

Quarterly Progress Meeting - August 2017



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration Partnership.

Sustainable Fisheries GIT: Blue Crab

Sean Corson
NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office and
Sustainable Fisheries GIT Chair

Through the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, the Chesapeake Bay Program has committed to...

Goal: *Sustainable Fisheries*

Outcome: *Blue Crab Abundance*

Maintain a sustainable blue crab population based on the current 2012 target of 215 million adult females. Refine population targets through 2025 based on best available science.



Through the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, the Chesapeake Bay Program has committed to...



Goal: *Sustainable Fisheries*

Outcome: *Blue Crab Management*

Manage for a stable and productive crab fishery including working with the industry, recreational crabbers and other stakeholders to improve commercial and recreational harvest accountability. By 2018, evaluate the establishment of a Bay-wide, allocation-based management framework with annual levels set by the jurisdictions for the purpose of accounting for and adjusting harvest by each jurisdiction.



What We Want



We want:

- Work with Budget and Finance Workgroup to draft a 5-year stock assessment financing strategy
- Confirm completion of allocation-based fishery management outcome
Send to PSC for final approval

1

Setting the Stage:

What are our assumptions?



Logic Behind Our Outcome

Following the Decision Framework:



Factors

- Funding for stock assessment
- Environmental and habitat variability
- Fishery management (population and economic stability)

Gaps

- Biological data to validate reference points
- Understanding of environmental impacts on crab mortality
- Evaluation of allocation-based framework

Management Approaches

- Conducting a limited stock assessment with available staff and resources
- Analyzing environmental impacts on blue crab in GIT-funded study
- Evaluated allocation-based management framework

2

Progress:

Are we doing what we said we would do?



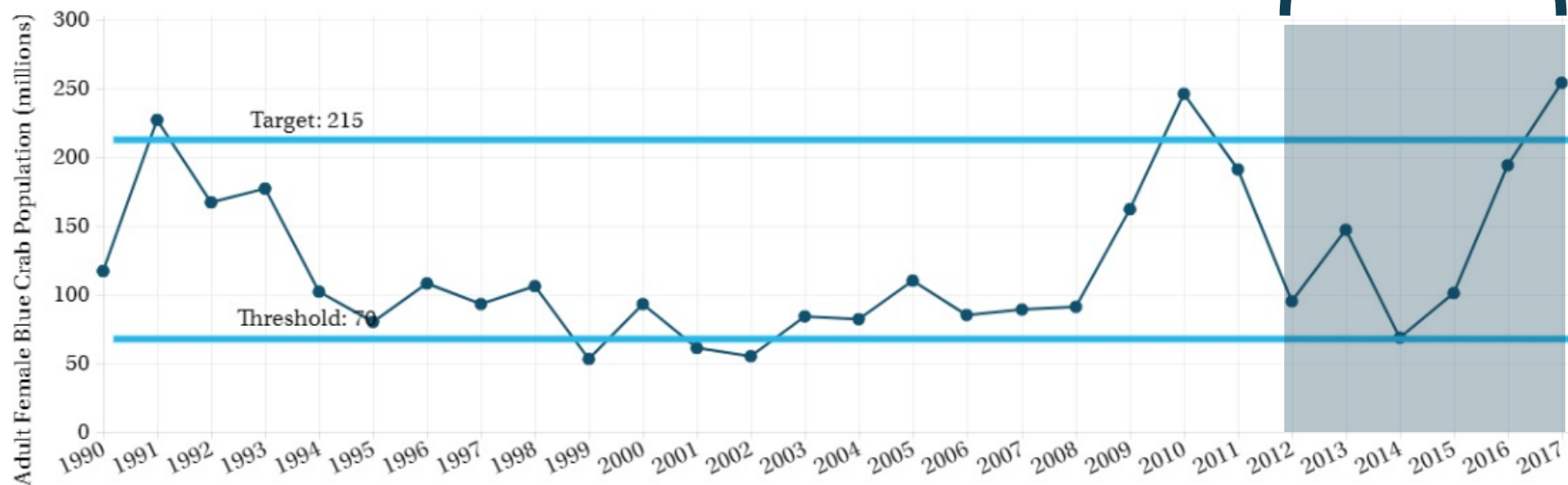
What is our progress?

Blue Crab Abundance

2017: Surpassed target population for adult female blue crabs

Current focus: Maintain target level, continue to monitor (juveniles decreased significantly in 2017)

Adult Female Blue Crab Population (1990-2017)



**Managing for 215M
adult female crabs**



What is our progress?

Blue Crab Management



Blue crab stock is not overfished

Under the abundance threshold of 70M adult females



Overfishing is not occurring

Under the the exploitation fraction of 25.5%



Evaluation of an allocation-based management framework yielded a lack of support from blue crab industry advisory committees

3

Challenges:

Are our actions having the expected effect?



Challenges



Long term stock assessment financing



Jason Williams

4

Adaptations:

How should we adapt?



**Based on what we've
learned, we plan to...**

-  **Continue current management framework**
 -  **Adjust harvest regulations as needed to maintain a sustainable blue crab population**
-  **Incorporate new research into management considerations**
 -  **Currently evaluating environmental impacts on blue crab population dynamics through GIT-funded study**
-  **Utilize results from environmental impacts study to guide collaboration with relevant CBP Outcome Workgroups**



What We Want



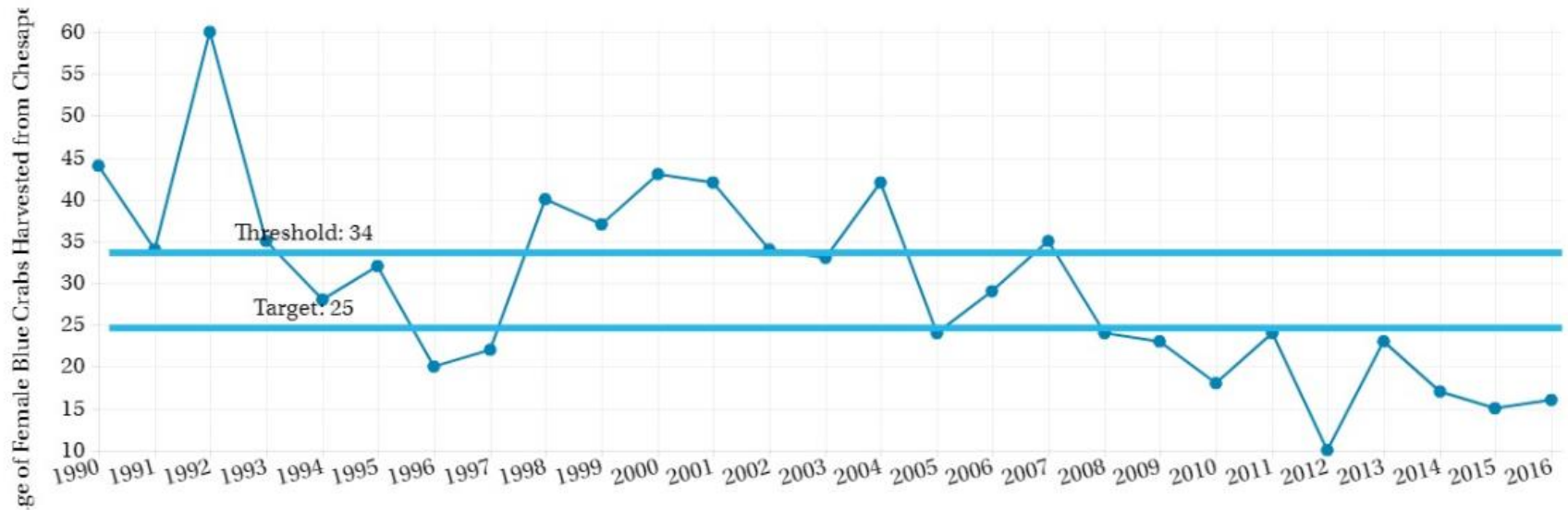
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Discussion

Extra Slides

Female Blue Crab Harvest Level (1990-2016)



Agreement Goals and Outcomes



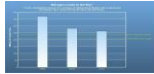
Sustainable Fisheries

- Blue Crab Abundance
- Blue Crab Management
- Oyster
- Forage Fish
- Fish Habitat



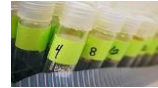
Vital Habitats Goal

- Wetlands
- Black Duck
- Stream Health
- Brook Trout
- Fish Passage
- Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)
- Forest Buffer
- Tree Canopy



Water Quality Goal

- 2017 Watershed Implementation Plans (WIP)
- 2025 WIP
- Water Quality Standards Attainment and Monitoring



Toxic Contaminants Goal

- Toxic Contaminants Research
- Toxic Contaminants Policy and Prevention



Healthy Watersheds Goal

- Healthy Waters



Stewardship Goal

- Citizen Stewardship
- Local Leadership
- Diversity



Land Conservation Goal

- Protected Lands
- Land Use Methods and Metrics Development
- Land Use Options Evaluation



Public Access Goal

- Public Access Site Development



Environmental Literacy Goal

- Student
- Sustainable Schools
- Environmental Literacy Planning



Climate Resiliency Goal

- Monitoring and Assessment
- Adaptation Outcome