

Summer 2013 SMP Updates

On behalf of the Shellfish Management Plan Team, we hope you've been enjoying the summer and are having fun in this hot weather! It's been a few months since our last SMP Stakeholder meeting in May, but we've been busy here preparing the SMP Chapters, hosting "How to Dig Clams" events, and having productive dialogues with many of you about how to maintain the tremendous momentum and interest in shellfish resources. We wanted to take a moment and share with you some of the SMP's summer highlights and things to look forward to this fall.

RISMP Seminar Series

Since July, we've been hosting a wildly popular "Clamming 101" series for the general public. Our first event was a shore digging demonstration on July 23rd with recreational digger Paul Kennedy. Participants new to clamming had the opportunity to learn about recreational regulations, how to spot clams in the sand, and techniques for digging. Then, they got a hands-on chance to dig steamers and quahogs of their own.

Quite a few of our novice clambers told us: "I've lived in Rhode Island my whole life and have always wanted to go clamming!" We were happy to give them the opportunity to fulfill a dream, while demonstrating the cultural and social importance of shellfish to our state.

On August 2, 2013 we held a special event, "Clamming 102: Bull-Raking on Greenwich Bay with Jody King." This was a dedicated event for our SMP funders and supporters to get to know us, the quahogging way of life, and our SMP activities.

Pictures from these and the rest of the RISMP events can be found on the [Rhode Island Sea Grant Facebook page](#). Like the page for more information and updates about all of the RISG projects, including the SMP!

Media and Press

Thanks to a great communications strategy and team, we've had a consistent presence and steady message in the media. Examples include:

- [The Providence Journal](#), July 26, 2013, "Raking in the Clams"
- [The Rhode Show](#), July 24, 2013, 9:00 a.m. segment
- Opinion Editorial (OpEd) in June by David Ghigliotty, commercial quahogger, in the Providence Journal, [Westerly Sun](#), Warwick Beacon, Cranston Herald, EcoRI, and all of the area [Patch sites](#).

Keep your eyes open for additional OpEds coming soon. Two editorials are currently in the works—one will examine the cultural value of recreational shellfishing in the state, and the second shows a local shellfishing family's perspective on the whelk fishery.

SMP Progress

As we mentioned at our May SMP Stakeholder meeting, we have a working draft of the table of contents for the SMP, which serves as an extended and detailed outline for the document as a whole. It is important to remember that this is a working draft and is likely to change as we start filling in the information gaps. The working draft outline is posted on the SMP website at <http://www.rismp.org/documents/project-documents/> for your review and comments. Please submit comments via SMP@etal.uri.edu.

The SMP will contain a lot of important information and we are all invested in getting it right. Therefore, over the course of this year, we'll be focused on completing four of the SMP chapters. The remaining chapters will be the focus of 2014-15.

In 2013-14, we'll complete Chapters 1 (Introduction); Chapter 3 (Biology of Shellfish); Chapter 5 (Harvesting, Growing, and Restoring Shellfish); and Chapter 8 (Existing Statutes, Regulations, and Policies). We've already begun drafting outlines, collecting baseline information for these chapters, and filling in the gaps with what we know and have learned throughout the SMP process. Please note: What we **have not** been doing is writing recommendations. This portion of the SMP will come this fall with your help and participation.

Technical Advisory Committees for the SMP

We all know that the management recommendations of the SMP are “where the rubber meets the road” in this effort. SMP chapters will each have recommendations associated with its topic. As noted above, we have not yet begun writing these recommendations. Early this fall, we will form Technical Advisory Committees (TACs), composed of fishermen, conservation groups, state agencies, the general public, and other interested parties. The TACs will be the primary force in creating these recommendations. Our aim is to have these TACs formed by the [September 17th SMP stakeholder meeting](#).

Reminders

The SMP website (www.rismp.org) is a great place to stay up-to-date on SMP related events and happenings. You can access all press articles, read blog entries from seminar presenters, download brochures and SMP documents, and more. As we add to this site continually, we encourage you all to sign up for email updates by subscribing to the SMP blog (found at the bottom of the webpage). You will get an email update **ONLY** if we've added anything new to the website. This is helpful if you want to stay privy to new things that are added (like blogs, press coverage, etc.) but forget to check the website often. And of course you can always sign up for our Listserv. We do not share this list with anyone and you will receive periodic updates on meetings, events, and public comment periods.

We hope you all join us on one or all of the upcoming events or meetings. Feel free to call Azure at 401-874-6197 or email SMP@etal.uri.edu if you have any questions, concerns, or comments. And, be sure to pass this information on to anyone else who may be interested!