

Tournament Director Webinar

April 11, 2018



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Status of the Fisheries



FAST STATS



- Over 200 tournaments in Maryland
- Several cancellations because of bad weather, including BASS Elite Series
- Biggest bags from upper Chesapeake Bay
- Highest catch rates from Lake Habeeb, Potomac River, and Deep Creek Lake
- High levels of survival at scales

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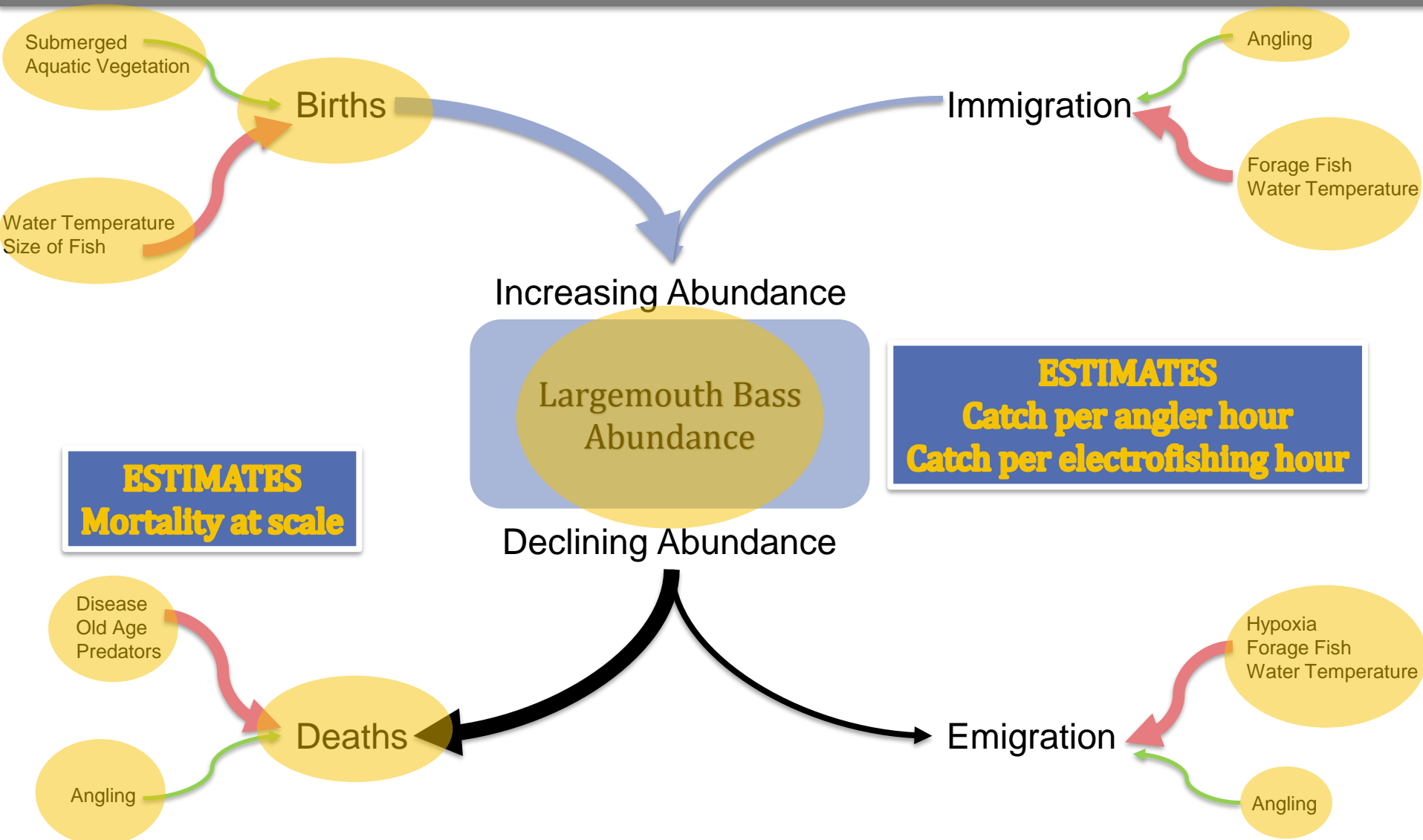
Status of the Fisheries

Most Actively Fished Areas by Black Bass Tournaments



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Status of the Fisheries

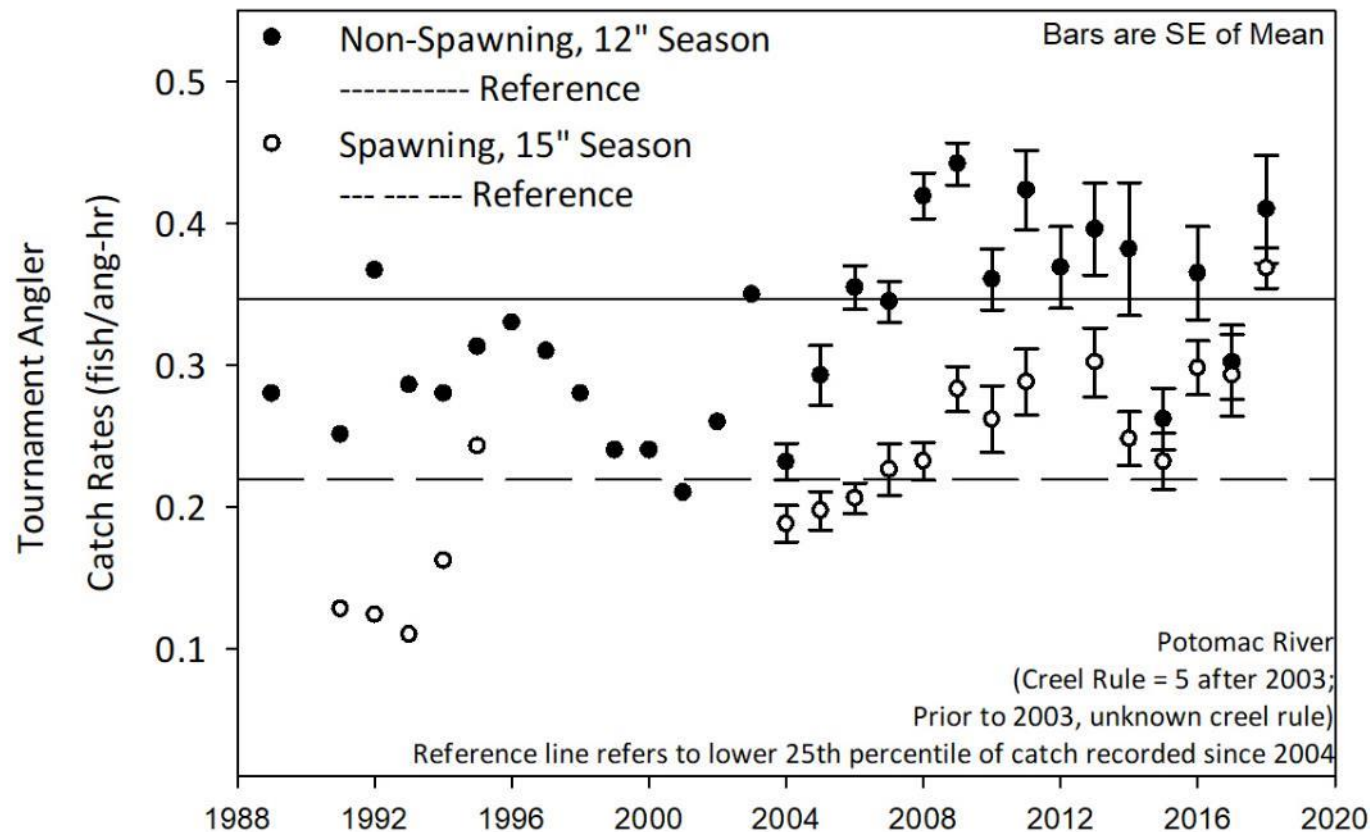


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Status of the Fisheries



Tournament Catch Rate – Potomac River

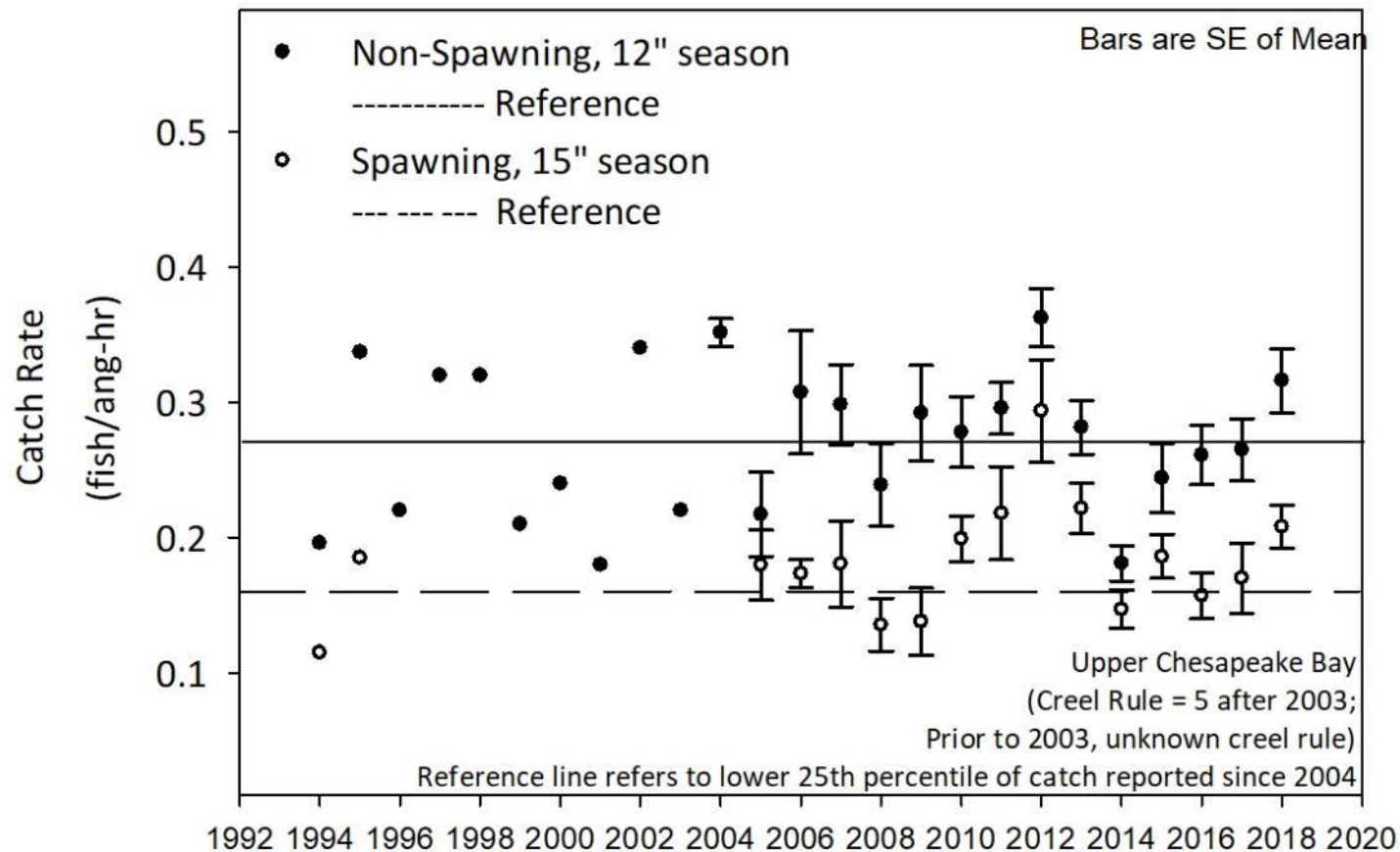


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Status of the Fisheries



Tournament Catch Rate – upper Chesapeake Bay

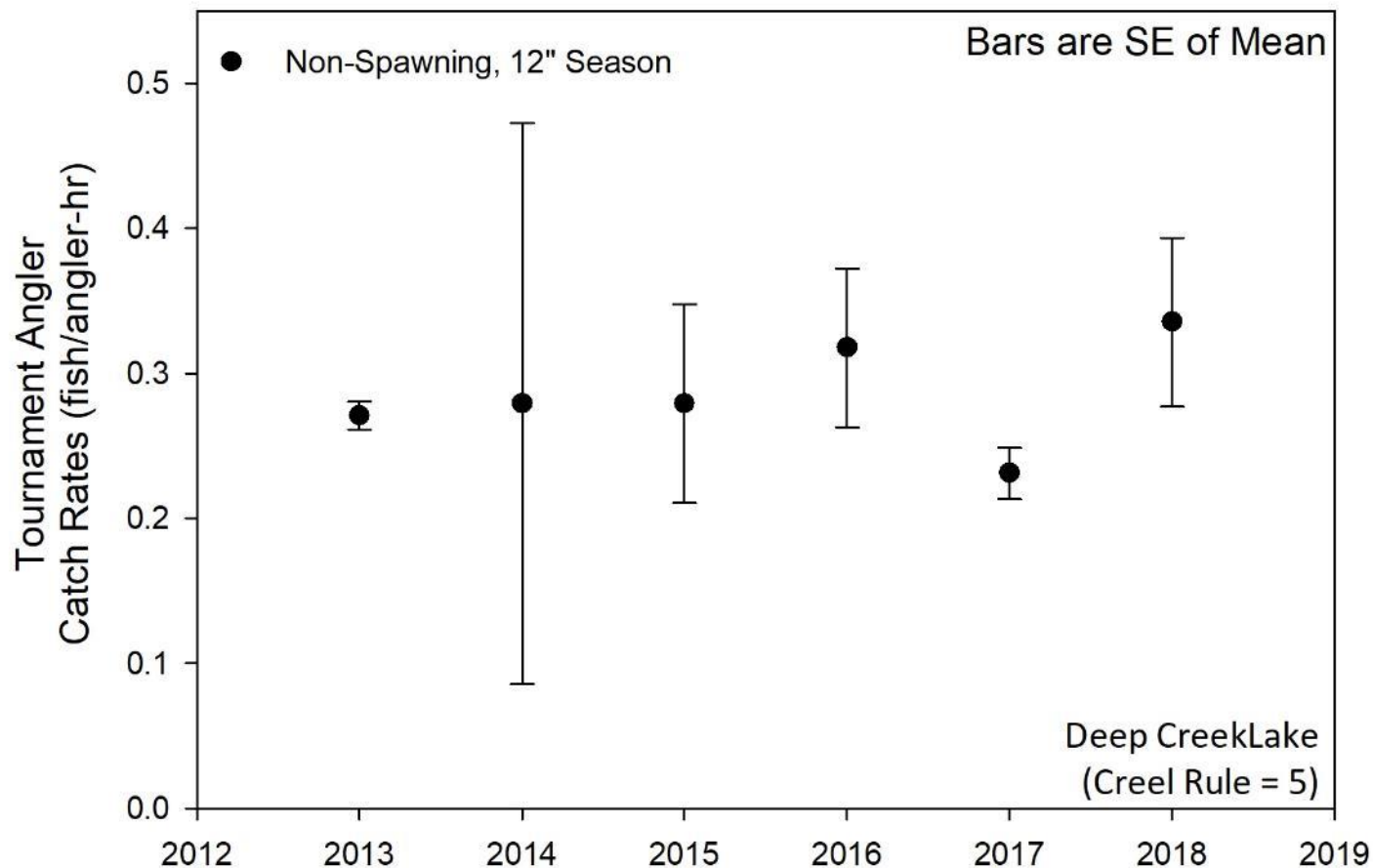


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Tournament Catch Rate – Deep Creek Lake

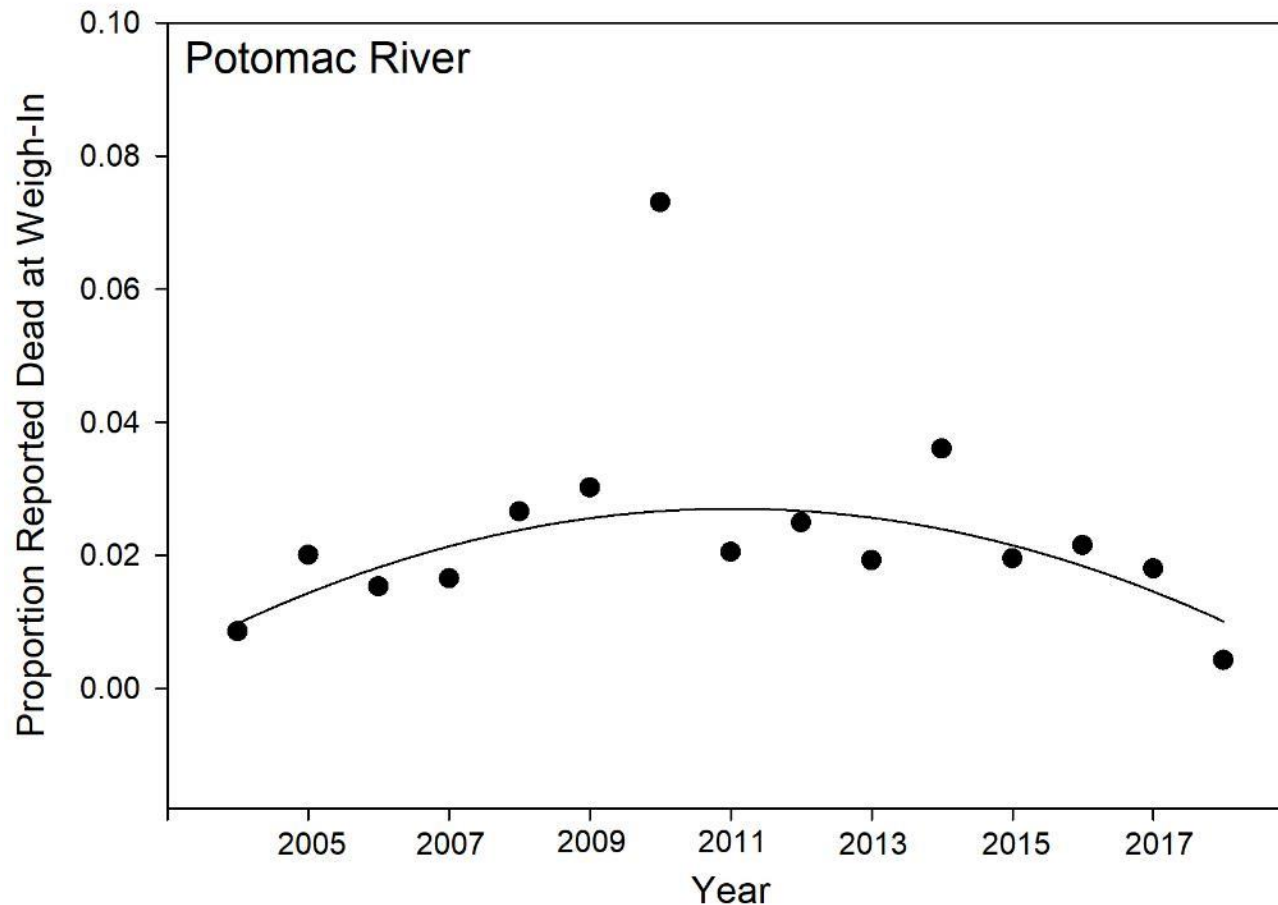


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Status of the Fisheries



Mortality at Scale

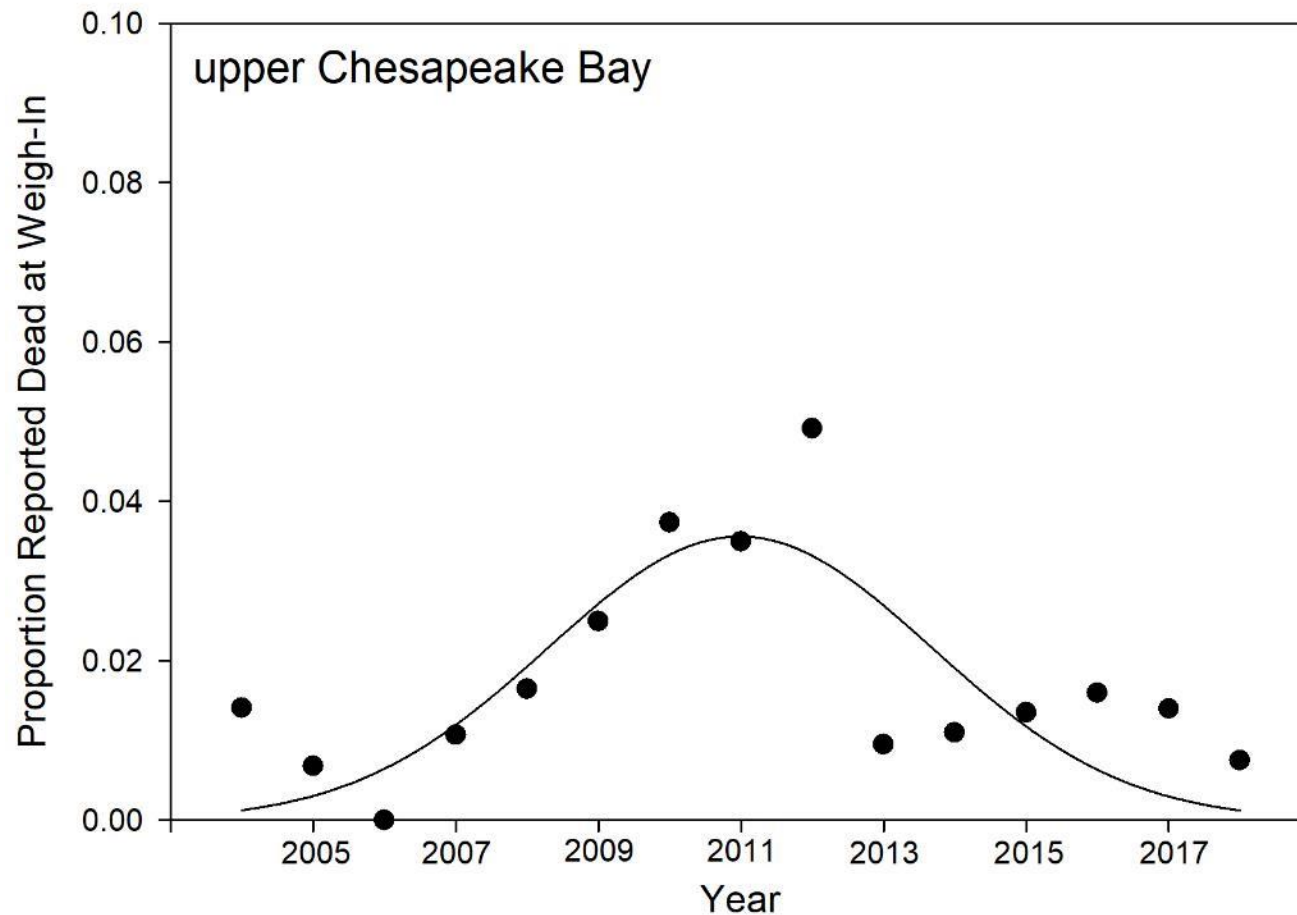


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Status of the Fisheries



Mortality at Scale

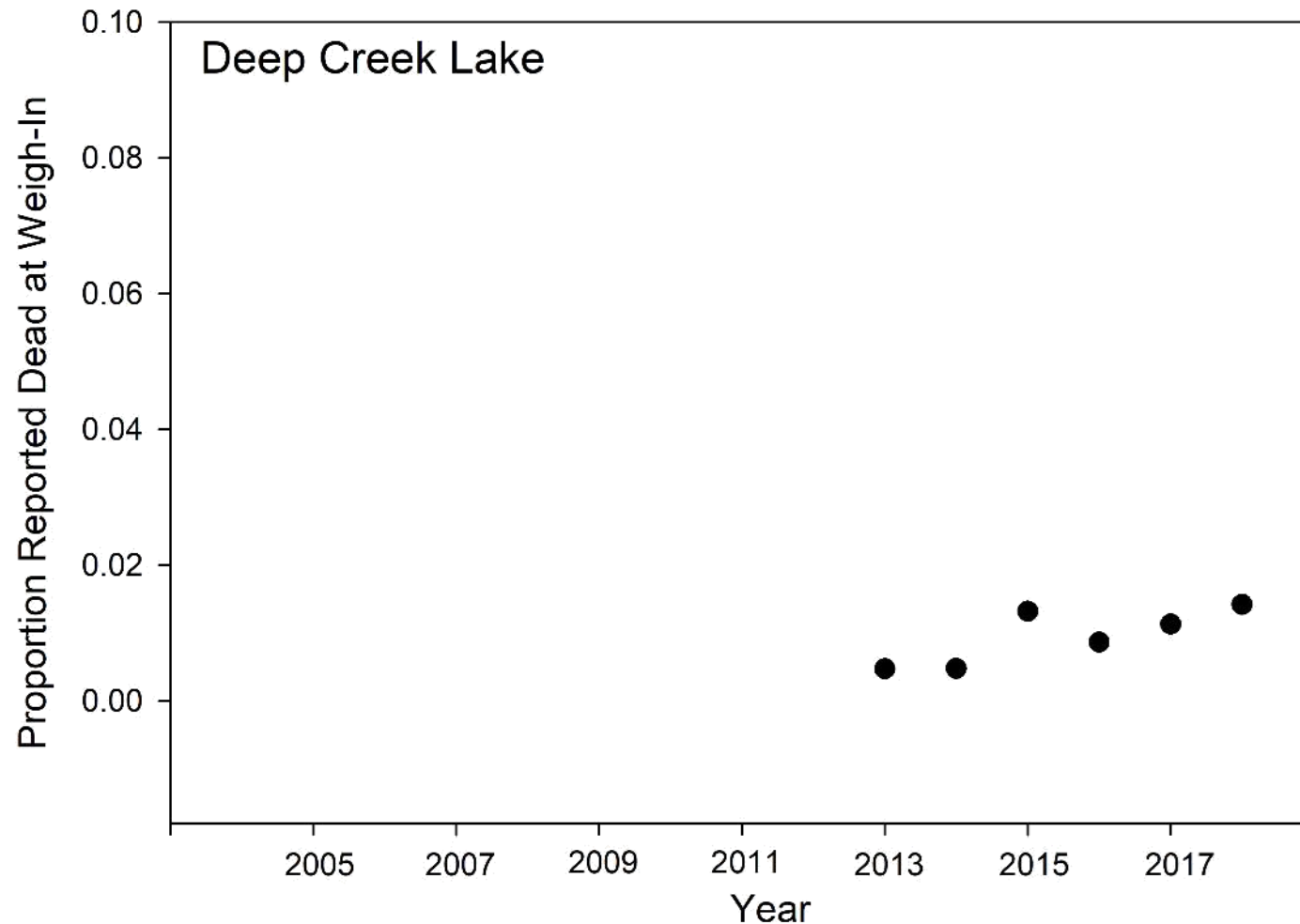


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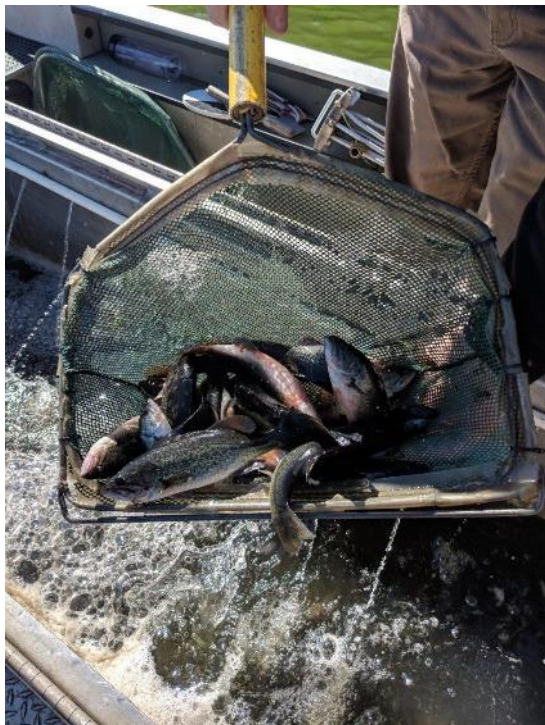


Mortality at Scale



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Status of the Fisheries



Fishery	Report Card
Upper Chesapeake Bay	A
Potomac River	A-
Patuxent River	A+
Wicomico River	C
Marshyhope Creek	D
Gunpowder River	C
Middle River	C
Bush River	D

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Status of the Fisheries



Narrative for Tidal Bass Program Grade Assessment

- Upper Bay: Reproduction was good though recruitment may be lagging; relative abundance was close to the 25th percentile, similar to last year and much improved over previous years, possibly resulting from combined efforts aimed at better fish care from anglers, stocking and improved distribution of nursery habitats.
- Potomac River: Reproduction was good, despite tough weather, but recruitment to fishery is slow though growth is great; lower than average total mortality, likely owed to handling care by anglers and reduced fishing pressure, has helped to keep catch levels high and maintain quality adults in population; the fishery is effectively recovering from problems observed earlier this decade.
- Patuxent River: Reproduction was exceptional, and coupled with average growth and annual mortality, help explain extraordinary levels of recruitment and relative abundance; since the last survey, Patuxent River has been stocked effectively with a total of 2279 advanced fingerlings and subadults.
- Wicomico River: With low levels of reproduction, as well as lower catches of adults than in 2015 and 2016, the population of upper Wicomico River near Salisbury continues to offer a relatively small, challenging fishery. While growth and body condition levels suggest fairly healthy individuals, recruitment remains difficult and likely hinders growth of the population. The population was stocked in 2012 with 3216 advanced fingerlings, but not since then.
- Marshyhope Creek: Reproduction was very poor for the population, growth rates are lower than usual, and recruitment appears to be challenged as fewer stock size fish and fewer adults were captured than usual, even though total mortality levels appear reasonable; this population may require stocking in the near future, further study into underlying causes of observed patterns, and creel assessments to document an effect to anglers.
- Gunpowder River: Reproduction was good and the distribution of lengths helped to indicate good recruitment and size structure. Growth rates were high and all body condition indices indicated adults were foraging well. Relative abundance was typical of previous years, though a short time series of data prevents any robust comparisons. This river has been annually stocked with a total of 5439 advanced fingerlings and subadults since 2014.
- Middle River: Inconsistently surveyed and a recent addition to the Tidal Bass Survey, the Middle River population exhibited good reproduction, but a size structure that was not indicative of a normal stock of bass. Average growth rates were low, among the lowest of the survey. However, catch levels of age 1+ fish were, on average, greater than the two other central region rivers (Gunpowder River, Bush River). This population has been stocked by the Department and local bass clubs with at least 800 subadults stocked in the past 3 years.
- Bush River: Inconsistently surveyed and a recent addition to the Tidal Bass Survey, the Bush river population exhibited good reproduction and a size structure typical for bass populations. Average relative abundance was the lowest of the three central region rivers (also, Middle River and Gunpowder River). For the first time in 20 years, Bush River was stocked with 265 subadults in 2018.

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Status of the Fisheries



Table 1. Brief comparison of expected catch black bass greater than 200 mm (8 inches) per boat electrofishing hour (CPUEs), percent relative weight (Wr) and percentage of black bass larger than 200 mm in the sample (PSD%). For general comparisons, Wr should be greater than 95% and PSD% should occur between 40% - 60%, and for tidal largemouth bass populations, a reference point of 57% is generally used but can be biased by gear efficiencies when catchability varies by age or sampling conditions. Data obtained from Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Shaded rows represent results collected from non-tidal waters during the June 30, 2017 to July 1, 2018 time frame whereas unshaded rows have that from tidal waters during the September to November 2018 time frame.

Location	CPUEs	Wr	PSD%
Deep Creek Lake (SMB)	22.5 BASS/HR	91%	45%
Deep Creek Lake (LMB)	5.1 BASS/HR	98%	94%
Cunningham Falls Reservoir	261 BASS/HR	91%	34%
Little Seneca Lake	153 BASS/HR	91%	61%
Loch Raven Reservoir	50 BASS/HR	IN OR ABOVE OPTIMAL	73%
Loch Raven Reservoir (Smallmouth Bass)	2.55 BASS/HR	IN OR ABOVE OPTIMAL	N/A
St. Mary's Lake	37.34 BASS/HR	85.5% or 89.7%	17.6%
Wheatley Lake	50.58 BASS/HR	84.5% or 93.4%	22.9%
Johnson's Pond	101 BASS/HR	GOOD CONDITION	75%
Smithville Lake	39 BASS/HR	WELL BELOW EXPECTED	50%
Conowingo Reservoir (LMB)	27.8 BASS/HR	94%	89%
Conowingo Reservoir (SMB)	59.3 BASS/HR	85.5%	73%
Potomac River (non-tidal- SMB)	82.9 BASS/HR	87%	53%
Upper Chesapeake Bay	34.87 BASS/HR	100%	88%
Potomac River (tidal)	23.50 BASS/HR	100%	68%
Patuxent River	46.56 BASS/HR	103%	53%
Wicomico River	3.47 BASS/HR	101%	70%
Marshyhope Creek	1.79 BASS/HR	99%	74%
Gunpowder River	4.06 BASS/HR	100%	60%
Middle River	8.75 BASS/HR	101%	33%
Bush River	5.42 BASS/HR	99%	64%

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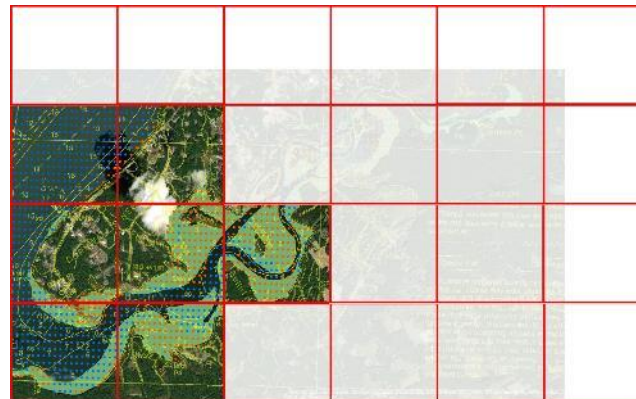
Potomac River Bass Management



Cooperative Surveys



- Three meetings on Potomac Bass fisheries management
- Objective to monitor trends in population size for Potomac River population, annual joint report
- Commitment of funding for tags and fall survey effort by agencies



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Updates on Weigh-in Facilities



- Leesylvania State Park (Potomac River)
 - Active interest
 - Engineering concerns
- Rogues Harbor (Elk River)
 - Engineering design
- Glenn Cove (Conowingo Reservoir)
 - Herb Weichmann and Joe Booker
 - Black Bass Conservation Award
 - Problems with wood??

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Updated Self-Certification Form



Maryland Aquatic Invasive Species

Vessel Self-Certification Form

All vessels (Motorized and Non-Motorized) must be free of Aquatic Invasive Species. (AIS)

 STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS! Prevent the transport of nuisance species. Clean all recreational equipment. www.ProtectYourWaters.net	<p>Please watch the Maryland DNR Video: Stopping the Spread of Invasive Species https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqQ7P4M6Hoc</p> <p><i>It's the law!</i> 08.02.19.05 .05 General. A. A person may not place or attempt to place upon or into State waters a vessel or associated equipment with attached or contained aquatic plants, zebra mussels, or other prohibited species of nonnative organisms. B. Water taken from waters infested by prohibited nonnative species may not be diverted, appropriated, or transported on public roads except in the following circumstances: (1) In an emergency declared by appropriate local or State authorities, such as a fire emergency; (2) As specified in water appropriation or public waters work permits; or (3) Under a permit issued by the Secretary. In addition to any other penalty provided under law, a person who violates a provision of this section or a regulation adopted under this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 30 days or a fine not exceeding \$ 2,500 or both for each offense, but not exceeding a total of \$ 25,000 for offenses arising out of the same enforcement action.</p>
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Before launching your vessel, please read the following statements, fill out the information, and sign below:

Boat Owner Number (for tournament): _____ Zip code of Boat Owner _____

My vessel and trailer were last on _____ Date _____
(most recent water body and state) (day/month/year)

I am planning to launch my vessel onto _____ Date _____
(planned water body and state) (day/month/year)

If you are planning on launching your vessel onto a **DIFFERENT** body of water from where you were last, **PLEASE** read the instructions on the back of this form and **properly wash and decontaminate your vessel and trailer** prior to launching to avoid the potential spread of Aquatic Invasive Species. Please check each box below when completed:

- ☐ Has your vessel/trailer been thoroughly **cleaned**; any dirt, plant, animal material, and grit removed from the vessel/trailer and boat?
- ☐ Have you **drained** and dried all engines, ballasts, live wells, bilge areas, and/or other equipment?
- ☐ Has the vessel/trailer been allowed to completely **dry**? (if not, please see the back of this paper and follow additional cleaning methods to ensure you are not unknowingly transporting microscopic AIS)

Once you are able to check ALL boxes above, **please fill out the information below, sign, date and have it available at your launch site.** Thank you for helping to protect Maryland waters from AIS!

Tournament Director Name: _____ Date of Tournament: _____

*** Note: A new certificate should be filled out with the current information each time you launch your vessel***

• Aquatic Nuisance Species

- Zebra Mussel
- *Hydrilla*

• Deep Creek Lake and Lake Habeeb

- Updated form requires less personal information
- Can be obtained from [Tidal Bass Program](#) page

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Tournament Economic Assessment



- Angler Survey
 - Non-tidal and tidal
 - Target preferences, catch and harvest rates, economics
- Money
 - Over 38 million estimated as spent in 2017 from Potomac River and upper Bay on black bass fishing (angler-intercept)
 - Over 400 million estimated as spent in 2015 from non-tidal waters on recreational fishing, in general
 - Despite their popularity, valuing organized sportfishing in Maryland has been inconsistent and rarely done
 - Why do it? It helps to promote organized fishing with FishMaryland, County Offices of Tourism, and the Maryland Outdoor Recreation Economic commission. It keeps counties interested in bringing big events to the area. It prioritizes the needs of black bass in watershed management plans.

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Tournament Economic Assessment



- ~ 30 questions
- Survey request sent out to select directors over next few months; please share with anglers via web or email
- Personal information will not be shared or analyzed
- Results reported in 2020

Black Bass Tournament Economic Impact

More than 300 black bass tournaments happen each year in Maryland. They promote fishing. They're important for the economy.

Recreational anglers spent over 38 million in 2017 fishing tidal Potomac River and upper Chesapeake Bay for black bass. What about tournament anglers?

The Department of Natural Resources wants to know how much tournament directors and anglers invest in their fishery each year. Why? It helps to promote organized fishing with FishMaryland, County Offices of Tourism, and the Maryland Outdoor Recreation Economic commission. It keeps counties interested in bringing big events to the area. It prioritizes the needs of black bass in watershed management plans. Thanks for your help.

* Required

Are you a tournament director or an angler? *

- ☐ Director: I am in charge of and host the event
- ☐ Angler: I fish the tournament as a boater or co-angler

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Never submit passwords through Google Forms.

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Regulations Update



Regulations Update

FISH REFUGES — Gumtree Cove

The department would like to remove the designation of Gumtree Cove, located in Nanjemoy River, as a fish refuge. Removing the designation will increase fishing access and opportunities in Nanjemoy River. This idea is supported by the Black Bass Advisory Subcommittee.



SNAKEHEAD

The department would like to remove the specific methods for killing a snakehead and simply requiring an individual to kill the snakehead upon capture. This would simplify the requirement for both enforcement and anglers.



LICENSING — Boat Decals

The department would like to authorize a boat owner to provide proof of purchase for a certain period of time to allow for a delay in shipping of fishing or crabbing boat decals. This change will be better for customers and help enforcement.



Small tournament permit requirement??

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Black Bass Advisory Subcommittee



Major Happenings

- Habitat liaison to department, Nick Kuttner
- Found no convincing evidence that catch-and-release or off-limits areas in tidal rivers during spring helped protect recruitment
- Encouraged attention to forms of fishing that damaged spawning habitat during spring
- Reviewed department's policy for reducing stockpiling at weigh-in areas
- Advised no changes to existing regulations for black bass possession in tidal and non-tidal areas
- Discussed wanton waste problems
- Recommended better coordinated management of Potomac River fishery by Virginia and Maryland

