

Commercial Low-Frequency Electrofishing for Invasive Catfish

An aerial photograph of a wide river with murky, greenish-brown water. Three small motorboats are visible on the water, moving in a loose line from top to bottom. The boats are leaving white wakes behind them. The top boat is a larger, dark-colored motorboat. The middle boat is a smaller, white motorboat. The bottom boat is a long, narrow white motorboat. The background shows the vast expanse of the river under a bright sky.

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Virginia Commercial Fisher

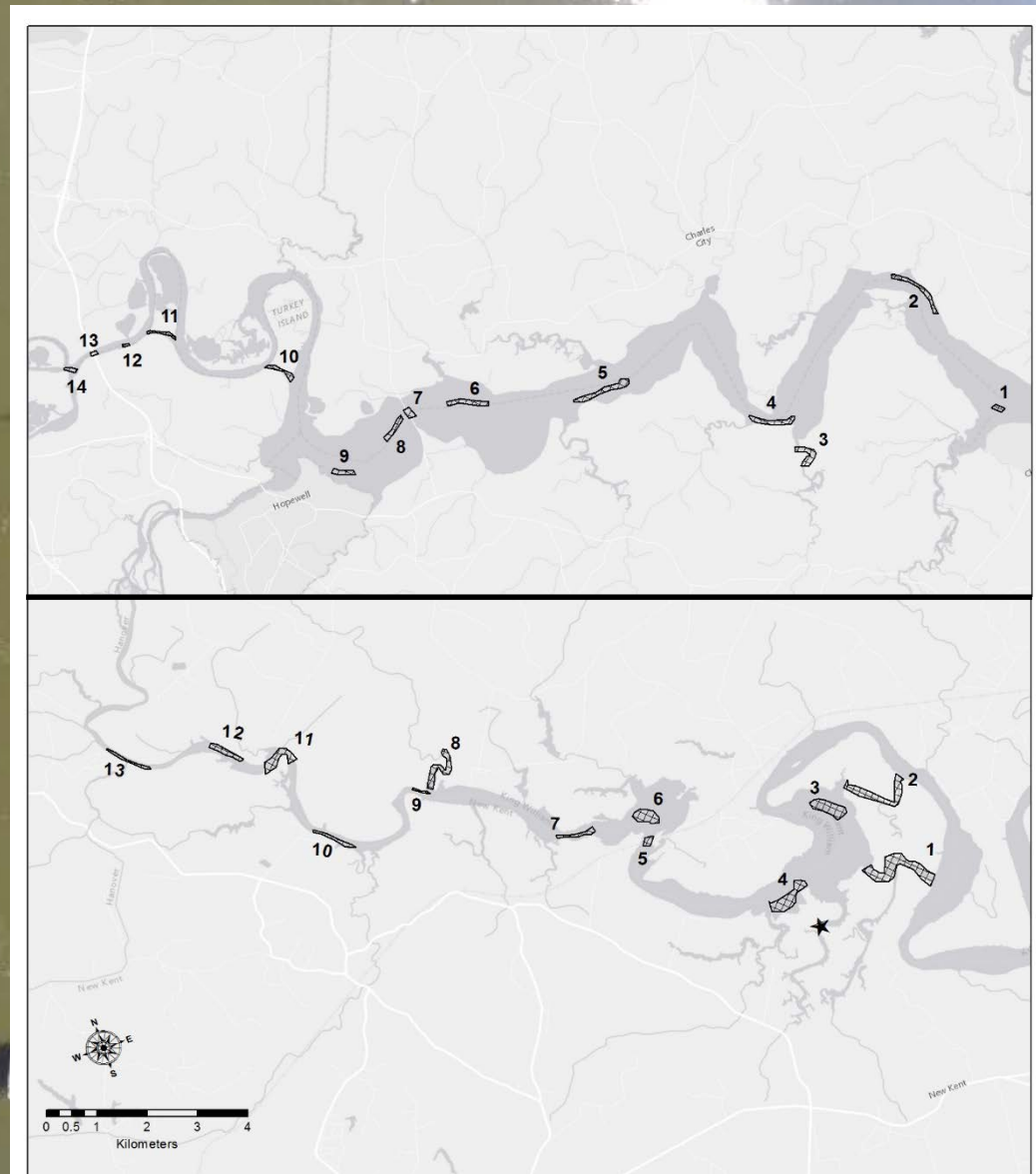
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*recipient of FRG funding (2014-2017)

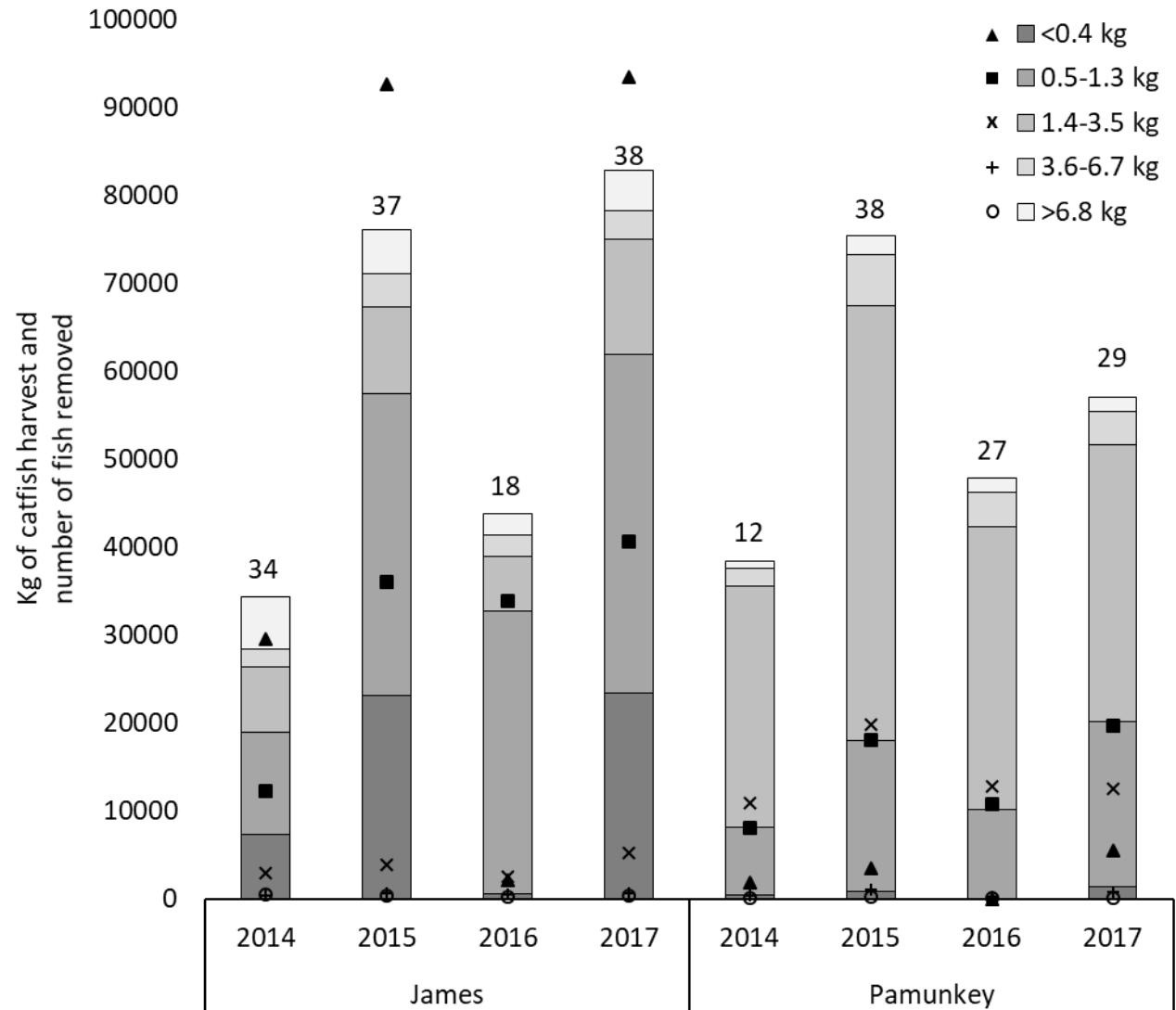
Study Approach (2014-2017)

- 7.5 & 9.0 GPP units (LFEF) fished at 15 pps; 1 or 2 chase boats
- VCU biologists shadowed a random subset of trips, collecting data
- Occasionally used VCU's two SR-16s to generate fishery-independent data or to emulate the fishery
- James (127 trips @ 14 locations)
- Pamunkey (106 trips @ 13 locations)



Blue Catfish Harvest

- Estimated 485,672 catfish removed
- James 358,898
- Pamunkey 126,774



Biomass
Removed During
Project
455,651kg
(1,955kg per trip)

- Channel catfish ~5kg
- Flathead catfish ~13,600kg
- Blue catfish ~442,000kg



Future Catfish Plans

- Continue analysis of 2014-2017 datasets; other data
 - Drone video and AI
 - Bycatch data from Sturgeon
 - Gill nets/trawling over 7 years
 - James, Potomac, Rapp
 - >200K fish; 40-70% were BCF
- Participate in 2020 LFEF fishery as cooperating researchers with commercial fishers
- New collaboration with USGS researchers
- Start new project in 2021 on Roanoke River, NC



Acknowledgements

- Fishery
Resource
Grants to
Trice (VIMS)
- VMRC
USFWS
VDGIF

