Response** indicates average response of all summit participants;



## TEAMWORX ANALYSIS

### A=TEAMWORK

The group consensus, and the consensus of all subgroups, indicated that there were opportunities for improvement in the teamwork component of striped bass management. Over 2/3 (70%) of summit participants ranked the importance of teamwork at above average in the overall paired comparisons. It is worth noting that only two issues (teamwork and management) received the strongest (near unanimous) consensus among all subgroups and that teamwork fell into an area which suggested that more emphasis was needed among the entire community. An analysis of the individual responses within subgroups indicates the relative importance of this issue:

- , All groups ranked in “high priority/needs work” quadrant
- , Recreational community - 11/14 rated “performance” at or below the average.  
12/14 ranked “importance” strongly above average.
- , Commercial community - 9/14 ranked “performance” at or below average.  
6/14 ranked “importance” above average.
- , DNR/other - 15/19 ranked “performance” at or below average.  
12/19 ranked “importance” above average

There is opportunity and need to increase stakeholder’s comfort with the level of teamwork. The recreational community rated the importance of this somewhat higher than others, possibly indicating one area for potential focus of efforts.

### B=ENFORCEMENT

Unlike results of the pre-summit interviews and indications during the summit, when asked to evaluate “enforcement” in comparison to other issues of management nearly 2/3 of summit participants did not rank it above average in importance. However, this issue was identified as an area of emerging opportunity for improvement. There was generally strong consensus that the performance of enforcement activities could be improved. Some analysis in trends of individual responses within subgroups indicate:

- , No grouped ranked it above average in importance.
- , Commercial - 9/14 ranked performance above average.
- , Recreational/charter - 17/19 ranked performance at or below average.

As indicated by the recreational/charter, there seems to be a need for increased performance in the enforcement arena. Strictly from the voting, it cannot be determined which sector of the fishing community these groups felt was not being enforced enough. However, in pre-summit interviews and comments at the summit, it was indicated that there were enforcement concerns in all sectors.

### **C=BUDGET**

Although the budget for striped bass management activities impacts the effectiveness of nearly every other area, the striped bass summit participants did not indicate a strong consensus on its importance. Although it ranked at the median in terms of performance and at slightly below average in importance, individual rankings are extremely variable. Observations of the individual responses within subgroups indicates:

- , No *clear* consensus on performance or importance.
- , The commercial subgroup was somewhat satisfied with performance.
- , The recreational subgroup was not as satisfied with performance (11/14 ranked performance at or below average).
- , DNR/Other - 13/19 ranked performance at or below average.
- , No group ranked it very high in importance.

### **D=ALLOCATION**

The polarizing nature of the allocation category (as defined) was evident in the rankings of importance. Overall, allocation was the second highest ranked issue in importance (importance ranked at approximately 65%). Among some subgroups, it ranked even higher:

- , Charter - 3/5 ranked importance at 100% (others were 75%). 4/5 ranked performance at or below median.
- , Commercial - 10/14 ranked performance at the highest level. Only one individual ranked performance below the median.
- , DNR/Other - 13/19 ranked performance above median (3 ranked performance at highest level).
- , Recreational - 8/14 ranked performance below median

The disparity in the evaluations of performance between user groups highlights the source of greatest contention in the striped bass management process.

## **E=MANAGEMENT**

Overall, management ranked the highest both in importance and performance of all issues. Stakeholders seem fairly comfortable with current management program results. As with other issues though, individual evaluations of the level of performance spanned the entire range. Elucidating those individual areas of concern with the management process may strengthen and enhance performance even above the current high level that is accepted by all groups.

## **F=HABITAT**

The conservation of habitat as it relates to the management of striped bass was identified by the group as an opportunity for improvement (high importance/needs work). In general, the majority of participants felt it to be important although all groups have scattered responses

- , Commercial - 11/14 ranked performance at or below median.
- , Recreational - 6/14 ranked performance below median (5/14 at median).
- , Both commercial and recreational responses included individuals who ranked performance at the lowest level (1). DNR/other also included individual responses indicating low performance and high importance.

## **G=LEGISLATION**

While not the highest area in terms of opportunity for improvement, legislation as it relates to striped bass management was determined to be an area of emerging opportunity (lower importance/needs work). As with the category of “budget” this category impacts almost every other aspect of management but its substantial effects may be so dispersed as to diffuse its ranking in importance. Generally, all group performance responses are scattered (charter and charter/commercial ranked performance generally as mediocre).

## **H=COMMUNICATION**

Communication was rated as an area of potential opportunity for improvement but not as the highest priority of importance. In general, performance was rated as mediocre with less than a third of participants rating it above average. Other observations include:

- , an equal number of participants gave performance the highest rating as those that gave it the lowest rating.
- , all groups ranked it below average in importance.

These relatively mixed results may indicate that groups (particularly Charter and Commercial) are somewhat comfortable with the current level of communication but that there are areas on which to improve. It must also be noted that as with all of the issues, the respondents to this tend to be more informed and have access to more information than the general striped bass stakeholder. The mediocre ratings of importance of Communication should not be interpreted to mean that the issue is not important particularly since communication is closely tied with teamwork which received unanimous high ratings of importance.

### **I=GEAR TYPE**

The issue of gear type as defined was rated by the summit participants as a whole as being “over-emphasized”. However, observations of the rankings within subgroup categories indicates substantial disparities in responses, particularly between recreational and commercial.

- , All but one commercial response ranked performance as high (above median) 12/14 ranked it as an 8 or 9 (the highest). Performance is high.
- , DNR/other ranked importance low with mixed performance.
- , Recreational - 10/14 ranked importance below average (6/14 at 0%).  
10/14 ranked performance at or below average.
- , Charter/Commercial - importance low; performance generally high.

## **TEAMWORX RESPONSES TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS**

- , It was the consensus of the group that in the 1997 season only, the spring time harvest (400,000 pounds), which ASMFC voted to be deducted from the overall Maryland harvest, was to be deducted from the recreational/charter component.
- , The majority of summit participants favored adding additional days to the 1997 recreational/charter harvest and these should be split equitably between the beginning of the season and the end of the season.
- , Responses were mixed as to whether Maryland should strive to fish below the maximum allowed harvest, but narrowly favored a more conservative approach (note: there may have been some confusion with some participants interpreting “maximum sustainable yield” to be the same as the maximum that ASMFC would allow Maryland to harvest).
- , Most participants supported a summer commercial hook & line season and an increase in the amount of fish allocated to this category’s harvest (redistribution from other gear harvest).
- , Most participants did not raise substantial objections to an overlap between commercial and recreational seasons (note: this could be interpreted as meaning an overlap with commercial hook & line gear).
- , The majority of participants indicated that the current allocation scheme was “acceptable” for the time being.

## SUMMARY

As with any consensus building effort, the Maryland Striped Bass Summit produced areas of clear consensus, areas which need further issue resolution, and areas which can provide objectives for working toward the future.

Teamwork - the only issue in the *TeamWorx* process which ranked “high importance/low performance” among all stakeholder subgroups and the summit participants as a whole was teamwork. Additionally, in the pre-summit interviews and throughout the Summit, reference was often made by participants of working closer together. Achieving a greater level of teamwork should become a high priority for the entire community.

Stability - There was clear consensus prior to the summit and expressed throughout the summit for stability in the fishery. Harvesting groups and ancillary industries (retail and processing) all expressed an interest in reducing the variability in the availability of fish. Additionally, there is clear indication that groups feel the need for stable information on pertinent regulations (seasons, creels, etc) well in advance both for planning purposes and to prevent confusion and misunderstandings in regulations (thereby helping to address some of the law enforcement concerns).

Law Enforcement - participants from virtually *all* striped bass stakeholder groups indicated a need for refinements in law enforcement. This was strongly suggested in both pre-summit interviews and in the summit proceedings and was ranked as a “potential opportunity” (but lower priority) for improvement by the group in the *TeamWorx* process. The DNR has experienced a decline in the number of enforcement personnel which may be contributing to the perception that enforcement has become a major problem. Additionally, during group discussions, the issue of increasing civil penalties and/or seeking stricter application of existing penalties from the judicial system were raised as potential solution. All stakeholders raised the issue of better “self-policing” among user groups to improve compliance with regulations.

Statistics - As a whole, the collection and analysis of striped bass information is fairly well accepted. Stakeholders are fairly confident of the biological information being used to predict and manage the fishery. However, the area of most discontent with all stakeholders is the collection and application of recreational fisheries statistics using the current Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS). Based on pre-summit interviews and summit proceedings, a portion of these concerns may be related to a need for better communication of the intent and methods of this survey. However, a complete analysis of the application of the MRFSS in the state of Maryland should be conducted outlining potential actions which can be taken in the state to improve the estimates and/or alternative sources of information.

Allocation - for the short term, most user groups accept the current allocation system which is in place. However, there are indications of a willingness to adapt to changing opportunities in the striped bass fishery. Using the *TeamWorx* system to address specific issues,

summit participants expressed a willingness to redistribute a portion of the commercial allocation within the commercial gear type to respond to a growing interest in commercial hook and line fisheries. In the recreational sector, there is a willingness to address geographical differences in fisheries by distributing additional fishing days to benefit anglers in various parts of the Chesapeake Bay.

Future allocation between groups, however, is an issue which this group and the striped bass community as a whole needs to begin addressing in a pro-active manner. As reflected in the *TeamWorx* exercise, although the charter, charter/commercial and recreational sectors view allocation as a current “opportunity” for improvement, the other groups view allocation as a current strength. This chasm will likely continue to grow if the issues are not addressed by following up to the groundwork established through this summit process and clearly identifying 1) what (precisely) each sector views in the near and long term for their component of the fishery as it fits under the vision developed here; 2) management actions to achieve these visions; and 3) impediments to achieving these management actions. Ascertaining this information and developing a 3-5 year allocation plan through the consensus building process established in this Summit should be a high priority of the striped bass community.

Habitat - general habitat concerns were identified as an “opportunity” in the *TeamWorx* process for improvement in the future. Summit participants ranked this as a high priority but were not satisfied with the level of performance currently being achieved in this arena.

## CONCLUSION

The impact of the summit went far beyond the achievement of the goals originally conceived. In part, due to the Department’s decision to secure the services of outside consultants to facilitate the summit, the agency was able to participate as an equal partner with the other entities in the summit. This helped to alleviate some of the mistrust and preconceived perceptions which some users may have had for the DNR and helped to establish the Department as a partner in striped bass management, not simply a regulator. Additionally, the summit helped to build trust among traditional rivals in the striped bass community by providing a non-threatening and focused forum through which the participants could interact as individuals to achieve common objectives. Already, in public meetings held after the summit, DNR managers and striped bass stakeholders have witnessed an improved climate for decision making which has been attributed to the striped bass summit.

The information summarized in this report provides the Chesapeake Bay striped bass stakeholders much of the information needed to move forward in developing a more stable situation in the allocation of this resource. In all phases of the summit process, stakeholders identified teamwork and cooperation as necessary for future issues. In the coming months, these ideals can be put to work to develop this future vision.

## **APPENDIX A: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

### **National Marine Fisheries Service**

Anne Lange

### **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**

Mike Mangold (invited - could not attend)

### **Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission**

Jack Dunnigan (presenter only)

### **Other**

Bill Goldsborough, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Buddy Zamoski (invited - could not attend)

Fred Donovan, Chesapeake Beach marina

### **Processors, buyers, restaurant**

Bill Woodfield, Chairman, Chesapeake Bay Seafood Industries Association

Andrea Jacquette

### **Tackle dealers**

Sarah Gardner, *Anglers*, Annapolis

Larry Coburn, *Laurel Hunting & Fishing*

### **Commercial**

Larry Simns, President, MD Watermens Association

Danny Beck

Ronnie Fithian, Kent County Commissioner

John Lassahn

Bill Calloway Sr. (day 1 only)

Dwight Marshall

Dave Martin

Bob Evans

Ben Parks

Billy Rice

Bobby Jobs



## **Charter**

Glenn James  
Ed O'Brien  
Joe Rupp, President, Maryland Charterboat Association  
Bruce Scheible  
Ed Darwin  
Chris Rosendale  
Henry Gootee  
Buddy Harrison  
Bob Spore  
Curtis Johns  
Tom Ireland  
Greg Madjeski

## **Recreational**

Bob Rider, President, Maryland Saltwater Sportfishermen's Association  
Rich Novotny, Executive Director, Maryland Saltwater Sportfishermen's Association  
Duke Nohe, President, Maryland Aquatic Resources Coalition  
Charles Colburne, Assateague Mobile Saltwater Sportfishermens Association  
Diane Baynard  
Dale Dirks  
Felix Heald  
Larry Shannon  
Jim Gilford, Chair, Maryland Sport Fish Advisory Commission  
Al Goetze  
Bill Smith, President, Maryland Coastal Conservation Association  
Jim Gracie  
Joe Evans

## **Department of Natural Resources**

John R. Griffin, Secretary of Natural Resources  
Sarah Taylor-Rogers  
Dorothy Leonard  
Pete Jensen  
Bob Bachman  
Howard King  
Phil Jones  
Marty Gary  
Harry Hornick  
Louis Rugolo (presenter only)  
Harley Speir

Don Cosden  
Dave Blazer  
Major Tammy Broll, Natural Resources Police  
Gina Spess  
Frances McFadden  
Steve Early  
George Sackett

**Summit Facilitators**

Dr. Linda Martinez, Lead Facilitator, Pecos River/Aon Consulting, Inc.  
Bob Anderson  
Jim Patterson  
Sarah Rorrer  
Andrew Loftus, Natural Resource Consultant

*Steering Committee*

*Larry Simns, Bob Rider, Bill Smith, Jim Gilford, Ed O'Brien, Bill Goldsborough, Ed Darwin, Anne Lange .*

## **APPENDIX B:**

### **PARTICIPANT AGENDA MARYLAND STRIPED BASS SUMMIT**

**MARCH 24-26, 1997  
BOLGER CENTER, POTOMAC, MARYLAND**

#### Monday, March 24

- 4:00 - 5:00    Arrival and registration at Bolger Center
- 5:00 - 5:30    Opening reception
- 5:30 - 5:45    Welcome - John Griffin
- 5:45 - 6:45    Dinner
- 6:45 - 8:30    Interview Results  
                  Summit Overview and Agenda;  
                  Getting the results you want

#### Tuesday, March 25

- 800 - 1100    Issue Background  
                  Where are we with striped bass - Dr. Robert Bachman, Maryland DNR  
                  MRFSS - Dave VanVoorhees, National Marine Fisheries Service  
                  Law Enforcement - Major T. Broll, Maryland DNR  
                  ASMFC Process - Jack Dunnigan, ASMFC  
                  Questions/group discussion
- 1200 - 1230    Lunch
- 12:30 - 4:00    Experiential Initiatives (outdoors, weather permitting)
- 4:15 - 5:00    Regroup in Conference Facility; Debrief
- 5:00 - 6:00    Break/Info Hour
- 6:00 - 7:00    Dinner
- 7:00 - 9:30    Small Group Issue Resolution  
                  Vision Framework

Wednesday, March 26

8:00 - 8:15 Energizer

8:15 - 9:30 Group Reports

9:30 - 10:30 “*TeamWorx*” (electronic voting)

10:30 - 10:45 Break

10:45 - 12:00 Discuss/refine “*TeamWorxs*” results  
Outline/prioritize issues

1200 - 1230 Lunch

12:30 -3:00 Consensus Building  
- Framework for addressing allocation issues in the future  
- 1997/98 allocation proposals

3:00 - 3:30 Wrap-up and close

## APPENDIX C

### INDIVIDUAL GROUP RESPONSES TO ISSUE IDENTIFICATION

#### *Group A*

1) In what areas of this information are you confident?

, There are plenty of rockfish (???)

, DNR has more information about status of rockfish

2) In what areas of this information do you lack confidence?

, ASMFC will allow optimum level of harvest

, Can the rockfish population continue to increase without affecting other Bay fisheries?

3) What recommendation can you make which would close this gap?

, Get consensus among all user groups on level of safe harvest

, Change “maps”

#### *Group B*

1) In what areas of this information are you confident?

, Technically sound data

, Juvenile survey and tie-in with biomass

, migration rates and fishing rates-very sound estimates

, Advisory system has merit-Department needs to listen even more

*Summit Events -Issue Identification (continued)*

2) In what areas of this information do you lack confidence?

- , Unknown effect of coast wide influx of new fishermen as other stocks decline and striped bass increase
- , Ultimate harvest level-unsure where to stop
- , Monitoring catch to distribute catch fairly (regionally) in Bay
- , Adequacy of effective enforcement
- , Data is presented to support certain sectors (including overestimation of recreational catch by MRFSS)
- , Perception that commercial catch is under estimated
- , Still don't know enough about long-term stock condition: need more information on long-term habitat effects.

3) What recommendation can you make which would close this gap?

- , Find ways to correct for "error bounds" (uncertainty) in accuracy
- , Law enforcement:
  - , revamp penalties - higher civil infractions
  - , self policing among user groups
  - , better public reporting system for crimes

*Group C*

1) In what areas of this information are you confident?

- , Spawning stock assessment
- , Young-of-year index
- , Total harvest (mark and recapture)

*Summit Events -Issue Identification (continued)*

2) In what areas of this information do you lack confidence?

- , Are we conservative enough-depends on goal of the fishery
- , MRFSS - model does not seem adaptive to change

3) What recommendation can you make which would close this gap?

- , Some feel goal was historic level - needs clarification
- , More confidence in local/state information

*Group D*

1) In what areas of this information are you confident?

- , Stock assessment
- , Good ability to regulate fishery

2) In what areas of this information do you lack confidence?

- , Recreational catch is over estimated
- , % by-catch

3) What recommendation can you make which would close this gap?

- , Better by-catch estimates
- , Use license data for phone survey

*Group E*

1) In what areas of this information are you confident?

- , Health of striped bass stock
  - a) provided we see the predicted outcome this fall (20")
  - B)define status of coastal fish pre 8 year and post 8 year.

*Summit Events -Issue Identification (continued)*

- , Enforcement IF:
  - a) Officer level=220+
  - b) Seasonal officer program
  - c) Southern Maryland-higher visibility, more presence (avoid harassment)
  - d) Don't make rules you can't enforce

2) In what areas of this information do you lack confidence?

- , MRFSS
  - a) estimates not always believable
    - 1) sample size not adequate
  - b) short-term pulse fisheries not covered
  - c) survey not ideal for states monitoring
  - d) bias intercept toward catchers, not non-catchers.

- , ASMFC
  - a) Require proxy, relevance and criteria

3) What recommendation can you make which would close this gap?

- , MRFSS
  - a) doesn't target effort in consideration of fishing variability:
    - want survey to confirm angler observations;
    - Major sample size increase

*Group F*

1) In what areas of this information are you confident?

- , DNR stock assessment data

2) In what areas of this information do you lack confidence?

- , MRFSS estimates
- , Hook/release mortality estimates
- , Petty reserve measures



*Summit Events -Issue Identification (continued)*

3) What recommendation can you make which would close this gap?

- , Use inches in intercept survey
- , 2 officers in NRP Patrols
- , Larger MRFSS sample size
- , Use license holders for phone survey population

*Group G*

1) In what areas of this information are you confident?

- , Comfort with information on biology and management
- , Comfort with the ASMFC process
- , Comfort with the status of law enforcement and law enforcement needs

2) In what areas of this information do you lack confidence?

- , Inconsistencies in the judicial outcome of fishery cases: lack of fairness
- , Not enough detail on MRFSS data and sample sizes
- , Distribution of misinformation regarding fishery management

3) What recommendation can you make which would close this gap?

- , Demonstrate why the MRFSS methodology is valid (better, more understandable presentation)
- , Better understanding of fishery management councils and how they work
- , DNR/ASMFC public education
- , Public awareness

*Summit Events -Issue Identification (continued)*

*Group H*

1) In what areas of this information are you confident?

- , DNR data
- , MD participation in ASMFC
- , Use of multiple analyses

2) In what areas of this information do you lack confidence?

- , MRFSS (geographical &...)
- , Application of user-supplied information (i.e. charter logs) even though the numbers may be good
- , Enforcement information
- , Selective data interpretation
- , Appropriate use of dedicated funds (striped bass stamp)
- , Timely/detailed regulation information

3) What recommendation can you make which would close this gap?

- , More and better information at non-technical level from DNR on data and management process
- , More enforcement visibility and communication from PCO regarding actions
- , Use of all pertinent information-including anecdotal
- , Enhance MRFSS-target users and harvest information program with striped bass permits.

**APPENDIX D**  
**GUIDELINES FOR VISIONS FOR FUTURE STRIPED BASS**  
**COMMUNITY (DEVELOPED BY SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS)**

**1. ALLOCATION**

- , Stable 5 year plan
- , Year round fisheries
- , Define “fair and equitable”
- , Individual commercial license quotas
- , Maintain conservation reserve
- , Satisfied with current Maryland allocation
- , Satisfied with Bay vs. Coast
- , Define allocation process
- , Bigger Atlantic coast fishery
- , Joint regional management

**2. MANAGEMENT**

- , Regional management (MD/VA,PRFC)
- , Impact of Gear on stock
- , Slot limit fishery
- , Enhanced MRFSS
- , Define “quality recreational fishery”

*Summit Events -Vision Guidelines (continued)*

- , Identify additional information sources

- , Enhanced management capability
- , Conservation Reserve
- , Controlled fishing mortality
- , Always fish at maximum rate
- , Endorse existing management

### **3. CONSERVATION**

- , Define clearly
- , Abundance and balance
- , Stability
- , Dominate year class/mother nature
- , Personal Behaviors with a conservation ethic
- , Importance of the resource
- , Shared resource
- , Clarify wise use
- , Define resource
- , Accountability
- , Look at 8 points developed by the committee
- , Vision-things we would like to see in the future
- , Look at it in total

*Summit Events -Vision Guidelines (continued)*

### **4. INTERDEPENDENCE**

- , Crabs/fish habitat
- , Needs to be one jurisdiction to manage Bay
- , Fair and equitable allocation by all user groups-a coming together
- , Desire to have a harmonious relationship with all user groups