

Shellfish Advisory Panel

February 20, 2019; 4:30PM

URI Bay Campus, Coastal Institute Building, Large Conference Room
218 S Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI 02874

MEETING SUMMARY

RIMFC members: J. Grant (Chair)

DEM: C. McManus; J. McNamee, E. Schneider, A. Gerber-Williams;

Scientific Advisor: D Leavitt;

SAP members: M. McGiveney, D. Ghigliotty, G. Schey;

CRMC: D. Beutel;

Public: D. Foley, M. Griffin, D. Torre, B. Pinsky;

1. Review of aquaculture lease applications sent to public notice by CRMC:

- 2018-05-159, Pinsky, Ninigret Pond: *D. Beutel* provided a brief overview of the proposal, which consists of expanding a current lease. *D. Beutel* indicated the estimated quahog density in the expansion footprint was 0.4 quahogs m⁻². *D. Foley* expressed concerns for commercial harvest in the ponds in general, as several people commercially fish in Ninigret Pond. However, this site did not interfere with the commercial harvest that he was aware of. *B. Pinsky* indicated that there is no commercial harvest that he has seen occur in the proposed expansion area. Discussion ensued on the 5% rule: its origination, the challenge of 5% being applied when, in reality, the available area for aquaculture is not the whole pond (e.g. mooring fields, navigation, spawner sanctuaries, prohibited waters based on water quality), and that the uses of the pond often occur in the same areas. **Motion made by *M. McGiveney* to recommend no objection to the application; 2nd by *G. Schey*. The motion passed 3-0.**
- 2018-09-033, Torre and Davidson, Sakonnet River: *D. Beutel* provided a brief overview of the proposal. *D. Beutel* indicated that whelk fishers are active adjacent to the proposed site, and that there would be significant objection by them if the applicant attempted to expand this site in the future. *M. McGiveney* asked about the depth of the site and other prospective conflicts that may be present. *D. Ghigliotty* asked why this site was picked, and the applicant explained that he and his brother picked this site using shellfish habitat suitability models that suggested best potential growth and survival, and found that this area would be most suitable. **Motion made by *G. Schey* to recommend no objection to the application; 2nd by *M. McGiveney*. The motion passed 3-0.**

- 2018-08-071, Griffin, Narragansett Bay West Passage: *D. Beutel* provided a brief overview of the proposal. *M. Griffin* explained that this site was a commercial viability site that he is now looking to proceed with as a formal, harvestable site. *G. Schey* asked about recreational fishing in the area, and there were no comments received regarding conflicts with the recreational fishing in the area by *D. Beutel*. **Motion made by *M. McGiveney* to recommend no objection to the application; 2nd by *G. Schey*. The motion passed 3-0.**

2. Presentation on estimating dredge catch efficiency for the Narragansett Bay quahog population.

C. McManus presented research conducted by Roger Williams University, the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation, and RIDEM Division of Marine Fisheries on the state's quahog hydraulic dredge efficiency, and how results can be used to better estimate quahog abundances in Narragansett Bay.

3. Presentation on current quahog stock assessment model for Narragansett Bay.

J. McNamee presented and updated version of RIDEM Division of Marine Fisheries' new quahog stock assessment model, including the data inputs (landings, dredge survey indices, life history parameters) and the results to-date.

Prepared by: C. McManus