



Coastal Advisory Council
July 14, 2016 at Darien CRC Office
Meeting Summary

Welcome and Introductions:

Meeting was called to order by Chairman Paul Wolff and the Council went through introductions.

Old Business:

Meeting Summary

There were no comments or edits to the winter meeting summary.

New Business:

Shellfish Program Overview

Paul Wolff introduced Dominic Guadagnoli, Shellfish Program Manager. Mr. Guadagnoli was asked to brief the Coastal Advisory Council on the status of the shellfish industry in response to the previous meeting's discussion on how the Council could assist CRD related to shellfish. The Chairmen briefed the Council on a discussion he had with Jill Stuckey, USDA representative, who could potentially assist with funding.

Mr. Guadagnoli gave a brief introduction on his history and background with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. He went over how the Shellfish Program was developed and what they are facing today. Primarily there are three partners that contribute to the Program. CRD is responsible for area classification and water quality sampling. Law Enforcement enforces the Georgia shellfish laws to ensure compliance and the third partner is the State Department of Agriculture who regulates the handling and distribution of shellfish.

For water quality monitoring Georgia uses two classes which are either approved or prohibited. Historically, 300 water samples were collected monthly and a conditional classification was used. However, due to budget cuts in 1997 the Program lost its ability to operate a lab and lost field staff. Now water quality samples are collected at approximately eighty sites every other month for fecal coliform. For specific questions Mr. Guadagnoli recommended referencing the Shellfish Sanitation Guidelines which are documented in the NSSP model ordinance.

Shellfish Program Statistics: Growing Area – 157,321 acres, Commercial Harvest Area – 29,186, and Recreational Harvest area 8,532 acres. There are 17 active leases, 8 of which are private and 9 are state leases. There are 17 master collector permits and individual harvester permits.

Questions from the Council were asked concerning the limiting factors of expanding areas, water quality indicators, and lease costs. Mr. Guadagnoli replied that sampling feasibility and costs were factors in expansion; fecal coliform is the primary indicator with some nutrient monitoring including nitrate/nitrite/phosphorous/chlorophyll a; lease costs are determined by a combination of factors included in the submission including a bid/business plan/management-monitoring plan.

Mr. Guadagnoli resumed his presentation discussing shellfish growth types. He explained why oysters growing in Georgia are cluster oysters due to the predominance of intertidal oysters unlike other areas. Other shellfish that are harvested are clams which make up 85% of shellfish landings. Georgia began looking at clam mariculture in the 1990s. The Department monitors clam seed from out of state. Clam seed must be inspected for pathogens before coming into the state which is an expensive process. Oyster seed is not allowed into the state because the potential for disease transmission is greater.

The Department along with growers and the University system had meetings discussing the potential for a hatchery in the state. The UGA Shellfish lab used Coastal Incentive Grant funding to pilot a hatchery. Currently, they have over 5 million seed at various stages. They have given growers seed and are trying different methods to acquire singles. The process is still labor intensive and one of the major issues is how to grow and maintain oyster singles. He passed around some oyster shell samples and answered questions concerning the different growth types and expanding areas.

He discussed shellfish landings and how they have changed over time. Some notable influences have been changes in the Gulf such as Hurricane Katrina and the BP oil spill. Next he discussed enhancements to recreational harvest areas by the Program. They are using new methods to deploy as well as new types of treatments to enhance public areas. He finished up his presentation covering future Program goals. He stated that the industry growth will require development of new techniques and products. He emphasized the importance of getting a qualified lab in the state. Finally, he has been working with industry on development of growing leases.

Chairman Wolff asked Charlie Phillips for any thoughts from an industry standpoint. Mr. Phillips stated that he agreed with what was presented. From an industry perspective they are looking at various methods such as triploids. He gets nervous from a business point of view to have all eggs in one basket in case of disease or storm. It might be good to have ability to transfer from other states but you have to be smart about it.

Maritime Committee update

The Chairman asked if Mr. Phillips had anything to report out from the Maritime Committee. Mr. Phillips stated they had discussion on marketing strategy but nothing further to report out.

The Chairman then asked for report out for Shellfish Ad Hoc committee. Jill Andrews stated that the committee had not come together to meet. She recommended the Ad hoc committee come together after the meeting to schedule regular meeting times.

Communications Committee update

The Chairman asked for an update from the Outreach Committee. Stacia Hendrix reported they were tasked with looking at the hunting license reform for the upcoming year. After consulting with staff they decided to wait to see if it will be on the legislative agenda for the upcoming year. Asked to add Buddy Sullivan to the Committee. As for the shellfish component, the marketing standpoint doesn't seem to be needed at this time. Jo Hickson asked if it would be appropriate for the Communications Committee to lend its expertise on communication and marketing to the greenway project given that the Coastal Georgia Greenway is asking the legislature for a million dollars. The Chairman asked Stacia if the committee would be willing to take that on and she agreed.

Jill Andrews touched on the marketing of and support for the shellfish industry asking that members keep the support alive even though there was not a direct task at this point.

There was a question on what the actual ask was from CRD to the CAC at this point regarding shellfish. Jill replied that there are multiple items going on and the need to just keep communication open.

Legislative Committee update

Steve Willis provided the legislative update. The committee worked up a draft letter to be sent to Spud Woodward that introduced topics of concern for the group such as coal ash disposal, petroleum pipelines, and buffers. Discussion ensued about the letter. It was voiced that the group should further educate themselves on the topics either before sending a letter or parallel to a letter being routed. There was agreement that more education would be good. There was then discussion on whether the letter should go forward. After discussion, Alton Brown made a motion to approve the letter with two revisions. First to strike the second sentence in pipelines and coal ash paragraph and the second revision would be to strike the last sentence in the freshwater buffer. Mike Edgy seconded the motion. Under further discussion the question of the Coastal Greenway support was brought up. It was decided that the Greenway support would be a separate letter. It was recommended that Jo Hickson provide a draft letter to the Legislative committee. Discussion was closed and a vote was taken with sixteen in favor and five opposed. The motion passed.

Nominating Committee

Jill Andrews provided the nominating committee's recommendation for Joe E. Slaughter to be the next CAC Chair and Ashby Nix Worley to be the Vice Chair. Ms. Andrews explained the composition of the nominating committee and the bylaws for selection. Chairman Wolff asked for nominations from the floor. Steve Willis nominated Marci Culley for Chair. Staff noted that Marci Culley is not eligible to serve as Chair if another Citizen At Large from the same county serves as vice chair. Allen Burns made a motion to close nominations from the floor and accept the recommendation of the nominating committee. Ben Carswell seconded the motion. The motion passed.

CIG Cycle 20 Themes, Process, Criteria

CRD Grants Manager Stefanie Nagid presented the Coastal Incentive Grant Cycle 20 terms and conditions. The maximum award amount would be \$80,000 for theme related projects per year, \$50,000 for construction projects per year, and \$25,000 for "Critical Local Need" projects per year. Grant term could be a maximum of two years. Allen Burns made a motion to approve and Andrei Barkovski seconded. Vote was unanimously in favor.

Ms. Nagid then went over the Cycle 20 funding themes and the addition of a new theme. The proposed themes are Oceans & Wetlands, Sustainable Communities, Disaster Resiliency and Coastal Hazards, and Non-Point Source Pollution. Jill Andrews and Kelly Hill provided an overview and reasoning for the new theme. There was discussion around the construction and the Non-Point Source Pollution and education from the Council. Andrei Barkovski then made a motion to approve the themes. Allen Burns seconded and the vote in favor was unanimous.

Ms. Nagid next covered the Cycle 20 Ranking Criteria. There was discussion on potential changes to the scientific merit section of the Research Criteria. Andre Barkovski made a motion to change criteria and Jo Hickson seconded. Discussion followed and Buddy Sullivan called to question. There were two votes in favor. Paul Brockington made a motion to approve the Ranking Criteria as presented. Ben Carswell seconded the motion. Vote was unanimous in favor of.

Ms. Nagid went over the Cycle 20 timeline and presented the evolution of the letter of intent process and the new preproposal process. Paul Brockington suggested that a Council member participate in the staff review. Buddy Sullivan made a motion to approve the new preproposal process with a council member contributing and Jo Hickson seconded. The vote passed unanimously in favor.

Legislative Updates

Jill Andrews reported that there was not much happening at this point regarding the legislature. It didn't appear that the license fee will go up as was put forward previously. Nothing has really solidified yet but if something does staff will inform the Council.

Announcements

Kelly Hill provided an update on the Directed Project. She stated that we were still waiting to hear from the state accounting office but it appeared we will have to rebid the project. The project is to compile an inventory of Low Impact Development (LID) BMP sites along with information about the projects.

Beach Week was a successful event again with 16 partner vendors and over 3,000 participants. It was the 10 anniversary of the outreach event which educates the public about Georgia's Coast and Beaches.

Stefanie Nagid announced and provided information on the Georgia Climate Conference to be held on November 2 and 3rd.