



Inside this Issue

- Presidents Corner
- Treasurer's Report
- Summary of 18th Annual Meeting
- Student Subunit News
- Maryland News
- Virginia News
- North Carolina News
- Summary of the 17th Annual SEAMAP Cooperative Winter Tagging Cruise
- Announcements and Meetings

2004 Tidewater AFS EXCOM

President – Ann Barse, Phone 410-543-6073; email ambarse@salisbury.edu.

President Elect – Chip Long, Phone (757)-465-6812; email longc@dgif.state.va.us.

Past President – James Morris, Phone 252-728-3595 x639; email james.morris@noaa.gov.

Secretary/Treasurer – Wesley Patrick, Phone 252-328-2945; email wsp0619@mail.ecu.edu.

MD Member-at-Large – Erik Zlokovitz, Phone 410-260-8306; email ezlokovitz@dnr.state.md.us.

VA Member-at-Large – Dave Hopler, email hoplejrda@mail1.vcu.edu.

NC Member-at-Large – Neil McNeil, Phone 252-728-8706; email neil_mcneil@noaa.gov.

ECU Student Subunit – Chad Smith, Phone 252-328-1765; email cms0514@mail.ecu.edu.

Newsletter Co-Editors – Roger Rulifson and James Morris, RR Phone 252-328-1757; rulifsonr@mail.ecu.edu. JM Phone 252-728-3595 x639 james.morris@noaa.gov.

Historian and Listserv Administrator – Roger Rulifson.

Webmaster – James Morris.



President's Corner

I am honored to be the 2004 President of the Tidewater Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. The Tidewater Chapter represents a diverse array of excellent scientists, and there is much opportunity for collaboration and exchange of ideas among its members.

Following in my predecessor's footsteps, one of my primary goals shared by many in our organization is to increase the size of our membership. The Membership Committee of 2003 prepared a brochure advertising our Chapter. Copies of this brochure were sent to 25 or more people by our Members-at-Large in each state with modest success in the recruitment of new members. If you have colleagues in under-represented regions of Maryland, Virginia or North Carolina, contact your colleagues in these regions and encourage them to join. Our Past President, James Morris, is the Chair of the Membership Committee for 2004. If you have ideas you would like to share, or would like to serve on this committee, please contact us.

If you are looking for an opportunity for professional development, there are openings for serving on Committees in addition to the Membership Committee. The Audit Committee is charged with keeping track of the accounts of the Treasurer, and the Nominating Committee recommends a slate of officers for the Chapter. I encourage student members and non-student members alike to participate in the governance of our Chapter. Most correspondence occurs via e-mail, and there is much personal satisfaction in serving on such committees of a professional society.

In accordance with the mission of the American Fisheries Society, one objective of our Chapter is to promote the development of fisheries professionals. With this in mind, I would like to see the formation of at least one more Student Subunit in 2004. The East Carolina University (ECU) Student Subunit, lead by Ms. Jennifer Cudney, has been extremely active and can be a role model for additional student groups. Student Subunits provide a unique opportunity for the professional development of young scientists. Among other things, the ECU students hold monthly business meetings, conduct fund-raisers for financing participation of students in chapter, division and parent society meetings, and organize workshops to learn skills used by fisheries professionals. The enthusiasm of these students is infectious, and we need to

encourage these activities at other academic institutions in our region.

In closing, thank you for electing me to the position of President of the TWC. My interactions with Chapter members have been productive, and I look forward to future involvement during the year.

-- Ann M. Barse, 2004 Tidewater Chapter President

Secretary/Treasurer's Report

Expenses: Annual Meeting.....	\$3,629.52
Income: Annual Meeting.....	\$3,510.00
Membership.....	\$ 14.00
Total Savings:.....	\$3,486.13
Total Checking:.....	\$5,677.09

Minutes of the EXCOM Meeting at the 18th Annual Meeting of the AFS-Tidewater Chapter

January 8, 2004. Room 212, The Commons, Salisbury University, Salisbury, MD (taken by Roger Rulifson, Historian, for Wes Patrick)

Present: James Morris, Jr., Pat Mazik (WVA, SDAFS Vice President), John E. Cooper, Chip Long, Ron Klauda, Neil McNeil, Jennifer Cudney, Roger Rulifson, Paul Greccay, Ann Barse, Alan Weaver, Erik Zlokovitz, Bill Rodney, Dave Secor.

Meeting called to order at 3 pm by President James Morris. James welcomed everyone and introduced special guests. President-Elect Ann Barse gave an update on the Salisbury meeting. All present congratulated Ann on a job well done.

Timing of the Annual Meeting – Erik Zlokovitz proposed having the annual meeting in later January or February due to state and federal agency commitments. John Cooper pointed out the academic schedule and advantages of having it not in school. Additional comments and suggestions were noted. Our 19th Annual Meeting next year will be in conjunction with the Southern Division Mid-year meeting in Virginia, and the Tidewater Chapter is a co-host.

Financial Matters -- There was discussion about whether the Tidewater Chapter should invest our surplus funds in an investment or interest-bearing account. The Baltimore proceeds have greatly increased our checking account. Cooper noted the advantage of having an account that enabled check writing if needed. Interest rates are low -- maybe up to 2% maximum – but if no checks were needed then maybe we

could find a 4-5% yield investment account. The Setzler-Hamilton fund could be self-sustaining if invested at 10% for long-term. Ron Klauda stated that currently the Chapter is spending about \$1000/year on awards and scholarships. **ACTION ITEM** -- A three-person committee to investigate this was formed with Wes Patrick as chair, Neil McNeil, and Bill Rodney. The Committee was instructed to come back with recommendations and the EXCOM vote by email.

Membership Committee Report – Alan Weaver, chair. Committee members are the At-Large members McNeil, Zlokovitz, and Hopler. A membership brochure was produced. one-page invitation to join the Chapter, which directed potential members to the Chapter website. Each At-large member contacted at least 25 members in his respective state. Erik Z. – between 60-70 people emailed, maybe 2-3 responses to that. Neil – 25-26 personal responses, 7-8 responses, 5-6 positive that they will join. Weaver – Dave plus Alan sent out maybe 50 people, responses includes a lot of overlap with Virginia Chapter and so have not renewed. There is no mechanism to track the outcome but wait and see for the 2004 membership. Membership rolls are moving targets. Morris will become chair of membership committee after the 18th meeting. Another idea by Morris – sending a 25-cent postcard to increase the number of paid members. Weaver – EXCOM voted last year to separate out the dues from the annual meeting registration. For this meeting, the registration does include the annual membership dues. Everyone is a member if you come to the meeting. Postcards will be sent out reminding about chapter dues after the meeting. A suggestion was to create another category -- Affiliate members – people that were affiliated with the Tidewater Chapter in the past. This would be the target list for postcard membership renewal. A second membership list would be kept.

Audit Committee – Wes Patrick, chair. Not given.

Awards Committee – Ron Klauda, chair. Two nominations for the Tidewater Conservation Award (John Olney and Ken Paynter). Each will receive a plaque (\$41 each). First year for Eileen Setzler-Hamilton Award. There were 4 excellent applications, Jennifer Cudney to receive award which is a \$250 check plus certificate. Dave Secor volunteered to take on student paper awards this year. Platform and poster awards, 2 to be given in each category. John Cooper and Fred Scharf are committee members. 1st place = \$100, 2nd place = \$50, and honorable mention. This year there will be 5 student platform presentations and 12 student posters. There was discussion on repeat nominations for the same award and the length of time to wait before someone can win the same award twice. Ten years was considered too long, and there should be no consecutive wins. Perhaps a length of 5 years is long enough to protect the prestige of the award. Maybe the Meritorious Service Award should be given only once. The Conservation Award and Teaching Excellence Award might be more than once, with an appropriate interval. There should be write-ups

in Fisheries for these awards. **ACTION ITEM** - Recommendation to defer a decision, sent to the Awards Committee for review and development for a set of recommendations.

President's Award – given out by the President, not chosen through the Awards and Scholarship Committee.

Nominating Committee – Alan Weaver, chair, with Ron Klauda and Roger Rulifson as members. People serving in their present capacities have elected to run again, and Chip Long has agreed to run for President-Elect. Morris will be chair of this committee for next year.

ECU-AFS Student Subunit Report – Jennifer Cudney. Report submitted.

University of Maryland Student Subunit Report – Bill Rodney. No student subunit at present. A lack of interest or activation energy needed to overcome this problem. May be a logistical problem due to UMD system being so spread out. Secor – fisheries is definitely centered at CBL, and there are 4 faculty each with at least 2 students. UMEL may become active again because they are trying to get a fisheries program. Undergraduates are an important part of sustaining the program, and there are no undergraduates at CBL. **ACTION ITEM** – Dave Secor will look into centering the Maryland student subunit activity at CBL.

2005 Southern Division meeting plans – Weaver. Tidewater, Virginia, and Va. Tech chapters are all co-hosts. Pat Mazik – voted down a proposal to have a co-meeting with the Northeastern Division. Student money set aside is not being used, so need to encourage students to apply for these funds. Need to make an official decision. **ACTION ITEM** -- Motion to have Tidewater meeting in conjunction with SD meeting by Weaver, second by Klauda. Motion carries unanimously.

Tidewater Listserv – Morris. Maybe ECU, but need other possibilities. Probably needs to be run through a university. [Ed. Note – listserv has been set up through ECU but needs to be activated].

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm by Morris.

Minutes from the 18th Annual Tidewater Chapter Business Meeting

January 9, 2004 (4:25 PM), Henson Science and Technology Building, Salisbury, MD. Meeting called to order by President James Morris. President Morris recognized the EXCOM members – Alan Weaver, Ann Barse, Wes Patrick, Neil McNeil, David Hopler, and Erik Zlokovitz.

Summary of EXCOM Report –

- 81 members, 63% NC.
- Finances – in good shape as a result of the Baltimore meeting. About \$5K. Over \$10K in checking account.
- Membership committee –
- Awards and scholarship committee –
- Nominating Committee
- Report of ECU-AFS Student Subunit by Jennifer Cudney
- Next year meeting with the SDAFS, co-host the meeting in Virginia Beach.
- Tidewater Chapter Listserv
- Newsletter editor recognition – to Rulifson

General Discussion with the Membership – none

Election Results – Voting was unanimous for the slate of officers

- President Ann Barse
- President-Elect Chip Long
- Sec-Treas Wes Patrick
- NC At-large Neil McNeil
- VA At-large Dave Hopler
- MD At-large Erik Zlokovich

Coveted Oyster Toadfish Award – Bill Richkus of Versar was responsible for locating a large toadfish to stuff. Goes to the incoming president. Presented to Ann Barse by James Morris.



Ann Barse, incoming president, receives the coveted Oyster Toadfish Award from James Morris, outgoing president.

Presentation of gavel to James Morris as outgoing president by incoming president Ann Barse.

Award Presentations – Ron Klauda
Eileen Setzler-Hamilton Award – background of the award.
2004 Recipient Jennifer Cudney, ECU.



Ron Klauda presents 1st Eileen Setzler-Hamilton Memorial Scholarship Award to Jennifer Cudney (ECU).

Conservation Awards – first time for awarding. Two nominees. The 2004 awards go to Dr. John Olney, VIMS, primarily for his American shad research and protecting critical nursery habitats in upper Mattaponi River. Dr. Ken Paynter, CBL, for his work in oyster restoration in Chesapeake Bay.



Dr. Ken Paynter (right) receives the Tidewater Chapter Conservation Award from Awards Chair Ron Klauda.

Platform Student presentations –

- 1st place – Taconya Piper, title “Fecundity of American shad, *Alosa sapidissima*, in the Delaware and Hudson rivers, USA”.
- 2nd place – Kirsten Corti, CBL, title “Patterns in the distribution and demographics of the hogchoker, *Trinectes maculatus*, in the Chesapeake Bay.”
- Honorable mention – Jennifer Cudney, ECU, title, “Population demographics of American eel

(*Anguilla rostrata*) captured in Lake Mattamuskeet, NC.

Poster Student Presentations –

- 1st place – W.R. (Chip) Collier, UNC-W title “A molecular genetic marker for the taxonomic identification of kingfishes, *Menticirrhus* spp. (Perciformes: Sciaenidae).”
- 2nd place– Kara Schwenka, NCSU, title “Age and growth of dolphin caught in North Carolina waters.”
- 3rd place – Brandon Puckett, CBL, title “Preliminary growth rate estimates for juvenile (age 0 and 1) blue crab, *Callinectes sapidus*.”

Special presentation award by Jennifer Cudney from ECU-AFS to Roger Rulifson for teaching excellence and leadership of the student subunit.

Meritorious Service Award – James Morris to Ron Klauda.

Ann Barse – Plan for 2004. Examine Potomac Chapter status, hope to pull in those members. Support continued efforts to boost Univ. MD Chapter back to active status. Continue efforts to improve communications among members with Listserv.

Meeting adjourned at 5:10 pm by President Ann Barse.

Respectfully Submitted,

Roger Rulifson for Wes Patrick (Sec-Treas)

Membership

Overall, we have a total of 62 members, due in large part to this years turn out for the Annual Meeting in Salisbury, Maryland. An additional 23 members are students at ECU for a grand total of 85 members. Only six people registered on-line this year so far and two by mail. If you attended the meeting, LISTEN UP! Wes needs your address, phone number, and email so that we can create an email listserv for our members. Currently, only those people who registered via AFS or snail mail have supplied this information. Please email Wes as soon as possible with your information, at email address wsp0619@mail.ecu.edu. Thank you.

2004 Membership List as of March:

NY – Carol Applegate, James Applegate, John E. Cooper.

NJ – Thomas Grothues.

PA – Barbara Conlin.

WV – Patricia Mazik.

DE – Dewayne Fox, Jessie Thomas.

MD – Gerald Balmert, Mackenzie Bard, Ann Barse, Kiersten Curti, Paul Greccay, John Jacobs, Roman Jesien, Ron Klauda, Chris Luckett, Scott McGuire, Taconya Piper, Mr. and Mrs. Plakos, Charles Poukish, Brandon Puckett, Bill Rodney, Dave Secor, H.

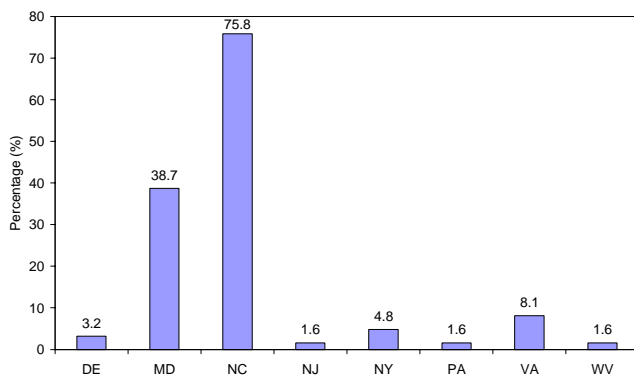
Slacum, Harley Speir, Kristi Stevens, Richard Takacs, Harry Womack, Erik Zlokovitz.

VA – Michael Fine, Matthew Fisher, David Hewitt, Chip Long, Alan Weaver.

NC – Scott Baker, Deirdre Barry, Jeff Buckel, David Chagaris, Chad Coggins, Chip Collier, Ingrid Coulson, Jennifer Cudney, Charlton Godwin, Joseph Grist, Jason Lanier, T. Lankford, Joe Luczkovich, Christine [Maser] Voss, Neil McNeil, Sara Mirabilio, Anthony Overton, Paul Rudershausen, Roger Rulifson, Fred Scharf, John Schupner, Kara Schwenke, (Michael) Chad Smith, Christine Stewart, Douglas Vaughn.

The **ECU-AFS Student Subunit** has 4 associated faculty and 32 total student members, a number of which were listed above. Student Subunit members are automatically members of the Tidewater Chapter.

ECU-AFS (NC) – Heidi Alderman, Leah Brinson, Nicholas Chaplinski, Nick Jones, Bo Dame, Ben Howell, Cameron Pritchard, Randy Pulley, John Schupner, Lance Winslow, Shaun Daniel Keese, Jean Tate Hiebert, Jacqueline Jenkins, Edward Meadows, Brandi Gooch, Ana Nelson, Stephen Hughes, Rebecca Deehr, Ken Brennan, Sara McKenzie, Curtis Hodges, Brian Moroz, Marc Silverman, and Chris Lee.



Distribution of the 2004 Tidewater membership by state (includes Student Subunits).

-- Wes Patrick, Tidewater Secretary/Treasurer

Chapter Dues – if you went to the Tidewater meeting in Salisbury, you are already paid. If not, please send your \$ 7 to Wes Patrick, Department of Biology, Howell Science Complex, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858.

Dues and fundraising events are the major source of income for the Chapter. Our biggest cash outflow is for student and professional awards and scholarships. So please support your chapter! It's a great investment.

Reminder to Continuing and New Tidewater members – don't forget to update your expertise database on the Tidewater website, www.sdafs.org/tidewater. If you are a new member, please register yourself on the website so that we can continue to compile our expertise database. This information is used to answer inquiries by the public and agencies on fisheries-related problems. "Just" a graduate or undergraduate student? We know you haven't been in the field long enough

to gain a wealth of expertise, but you have research interests and we want to know those as well. Please go to the website and register today. Thanks.

-- James Morris, Website manager

Summary of 18th Annual Tidewater Meeting, January 8-10, 2004

The 18th Annual Meeting of the Tidewater Chapter took place at Salisbury University, in Salisbury, Maryland from January 8-10, 2004. Approximately 60 members and their guests attended. The meeting began with a Social and Poster Session in the Wicomico Room on Thursday evening. Some excellent posters were displayed, 13 of which were co-authored by students, and 3 by non-students. We convened in Henson Science Hall on Friday and on Saturday morning for the platform presentations. There was a total of 18 contributed papers, 5 of which were co-authored by students. As in past years, topics were far-ranging, from mercury accumulation in osprey tissues, coral reef ecosystem food webs, blue crabs and other benthic invertebrates, dolphins and tunas, eels and kingfishes, and various management issues were presented. In particular, the student participation this year was commendable.

On Friday morning, we were fortunate to have 3 invited guest speakers. First, Dr. Gus Rassam, Executive Director for the American Fisheries Society, gave an overview of AFS initiatives. Next, Dr. Patricia M. Mazik, Vice President of the Southern Division of the AFS also gave a short presentation on SD initiatives. Our keynote speaker was Dr. Kennedy T. Paynter, who presented, "Oyster Restoration in Chesapeake Bay: Promise and Challenge." His presentation was an overview of attempts to restore the native Eastern Oyster in the Bay, and current ideas for introducing the Asian Oyster to this ecosystem. It was a timely presentation that generated some interesting discussion.

The new slate of officers for 2004 is: President-Elect Chip Long (VA), Secretary-Treasurer Wes Patrick (NC), MD Member-at-Large Erik Zlokovitz, VA Member at-Large David Hopler, and NC Member-at-Large Neil McNeil.

Student Awards were presented on Friday evening (detailed elsewhere in this newsletter) followed by our dinner social, which was held on Friday night at the Brew River Restaurant located on the Wicomico River in Salisbury Maryland. Great food was enjoyed while listening to a local blues duo, "Brother Lowdown." We also raised money for student scholarships by holding a raffle at this event. Our prized raffle item was a beautiful print donated by a local artist, Mr. Robert Tolley.



ECU faculty, alums, and students gather at the Friday night dinner social at the Brew River Restaurant on the Wicomico River.



The line was long but the food and music were great at the Friday night dinner social. Fred Scharf (UNC-W) shows off his full plate!

Besides Student Awards and the Conservation Awards given to Dr. John Olney and Dr. Ken Paynter (also mentioned elsewhere in the newsletter), one more official TWC award warrants mentioning. Dr. Ron Kluda was awarded the Meritorious Service Award for his continued contributions to the Chapter. Ron has chaired the Awards committee for many years, served as president, and has been a venerable advisor on Tidewater Chapter needs and issues to many Presidents (including me). His level of activity has been steady and he is always willing to chip in and offer a hand in any endeavor to increase or improve the Tidewater Chapter.

Finally, Jennifer Cudney, an East Carolina University (ECU) graduate student and President of the ECU- Student Subunit of the TWC, presented Dr. Roger Rulifson (ECU) with an award for his leadership role as Faculty Advisor for their organization. In the final analysis, the 18th Annual Meeting was a great success and I thank all those who participated!

-- Ann Barse, TWC President

Student Subunit News

East Carolina University

Business meetings this semester were held on the first Wednesday of each month. The subunit continued to use a new format for meetings. Socials were held at two area restaurants: Christy's Euro Pub and Marathon (Greek)

Restaurant. Guest speakers in February and March were Dr. Margie Gallagher (Head of the College of Human Ecology, Nutrition, & Hospitality, East Carolina University) and Ms. Sara Miribilio (Fisheries Specialist, NC Sea Grant Extension Program, Manteo Office). Dr. Gallagher spoke about her research in aquaculture and fish nutrition, while Ms. Miribilio educated members on the many opportunities available within the national and state Sea Grant College Program.

In January, seven graduate students and one undergraduate student attended the Tidewater Chapter meeting in Salisbury, MD. Charlton Godwin and Jennifer Cudney gave oral presentations. David Chagaris, Ingrid Coulson, Chad Coggins, Ana McClannahan, Christine Voss, and Heidi Alderman authored posters. Faculty active in ECU-AFS also contributed posters and oral presentations. Dr. Rulifson compiled a poster commemorating the 5th Anniversary of ECU-AFS. Jennifer Cudney was honored with the Eileen Setzler-Hamilton Memorial Scholarship, and also received honorable mention in the judging of student oral presentations. We all had a wonderful time at the meeting and really enjoyed the social at the Brew River Restaurant. Thank you for arranging a great meeting from the students of ECU-AFS!

Two workshops are planned for this semester at East Carolina University. The first was an Introductory GIS workshop held with Dr. Tom Crawford (Department of Geography). On April 16, 2004, ECU-AFS will host an electrofishing workshop with biologists Kent Nelson and Bob Barwick from the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. The event will consist of a morning lecture session to discuss the principles behind electrofishing and safety concerns. The workshop will reconvene after lunch at the Tar River to introduce students to the electroshocking equipment. The workshop will provide continuing education credits to participants. We hope to line up some hands-on volunteer experience for students following the workshop. Chip Long has already indicated a willingness to set up some dates. Is there anyone else out there that needs some laborers this spring? (Please email me ASAP if you would like to have some student volunteers)

Members of ECU-AFS are organizing raffle items and food to sell at the East Carolina University spring carnival, Barefoot on the Mall. The featured raffle prize is a kayak. Other prizes include t-shirts and hats from local businesses, gift certificates, and a framed picture of President George Bush holding an ECU t-shirt. ECU-AFS will prepare hotdog and sausage dog meals complete with chili, sauerkraut, chips and a drink. Proceeds from the fundraiser will be used to offset registration costs and other expenses at the annual meeting in Madison, Wisconsin.

ECU-AFS hopes to play a major role in the planning of the joint Tidewater/Southern Division meeting in January 2005. Representatives from the Subunit will attend a planning meeting on April 6 in Virginia Beach.

Although ECU-AFS prepared a thorough application packet, we were not selected to host the next Student Colloquium. The Tidewater Chapter showed an amazing amount of support to the Subunit as we explored this opportunity. I want to again thank the Chapter for your interest in the professional development of East Carolina University students.

Officer elections for the 2003-04 academic year were held at the April 7, 2004 business meeting. The new ECU-AFS officers are: Chad Smith, President; Ingrid Coulson, Vice-President; Jacqueline Jenkins, Secretary; Heidi Alderman, Treasurer; and co-Historians Elizabeth Lockhart and Stephen Hughes. A number of our ECU-AFS graduate student members will graduate this summer: Charlton Godwin (past president), Jennifer Cudney (president), Chad Coggins (vice-president), Randy Pulley, Lance Winslow, and Ken Brennan.

The next two business meetings of the ECU student subunit will be April 6, 2004 and April 28, 2004. If you are interested in attending a meeting, holding a forum with ECU students, or showing off your research, please contact the student subunit. We look forward to hearing from you!

-- Jennifer Cudney, Immediate Past President, ECU-AFS Student Subunit.

Maryland News

MDDNR Striped Bass Project:

Striped Bass Stock Assessment (SBSA) Project staff completed checkstation sampling of the Chesapeake Bay commercial winter gillnet fishery in late February. Approximately 3500 striped bass were measured, weighed, and sampled for scale ageing. Heavy icing in the upper Bay (ice was reported to be as much as 14 inches thick) prevented many gillnetters from getting out of their docks during parts of January. Watermen who anticipated the ice and moved their boats south of Annapolis reported large catches, despite problems with "mini-icebergs" (floating chunks of ice). Gillnetting tends to be more productive during severe winters because the fish tend to concentrate on the bottom along the deep channel edges. The fish are most catchable with gillnet gear fished on the Bay bottom under these conditions. Striped bass biologists observed extremely large catches of striped bass, with a higher proportion of "large rock" (15-25 pound stripers) than in past years. The most productive area seemed to be in the vicinity of Tilghman Island on the middle Eastern shore. A productive spring trophy season is anticipated because of the large amount of fish apparently staging in the Bay during late winter.

Striped bass biologists will initiate the spring gillnet survey on March 29. Crews will deploy multi-panel experimental drift

gillnet on the upper Bay and Potomac river. The main purpose of this study is to estimate spawning stock biomass and also tag as many striped bass as possible. A survey of the recreational spring trophy striped bass fishery will begin on April 17, which is opening day of the "Trophy Rockfish" season in Maryland.

MDDNR Multifish Project:

Multifish staff are currently sampling the Nanticoke and Choptank river systems with experimental fyke nets. These nets are used to collect biological data and age structures on a variety of anadromous species, including yellow perch, white perch, blueback herring, alewife herring, hickory shad, American shad, and striped bass. In a cooperative arrangement with DNR, USFWS staff are also monitoring fyke nets in the South River. Some of the ripe female yellow perch from the South River are being collected as brood stock and transported to hatcheries.

MDDNR Fish Passage Program:

The Fish Passage Program is currently working with American Rivers, Chester Water Authority, and the Octoraro Watershed Association to finalize a permit to remove the Octoraro Dam in Cecil County. The dam currently blocks 19 miles of historic habitat for hickory shad, alewife herring, and blueback herring, as well as American eel and many resident species. The removal will be among the largest in the Maryland. Program staff are also working with the Watershed Restoration division of MDNR to combine two large fish blockage databases to form a unified database which will contain information and photographs on over 1,500 fish blockages in Maryland. Program staff will begin revisiting each blockage to take photographs and updating information for the database, which was developed in the 1970's. This database is an important tool for identifying and prioritizing blockages for removal or mitigation.

-- Erik Zlokovitz, MD At-Large Member

Virginia News

Embrey Dam Breached

On February 23, 2004 the Embrey Dam on the Rappahannock River in Fredericksburg was breached to allow migratory fishes such as American shad access to the upper watershed. The dam is 770 feet long and the initial breach is 130' wide. The actual demolition was done by the 544th Army Ranger Dive Unit out of Fort Eustis and the 555th Air Force Redhorse Squadron out of Nevada under the purview of the Norfolk District of the Army Corps of Engineers. Complete removal of both Embrey Dam and the 1854 crib dam (50' upstream of Embrey) will be completed over the next two years using

heavy machinery. A large section of the crib dam was removed prior to the blast during the sediment dredging operation. The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) has been pursuing fish passage at Embrey since the 1980s. In the early 1990's the VDGIF conducted sediment and historical studies that lead to a state funded feasibility study in 1997 that recommended complete removal as the best fish passage option. When the City of Fredericksburg, owner of the dam, announced that the dam would no longer be needed as a water supply the removal option became viable. Also in 1997, Senator John Warner became very interested in the project and began seeking an avenue to apply federal money to the project. In 1998, the Corps became involved and lead a feasibility study co-sponsored by Virginia, Fredericksburg and Stafford County. Warner was successful in securing the funding to conduct the actual project phase at full federal expense. This removal project reopens 106 miles of the Rappahannock and Rapidan rivers that has been inaccessible for over 150 years. The target population for shad is 71,000 based on the amount of upstream habitat that should support spawning and rearing activity. The VDGIF and the USFWS are stocking American shad fry in the upper river to enhance the recovery process. The VDGIF will continue to monitor the river above and below the dam to evaluate the restoration effort.



Demolition of the Embrey Dam on the Rappahannock River in Fredericksburg by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, February 2004.

For more information contact Alan Weaver at 804-367-6795; aweaver@dgif.state.va.us

VIMS News

Doug Clarke (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers) and VIMS scientists are collaborating in a study of movements of American shad during the spawning run on the James River. Fish captured at the river mouth in March have been fitted with acoustic tags and released. Their upstream movements will be monitored at fixed hydrophone stations 75-125 km above the points of release. One objective of the study is to demonstrate the feasibility of using remote tracking techniques

to test the effects of channel maintenance activities by dredging on anadromous fish migration in the lower James River.

– John Olney

VMRC News

A 63-pound striped bass caught on January 30th by Carolyn W. Brown of Virginia Beach has been certified as a new Virginia state record by the Virginia Saltwater Fishing Tournament. Brown caught her fish in the Atlantic Ocean off Currituck, NC with Captain Larry Mattocks on the Fishateer. The record-setting striper, which measured 50 inches in length and had a girth of 33.25 inches, was fooled by a 9-inch Storm plastic bait being trolled as the trailing bait behind a Mojo lure. Capt. Mattocks stated they were trolling in 50 feet of water approximately 2.75 miles off the beach when the fish struck. The water temperature at the surface was a chilly 39 degrees. A fight lasting almost 15 minutes ensued and when Brown got the fish to the boat it was discovered she was actually fighting two fish - a smaller fish had struck the front (Mojo) lure. Mattocks, who does not use a landing net, hoisted the larger fish through the "tuna" door on the stern of the Fishateer. The prior state record of 61-pounds, 12-ounces was caught near Buoy 42 in the Chesapeake Bay by James R. Muse of Richmond on December 7, 1996.

-- David Hopley, VA At-Large Member

North Carolina News

From the NC Division of Marine Fisheries:

Marine Patrol Auctions Tuna

The North Carolina Marine Patrol auctioned off a tuna on December 11, 2003 potentially bringing in about \$2,400 for Carteret County schools. The Bluefin tuna, weighing in at 264 pounds, was confiscated by a NC Marine patrol officer in Morehead City. The tuna was auctioned off under a state court order to Maguro American Inc., paying the highest bid of \$9.06 per pound. The money will be held in escrow until a judge determines the outcome of the case in which the fisherman who caught the tuna is charged with selling a fish without a valid Standard Commercial Fishing License.

Size Limit Drops for Ocean Caught Flounder

The Division of Marine Fisheries in Morehead City has dropped the recreational size limit for flounder caught in North Carolina's ocean waters from 15 to 14 inches as of March 29, 2004. The new size limit applies to all recreationally –harvested summer flounder taken from NC's ocean waters by hook-and-line, gigs, and any gear used by

Recreational Commercial Gear license holders. The size limit for inside waters is also 14 inches, except for the Neuse and Pamlico Rivers and most of Pamlico Sound where the limit is 13 inches. The bag limit will remain at eight fish per day. According to Division of Marine Fisheries director Pres Pate, DMF is able to lower the size limit for flounder because they have slowed the recreational harvest of summer flounder as required by the intrastate management plan, and still provided reasonable fishing opportunity for anglers that allows them to take advantage of smaller fish off the coast. Only 49,000 summer flounder were landed last year in NC which is well below the target catch of 231,000 fish. "By comparison, anglers harvested 189,480 summer flounder in 2002 and 327,249 summer flounder in 2001 from NC waters" said Pate. Hurricane Isabel is thought to have been partly responsible for the drop in recreational summer flounder landings. Infrastructure such as roads, docks, boat ramps, and marinas prevented access in the fall of 2003, especially in Dare County.

Flounder is one of the most popular fish both for recreational and commercial fishermen. It presents a management dilemma for the DMF. Two major species of flounder co-exist in NC waters; summer and southern flounder and each have their own management strategies. Summer flounder are found mainly in NC's ocean waters particularly around inlets. Summer flounder are migratory and move along the East Coast from NC and Maine on up into Canadian waters. Because of this migratory behavior, summer flounder are jointly managed by the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council in conjunction with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. During the mid-1990s, the coastal stock of summer flounder was considered overfished and rebuilding measures were implemented. The stock today is recovering but there are still catch limits in place.

Spiny Dogfish Season

Spiny dogfish, a small shark species found along the East Coast, has a confusing management strategy. North Carolina opened its commercial spiny dogfish season on January 1, 2004. NC allows a daily limit of 2,000 pounds per day until the state's quota of 500,000 pounds is taken. The season is in compliance with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission management plan for spiny dogfish.

Meanwhile, NOAA Fisheries closed the commercial spiny dogfish season on July 18, 2003 in federal waters (3-200 miles offshore). At that time, fishermen holding federal permits to land spiny dogfish were advised they could not land any spiny dogfish from state or federal waters while the season was closed. Dealers were also told they could not purchase spiny dogfish from federal permitted fishermen while the season was closed.

Once the state season opened, fishermen contacted the DMF to find out how they could legally land spiny dogfish at NC ports. NOAA fisheries advised the state that fishermen and dealers must cancel their federal spiny dogfish permits before landing or purchasing dogfish landed in NC or they would face federal penalties. On January 12, NOAA Fisheries reopened the commercial season for spiny dogfish in federal waters. Fishermen who hold a federal permit may possess up to 300 pounds of spiny dogfish per trip per day. This is much less than the daily limit allowed by NC for commercial spiny dogfish fishermen in state waters of 2,000 pounds per day. NOAA Fisheries advised the state that federal permit holders must abide by the more restrictive quota of 300 pounds per day regardless of whether the fish were caught in state or federal waters. If fishermen want to land more than 300 pounds per day, they must first cancel their federal permits.

From the NC Wildlife Resources Commission:

Hickory Shad Making a Comeback in the Roanoke River

Hickory shad have made a remarkable comeback in the Roanoke River over the past decade. According to the NC Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC), the reasons for the comeback are not entirely clear. Possible contributing factors for the comeback include favorable spring spawning and ocean conditions and limited commercial fishing and harvest restrictions. Anglers practicing proper catch and release techniques where fish are landed quickly and handled very little while the hook is removed have also probably had positive impacts on the fish survival rates.

Early bird anglers can attest that fishing has been good late February through March on a variety of tackle. There has been an increase in anglers using fly rods with miniature, Clouser-type lures. The Roanoke River is considered by many anglers to be the premiere destination for reeling in a shad but it is not the only place to go. The Tar, Neuse, and Cape Fear Rivers are also good spots to go for hickory and American or white shad. Hickory shad begin appearing in the lower river near Plymouth in late February and early march and later in the upper river in mid march. Peak fishing is usually from late March to early April near Weldon.

Grifton Angler Lands Record Hickory Shad

Trey Maroules, from Grifton NC, landed a record hickory shad from Pitchkettle Creek in Craven County on February 22, 2004. The shad weighed in at 4 pounds, 1 ounce and measured 22 inches in length and 12.8 inches girth. The shad was weighed on certified scales at the Country Store in Grifton. Positive ID of the fish was a collaborative effort between the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and the NC Museum of Natural Sciences.

Bob Barwick, a fishery biologist with the Commission, said identifying fish that are so large for their species can be difficult because they have often lost some of the characteristics of their smaller counterparts. Sometimes, what appear to be record-breaking specimens are actually hybrids between similar species. The previous NC record hickory shad was caught in 1992, and weighed in at 3 pounds, 8 ounces.

-- Neil McNeil, NC At-Large Member

Summary of the 17th Annual SEAMAP Cooperative Winter Tagging Cruise

The 17th annual Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP) winter tagging cruise was a great success, and a number of Tidewater Chapter members were onboard to document the events. From January 15-25, 2004, personnel from Maryland (MDDNR) and North Carolina (NCDMF) fisheries agencies, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC), the US Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA and East Carolina University (ECU) worked together aboard the Duke University R/V Cape Hatteras in continental shelf waters between Cape Hatteras and the Virginia line tagging striped bass, spiny dogfish, Atlantic sturgeon, horseshoe crabs, and anything else that swam or crawled. The scientific crew worked around the clock in 6-hour shifts racking up a total of 258 single trawl tows containing 8,450 fish of 17 different species. A total of 2,708 striped bass were measured, tagged and released, and an additional 3,385 spiny dogfish were measured, sexed, tagged and released. Only one sturgeon was encountered, down from 22 captured last year. The highlight was the recaptured of a striped bass originally tagged by MDDNR personnel on April 7, 1987 in the Choptank River – the fish had been at large for 17 years, or approximately 6,132 days! The Duke crew was superb, with great food and great working space and remodeled staterooms. We even had a couple of jam sessions in the galley late at night, with Wilson Laney (USFWS) on guitar, Roger Rulifson (ECU) on mandolin, and Erik Zlokovitz (MDDNR) on bass clarinet. It was rough seas, cold, with ice on the decks and tagging tables, and a good time was had by all!

-- Roger Rulifson and Erik Zlokovitz



Both running seawater tanks are loaded with striped bass waiting to be tagged and released during the 17th Annual SEAMAP cruise.



SEAMAP Cruise 2004 scientific party (L-R): Megan Gamble, Stephen Taylor, Clif Tipton, Erik Zlokovitz, Wilson Laney. Middle: Tina Moore. Top row: Roger Zirlott, Eric Gowdy, Chris Batsavage, Lydia Munger, Roger Rulifson, Bill Cole, Sara Winslow.

Announcements and Meetings

Work on the **2005 Southern Division AFS Spring Meeting** has begun, with periodic meetings of the organizing committee. The meeting is scheduled for **February 26-29 at Virginia Beach**. The Tidewater Chapter is one of the co-hosts, and we'll have our 19th Annual Meeting there as well. Chip Long is looking for ideas for technical session themes. Please send in your ideas as soon as possible to Chip, email longc@dgif.state.va.us or call 757-465-6812.

The Tidewater Chapter Listserv has been set up through East Carolina University but details on implantation still need to be finalized. Roger Rulifson will be the list serve administrator. The current plan is for all paid-up members to be automatically registered for the listserv. A second group – Tidewater affiliates – will be added as a second group in anticipation that we can entice them to “return to the fold.” The listserv should be up and running by the end of April. An initial email with instructions for subscribing, using and unsubscribing will be sent to all members.

Fourth World Fisheries Congress, Vancouver, BC, May 2-6, 2004. <http://www.worldfisheries2004.org>

28th Annual Larval Fish Conference, Clemson, SC, May 23-26, 2004. <http://www.lfc2004.org>.

American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, Norman OK, May 26-31, 2004.
<http://www/dce.ksu.edu/2004jointmeeting>.

American Society of Limnology and Oceanography 2004 Summer Meeting: The Changing Landscapes of Oceans and Freshwater, Savannah, GA, June 13-18, 2004.
www.aslo.org/meetings/savannah2004/.

3rd International Symposium on Fish Otolith Research and Application, Townsville, Queensland, Australia, July 11-16, 2004. <http://www.otolith2004.com>.

134th Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society, Madison, WI, August 21-26, 2004. <http://www.fisheries.org>.

The 58th annual Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SEAFWA) will be held in Hilton Head, SC, October 30 – November 3, 2004. The second call for papers is out. www.dnr.state/sc/us/seafwa.

Skinner Memorial Award, 2004 Call for Applications --
The John E. Skinner Memorial Fund was established in memory of John Skinner, former Chapter and Western Division American Fisheries Society President. The fund provides monetary travel awards for deserving graduate students or exceptional undergraduate students to attend the American Fisheries Society (AFS) annual meeting. The 2004 meeting will be held in Madison, Wisconsin from August 22-26. Any student who is active in fisheries or related aquatic disciplines is eligible to apply. Awardees are chosen by a committee of the AFS Education Section. Selection is based on academic qualifications, professional service, and reasons for attending the meeting. Travel support not to exceed \$500 per award will be made available to successful applicants. Completed applications must be received no later than May 14, 2004. Limit all answers to the space provided. Additional material will not be considered in evaluating applicants. For more information about the Skinner Award, visit the AFS web site (www.fisheries.org) or contact:

Dr. Steven R. Chipps
NPBL 2140B
USGS South Dakota Cooperative Fish & Wildlife Research Unit
South Dakota State University
Brookings, SD 57007
E-mail steve_chipps@sdstate.edu

Next Tidewater Chapter Newsletter

The summer newsletter will be coming out in June, so please send any newsworthy items to the editor at rulifsonr@mail.ecu.edu.

- Are your graduate students graduating? Let us abstract his/her thesis and assist with the job search.
- New position title?
- Change of address?
- Sampling stories?
- Interesting pictures?
- Things new at your lab?

Send us your news and make this a membership-based newsletter.