



Exploring Successful Program Elements and Potential Improvements to Maine's Municipal Shellfish Program

Overview of the Workshop Series Summary Report

Department of Marine Resources
Shellfish Advisory Committee

July 20, 2022

Laura Taylor Singer, SAMBAS Consulting LLC

Overview of Workshop Series

- ▶ May 2 - 9, 2022
- ▶ Three in-person and one Zoom workshop
- ▶ 20 - 25 participants per workshop
- ▶ 92 individuals total
- ▶ Harvesters, shellfish dealers, municipal employees, members of municipal shellfish committees and/or the Shellfish Advisory Committee, members of academic and science organizations, and DMR employees

Workshop Agenda

- ▶ **Municipal Shellfish Program Review**
- ▶ **Panel Discussion: Components of an Effective Municipal Shellfish Program**
 - *What does it look like to have an effective program?*
 - *What do you see as the key components for success?*
- ▶ **Prioritize Topics for Discussion in Breakouts**
- ▶ **Key Questions for Breakouts:**
 - *What does your municipality currently do to address this issue?*
 - *What additional strategies could be used?*
 - *How could municipal shellfish programs be improved to address these issues?*
 - *What ways could DMR and municipalities partner for a more effective municipal shellfish program to address this issue?*
- ▶ **Sharing of Ideas and Wrap up**

Important Notes

- ▶ Interaction between state commercial aquaculture leasing system and municipalities was intentionally *not discussed* as it involves separate state program, unique laws and regulations
- ▶ Requirement for municipal shellfish programs to obtain Limited Purpose Aquaculture Licenses (LPA) for some resource enhancement *was discussed*
- ▶ Ideas presented are just *a few examples* of those that came out during the workshops - don't necessarily represent consensus and may just be an idea from a single person
- ▶ Workshops were *initial conversations* to spark thinking and generate ideas - roadmap being developed to guide future improvements

Key Issues & Themes

- ▶ Municipal Shellfish Committees
- ▶ Regional Approaches
- ▶ Conservation of the Resource
- ▶ Access to the Shore
- ▶ Access to Licenses
- ▶ Communication
- ▶ Information for Resource Management
- ▶ Water Quality Monitoring & Shoreline Sanitary Surveys



Municipal Shellfish Committees



Key Elements of a Successful Committee

Harvesters included and valued
Leadership in community
Efficient and orderly meetings



Increasing Harvester Participation

Short, focused meetings
Relevant topics
Provide food



Enhancing Effectiveness

Providing resources & training
Encourage younger harvesters
Designated harvester seats



Funding Considerations

Grants thru ME Shellfish Restoration & Resilience Fund
Increase state license fee to create research/management fund



Regional Approaches

- ▶ Frenchman's Bay example
- ▶ Coordination and sharing among communities is beneficial (especially to address specific common issues)
- ▶ Towns still want autonomy
- ▶ Appreciated regional discussions - more regional workshops

Conservation of the Resource

- ▶ Types of Activities
- ▶ Participation by Harvesters
 - Compensate for time
 - Increase license fees as penalty
 - Point system
- ▶ State and Federal Permitting Issues
 - Educate landowners about need
 - Move LPA review and approval for town projects to Shellfish Management Program
 - Direct support to towns





Access to the Shore

- ▶ Methods for Harvesters to Improve Relationship with Landowners
 - “landowner appreciation day”
 - Shoreline cleanup
 - Work with land trusts & realtors
- ▶ Municipal Tools and Solutions
 - Update comp plans
 - Ordinance for new development
 - Community listening sessions
- ▶ State Tools and Solutions
 - Share Maine Coastal Prog resources
 - Inventory current access points
 - Develop model ordinance language

Access to Licenses

▶ Improving licensing

- Tiered license examples - reduced student fee
- Sovereign license for Tribal Nations
- Limit number non-resident licenses a single person can hold
- Create “commercial harvesting zones” and “non-commercial harvesting zones”



Communication

▶ Information to Harvesters

- Online training programs
- Utilize social media
- Publicize area biologist and warden contacts

▶ Outreach to public

- Impacts of dogs on water quality
- Promote economic value of shellfish to community and state



Information for Resource Management

- ▶ Assessment of the Resource
 - Develop ways for consistent stock assessment over time
 - Increase number of area biologists
 - Develop a "state of the fishery" report on status statewide
- ▶ Annual municipal reporting
 - Examine what information is collected and evaluate utility
 - Develop ways to share reports



Water Quality Monitoring and Shoreline Sanitary Surveys



- ▶ Communication and collaboration between towns and DMR
- ▶ Identifying and communicating highest priority areas
- ▶ Public education
- ▶ Incentives for landowners to clean up pollution sources
- ▶ Separate Bureau of Public Health from the Shellfish Management Program

Potential Next Steps



**Develop Additional Outreach
and Engagement to Target
Harvesters**



**Continue to Foster Regional
Information Sharing**



**Consider Approaches to
Supporting Municipal
Shellfish Committees**



**Assess Effectiveness of
Conservation Efforts and
Lessons Learned**

Potential Next Steps



**Address State and Federal
Permitting Complexities**



**Produce Information to
Better Manage Resource**

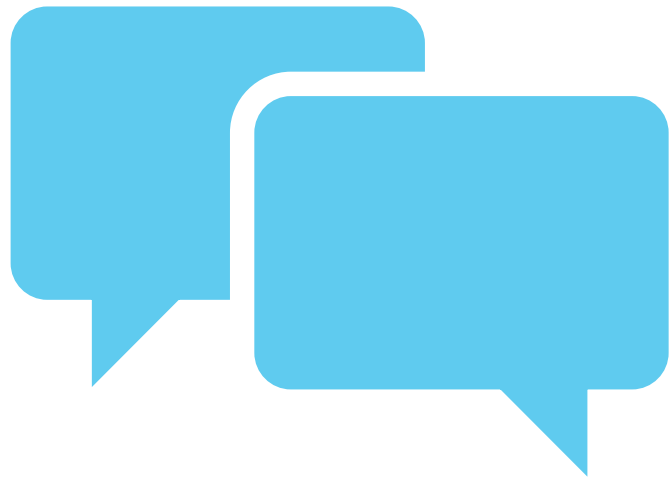


**Work with Partners to
Elevate Issues of
Shellfish Harvester
Access**



**Develop Avenues for
Improved Communication**





Discussion

Next Steps for ShAC Roadmap

- ▶ Compile all ideas into a single spreadsheet for review and consideration
- ▶ Possible categories:
 - Who - responsible (town, state, both, or other)
 - When - Timing (short-term, medium, or long-term)
 - How - Process - (e.g., ordinance change, regulatory change, outreach, engagement, etc.)
- ▶ Prioritize (High, Med, Low) by ShAC after discussion and consideration of ideas with stakeholders



Preliminary Timeline - Next Steps

- ▶ August - Finalize meeting report
 - ▶ September 14 - Shellfish Advisory Council meeting
 - ▶ Fall - Start to develop roadmap (Committee)
 - ▶ Winter ShAC meeting - present DRAFT roadmap
 - ▶ Winter/spring - finalize roadmap
-
- ▶ There will be additional opportunities for public input during and outside of ShAC meetings

