

**Summary of
Meeting of the Taunton Bay Advisory Group
6 PM Tuesday, April 21, 2009
Sullivan Town Hall
Facilitated by Sherman Hoyt
University of Maine Cooperative Extension
Summary Recording by Matthew Nixon
NOAA Coastal Fellow**

Advisors Present: Steve Perrin, Antonio Blasi, Shep Erhart, Frank Dorsey, Doug Kimmel, Slade Moore, Lee Hudson, and John Sowles
Others: Wendy Norden and Matthew Nixon

Old Business

Updates on Previous Assignments

- Mission statement revisions will be followed up with at the next meeting.
- Brian Beal will present at the July meeting.
- Only one person has submitted a “Three things done well and three things done poorly” report to John.

Other Updates

- John presented the Taunton Bay Project at the New England Estuarine Research Society Annual Spring Meeting in Salem, MA. It was a worthwhile event to go to and he fielded great questions from the audience. It still appears that the Taunton Bay project is the only one of its kind up and running. The rest are academic and/or planning exercises that are top down by government agencies.

Presentation by Wendy Norden

- Wendy outlined her research questions for her eelgrass experiment proposed for 2009 in Taunton Bay.
 - Which restoration techniques produce the highest survival rates (seeding of adult plants)?
 - Is eelgrass growth or seed germination enhanced by the presence of mussels?
 - What is the distribution of fish species in different densities of eelgrass?
 - How is larval recruitment affected by the presence/absence of eelgrass?
- Wendy reviewed the various methods of transplant and restoration

- Restoration projects took place in California in a sanctuary (privately owned).
- Reviewed Restoration projects in San Francisco Bay.
- Taunton Bay is a good place for Norden to study as there is a significant amount of existing data which is a good jumping off point.
- Norden is thinking of using three sites in Taunton Bay
- Frequency of monitoring during the project would be once every ten days or three weeks. There would be a couple of “pulses” where the PI’s would need people for planting, etc.
- General consensus is that the group is interested. DMR may be able to support some of the logistical efforts at the onset and Seth Barker should be brought into the picture as well before any initiative gets off the ground.
- John noted that DMR’s eelgrass priorities are not around restoration but rather on what ecological conditions make a site suitable for eelgrass, or not. Nevertheless, he thinks it would be useful to do a Habitat Suitability Index in reverse by letting Wendy choose sites and then look at environmental characteristics to relate them to recolonization success.
- Sediment load and dropoff would be a good parallel study to conduct as well. At the next meeting, the Group should sit and enumerate what they really want to do as everything cannot be studied and the Group should identify priorities that run parallel with Wendy’s studies.
- Homework: Key bed Identification, ranking values
- Wendy’s email address: wnorden@maine.edu

Water Quality and Benthic Studies Update

- John has ordered the WQ sampling equipment and is trying to figure out a way to tie the Norden study into the summer field studies.
- Antonio will be assisting with the Secchi disk and nutrient sampling.
- Part of the shorebird forage study plan is how to get wormers and clammers involved in the benthic infauna study.
- The training session will begin the end of May or the 1st of June.

Mission Statement Update

- John proposed to table discussion on the mission statement to the next meeting. Lee will head up the endeavor via email.

Invitation to Joe Porada

- Mr. Porada has proposed to add hardshell clam, oyster, etc aquaculture lease in Egypt Bay.
- The group was interested in having him to come to the next meeting to explain his project.

- John will find out where Mr. Porada is in the application process before the Group meets with him.

Facilitation Future

- Shep did a good job at the last meeting as acting facilitator showing the group can successfully self-facilitate.
- Annie Tselikis of Penobscot East had expressed interest to Sherm but Sherm has not followed up since initial contact.
- Slade asked whether it was worth starting up a rotating schedule within the group.
- Lee is opposed to this idea as she thinks the facilitator should be impartial.
- Most advisors preferred an outside facilitator. John pointed out the reality of limited resources.
- Sherm then urged the group to follow up with the other two facilitation leads.
- Lee will follow up with Penobscot East lead and give a report at the next meeting.
- We should get sandwiches for the next meeting.
- Consensus is that we should get food for the next meeting. Doug, Shep, and John will work this out.

Fisheries Update

- Sherm asked about holding followup fishermen meetings.
- John prefers not to hold them. Fishermen are busy and he has been in almost constant contact with the resource harvesters throughout their respective seasons.
- John does want to engage the fishermen but engage them in something that they will benefit in as well as us, e.g. post season assessments, WQ monitoring, and video work.
- Lee added that there was not a line of boats nor was there a “derby” effect when the bay was finally opened up.
- Sherm spoke about the newly formed Scallop Advisory council and some of them have been speaking with him about Ecosystem-based Management and a similar setup to Taunton Bay.
- Steve thinks that we don’t have to “sell” what we are doing. Rather, we need to show what we are doing. Our performance is the best message we can make.
- The DVD from the Fishermen’s Forum has not been aired as of yet.
- Doug said that they did get a grant for the children’s program at the Friend’s of Taunton Bay Education Center.

Adjourn

The next meeting will be May 19th, 2009.