

Depoe Bay Near-Shore Action Team
Special Meeting
Thursday, April 13, 2006 – 3:00 pm
Depoe Bay City Hall

PRESENT: Chair L. Goddard, R. Davilla (departed 5:12 pm), B. Fasciano (arrived 4:25 pm), J. O'Brien, F. Robison (departed 4:55 pm), L. Robison (arrived 3:13 pm), J. Rose, V. Sovern

ABSENT: M. Grover, M. McGuirk, C. Newell, F.C. Robison, J. Tate, P. Taunton

STAFF: City Recorder P. Murray

Chairman Goddard called the meeting to order at 3:10 p.m. and established a quorum.

Siletz Reef Rockfish Tagging Program

Goddard announced the purpose of this special meeting to discuss the upcoming Siletz reef acoustic fish tagging program with ODFW representatives. Steve Parker, ODFW Marine Research, introduced himself and the research team members. Parker provided information on the fish tagging program, accompanied with slides. He research goal is to develop stock assessments, life history information and techniques to reduce barotrauma in rockfish. Lab and field work has been conducted on recompression to aid survival rates. Other methods used include inverted hook with weight or a cage to drop and release the fish at depth. Keith Madison has designed and built a Cage Cam to study release behavior in the field, to study links between behavior and mortality rates. Parker reviewed examples of various fish behaviors at varying release depths. It is found that Black Rockfish have good survival rates and it appears the capture depth affects release behavior and probability of survival.

Parker explained the experimental design uses acoustic telemetry, monitors individual fish opposed to groups of fish, the study area is in the normal fishery environment, absent periods are recorded by sex, the tag is the size of a "AA" battery and is surgically inserted, the receivers are suspended approximately 15 feet off the ocean floor and are spaced about 700 meters apart. The Seal Rock research results showed fish home ranges are restricted to core use area, repeated fish activity in two home ranges, fish spend the daytime on the bottom and move up the water column at night (this behavior is twice as common as the opposite), patterns were noted, but there is never a time when all the fish are doing the same thing at the same time, and environmental variables affect behavior patterns. Black rockfish have a small activity area, frequent locations with females leaving for longer periods than males, abundant vertical movement, with catch variability not due to daily movement but catch-ability. The study period for survival is 21 days, 50% survived for that period and beyond. It is not known if the fish are able to see after release or if they return to normal, or what condition they are in.

2006 Program plans- research on the Siletz Reef will confirm Black Rockfish behavior, Yellow-eye Rockfish survival and behavior with less barotrauma, study recompression survival in other rockfish species, investigate homing ability with selected species, and observe Yellow-eye in shallow water. Fred Robison said he used to catch Yellow-eye in shallow water (60 to 80 feet), keep alive in transport by placing upside down in a bucket, these fish would live up to four years in the aquarium. It was noted that Yellow-eye used to be caught in areas where they no longer are located. Parker is requesting information on areas to target fish for tagging, he has brought maps on which the areas can be marked. They will need to tag a dozen Yellow-eye and a half dozen Black Rockfish, and receivers will need to be placed in good locations without a lot of vertical changes. The study area will be in a fishing area, so equipment damage may occur.

If receivers come up missing (not in its location) it is appreciated if it is reported and if found it is appreciated if it is returned.

There are two jobs for which a boat will be needed and it is hoped to contract with a Depoe Bay boat owner for these jobs. The first job will be to catch and tag the fish, which will require a fair sized vessel to accommodate fishermen and the tagging team. Dropping and setting the receivers and pulling the receivers to download data throughout the study period requires a boat with a hydraulic block to pull the receivers. There will be 21 receivers and it takes about ½ hour to download data from each one, typically the data download takes two days. ODFW will obtain a contract through a request for bid process and \$1,000,000 insurance will be required. Four to five days is estimated for catching and tagging and receivers will be pulled/data downloaded three to four times during the study period. The projected schedule is flexible to provide for rough seas. A contract is planned to be let by the end of May or beginning of June for the project to start and contracts are on an “as-needed” basis for flexibility on scheduling. Very calm seas are needed for live contact observing, typically leaving at dawn, hoping to be done before the northwest winds come up (2:00 pm). Siletz Reef was selected because ODFW has maps of the area and maps are a great aid in interpretation. It was noted that running time from Depoe Bay is about 20 minutes.

It was suggested to post notices to make recreational boaters aware of what the receivers are. Parker said typically there is not much information provided to the public during the study, but study results are released and publicized (data analysis and report takes approximately 8 months to a year). Parker said if anyone is interested, it is okay to copy the cam cage design to be used for fish release. Discussion followed on alternate methods of fish release and education efforts on the various methods.

Lars Robison reviewed locations of various types of rockfish on the map, noting that there are many pinnacles on the reef, one being only six fathoms deep. Parker said shallow areas would be avoided for placement of receivers, as well as sharp ledges or drop-offs. They will need information on these areas so they can build the gear and plan receiver locations. ODFW will coordinate with crabbers in the area (most are from Newport) and Goddard offered to research who is crabbing in the study area so contacts can be made. Lars Robison offered to provide additional information on the reef and fish in the area and Goddard will be the contact person for ODFW. City Staff will provide boat owner names and addresses to Parker for the Request for Proposals mailing for the contract (from city business license and moorage holder records). Parker and the research team members were thanked and they departed.

John Rose distributed copies of a NOAA letter dated March 27th and draft community profile information for discussion at the regular NSAT meeting on April 20th.

Rose then distributed copies of a draft information hand-out, NSAT logo and whale information card for review and approval (copies attached to the original of these minutes). He explained it is hoped to have the hand-out printed in time for the Wooden Boat Show and Crab Feed on April 22-23, and to include the NSAT logo on a whale information card which will also be available at the Whale Watch Center. Discussion followed on the draft logo, including suggestions for revisions. Rose asked for approval today for this application only, providing a revised logo in the future for final approval.

MOTION: O’Brien moved to approve the use of the logo on a temporary basis for printing on the back of the whale information card. Sovern seconded the motion.

Goddard said it is moved and seconded and called for discussion. There was none.

VOTE: Motion passed.

AYES: Davilla, Goddard, Fasciano, O'Brien, L. Robison, Rose, Sovern

MOTION: Rose moved to authorize Sovern to print 1,000 information hand-outs for the Wooden Boat Show and Crab Feed. O'Brien seconded the motion.

Goddard said it is moved and seconded and called for discussion. Discussion occurred on the draft information hand-out, including 1) add *Near Shore Action Team* below *FISH OFF?* and 2) change *Depoe Bay Community Foundation, a nonprofit action group formed to save our economy* to *Near Shore Action Team c/o City of Depoe Bay* since the Foundation is not yet established.

VOTE: Motion passed.

AYES: Davilla, Goddard, Fasciano, O'Brien, L. Robison, Rose, Sovern

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 5:12 p.m.

Loren Goddard, Chairman

Pery Murray, City Recorder