

AISWG Marine Subcommittee audio Conference: Green crab Monitoring

Tuesday, January 29, 2008, 9:30am

Hosted via NMFS bridge number. Minutes taken by Deena Jallen

Participants

Tammy Davis- ADF&G, Juneau

Gary Freitag- Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory Program, Ketchikan

Judy Hamilton- KBRR, Homer

Ingrid Harrald- KBRR, Homer

Deena Jallen- UAF CES, Fairbanks

Lance Lerum- Forestry Service, Juneau

Whitney Rapp- Glacier Bay National Park and Preserve, Gustavus

Linda Shaw- National Marine Fisheries Service, Juneau

Alan Unmack- Sitka Tribe, Sitka

Heather Woody- Sitka Tribe, Sitka

Agenda: Items to discuss

- Touch bases for 2008 sampling season
- Set next meeting time

Additional Resources

- Contact information

Discuss 2008 Green crab monitoring

Tammy Davis reported that ADF&G had not gotten funding for their NISA 5 proposal. Based on the response from NOAA to the proposal, they changed some of the grant objectives, so they would be more in line with NISA 5 goals. Linda Shaw had requested funding and ADF&G now has \$38,400 to be distributed through Linda Shaw and NMFS. The funds will need to be spent by the end of the state fiscal year, although an extension may be requested. Tammy said that the funding is for green crab monitoring in Southeast Alaska, but it might also be extended to South central Alaska, if the same sampling protocol is used. The purpose of the funding is to establish monitoring in Southeast Alaska, and to tie in with PWSRCAC monitoring efforts.

Linda Shaw would like to identify the equipment needs of people in the field. She thinks PWSRCAC has enough traps, and will contact Dan Gilson to check on the number of traps available. The funding could also be used to get data loggers for salinity and temperature for the sampling sites. Whitney Rapp said that she needs bait in Glacier Bay. The local source is no longer available, so bait has to be brought in from Juneau.

Gary Freitag said he expects they will end up with money left over for additional sites, and some of the money could be spent on travel to sites of high likelihood of having green crabs (as predicted by the habitat suitability models). He would expect to see them in Ketchikan first.

Linda Shaw said that Judy Hamilton had made the comment that the trapping efforts in Juneau were not catching a lot of native crabs. She suggested looking at areas of higher salinity for trapping (the low salinity areas didn't have many native crabs, either). Turbidity might also be a factor. Ingrid Harrald said that Dan Gilson did not find many crabs in areas of sedimentation (glacial silt). Gary Freitag suggested doing some ground truthing for the model, and sampling in areas where Dungeness crabs populations are known to be found that coincide with areas predicted by the model. Site accessibility should also be considered. The green crab habitat model shows green crab being most likely to occur in estuarine areas, and areas with low turbidity and salinity. The model also uses the distribution of red rock crab as one of the criteria, but Alaska does not have the same large numbers of red rock crab that are found in other areas. Linda Shaw suggested looking at that model parameter as well when selecting sites.

Gary Freitag asked how the group should proceed, and suggested people in each area look at potential sampling sites, and estimate the costs of travel to do sampling. Lance Lerum said that he might also be able to sample opportunistically for green crab while on other Forest Service research cruises. Their work is primarily involved with trapping Dungeness crabs at greater depths. He also suggested increasing outreach efforts to the commercial fishing industry. Whitney Rapp pointed out that the mesh on the commercial pots is generally too big, but in her work with sampling juvenile lobsters, they had success by getting the fishers to disable the trap vents, and then look at what was caught. Lance Lerum mentioned that traps often catch smaller species anyway, so contacting the crab fishery and making them aware of the green crab issue would be useful.

Tammy Davis said that there are funds in a separate pot of money for outreach efforts, and that the \$38,400 should be focused on sampling, not outreach. Linda Shaw asked the participants to take a look at the website habitat suitability model, and over the next month, identify suitable sampling sites. From the ShoreZone website, people can pull up a 'query' tab, and check boxes of habitat types (eelgrass, sunny estuaries, etc). The model uses a string of commands to include and exclude habitat variables associated with green crab ('sunny exposed estuarine wetlands' without 'eelgrass'). Linda sent out a list of model codes via email (see Additional Resources). There might also be a way to save the maps as a shapefile. People can call her if they have questions with entering queries in to the model. She would like the sites identified by February 20th. Whitney Rapp wanted clarification on how to select the sites. Linda Shaw said that the number of traps will likely be the limiting factor. Dan Gilson had been using 2 or 3 sites with 8 traps each in the sampled communities.

Linda also reminded that the model might not be the ultimate predictor of finding green crab in Alaska, but Tammy Davis would like to see the model followed since Linda's proposal was based specifically on using it to choose monitoring sites.. The data sampled can work as a test of the model, the model uses specific attributes that have proven to be preferred by green crab, we should test the models before we decide it is not appropriate. Whitney Rapp pointed out that the model did not include Glacier Bay, Tammy and Linda said that she could use the model criteria to pick sites locally.

Linda Shaw will begin doing permit applications after there is a firmer idea of where sampling will take place. Participants should have their sites selected by February 20th.

Next Tunicate teleconference

February 19, 9:30 am

To attend, call into 907-586-7977. Allow line to ring until another party picks up, long distance charges apply.

Green crab teleconference

February 22, 9:30 am

To attend, call into 907-586-7977. Allow line to ring until another party picks up, long distance charges apply.

Marine Subcommittee

February 28, 9:30 am

To attend, call into 907-586-7977. Allow line to ring until another party picks up, long distance charges apply.

AISWG

February 28, 11:00 am

To attend, call into 907-271-1405. Allow line to ring until another party picks up, long distance charges apply.

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Additional Resources

ShoreZone Coastal Mapping

<http://www.fakr.noaa.gov/maps/szintro.htm>

Green Crab Query Codes:

BC class 24 = sand and gravel flat or fan
Habitat class 43 = semi-protected estuary/wetland
Habitat class 53 = protected estuary/wetland
Habitat class 63 = very protected estuary/wetland
Habitat class 33 = semi-exposed estuary/wetland

PUC = Puccinella (supratidal grass)

GRA = Grass

SED = Sedge

ZOS = Zostera (eelgrass)

Contact info

Gary Freitag

Phone: 907-228-4551

Fax: 907-225-3895

E-mail: freitag@sfos.uaf.edu

Robertson/Hamilton Technical Center

600 Stedman

Ketchikan, AK 99901

<http://seagrant.uaf.edu/map/staff/freitag.html>