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MARYLAND - VIRGINIA
"Potomac River Compact of 1958"

Potomac River Fisheries Commission

P.O. Box 9

Colonial Beach, Virginia 22443

www.prfc.us



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**POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION
BLUE CRAB ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

PRELIMINARY MEETING AGENDA

August 15, 2017

**222 Taylor Street
Colonial Beach, VA
Carpenter Building
John T. Parran Hearing Room**

- 1. Call to Order – 6:00 p.m.**
- 2. 2017 Crab Harvest Report (Handout)**
- 3. 2017-2018 Chesapeake Bay Jurisdictional Management Measures Discussion**
- 4. Discussion of Possible 2017/2018 PRFC Crab Management Responses (Possible Action)**
- 5. Issue Discussion: Designated Crabber Regulation and Draft Regulation (Handout)**
- 6. Issue Discussion: Conflict between crab pots and fishing gear**
- 7. Delinquency notices for late harvest reports**
- 8. BCAC Vacancy: Virginia Lower River Peeler Potter and Possible Options**
- 9. New Business**
- 10. Adjourn**

Crab Advisory Committee Meeting

Potomac River Fisheries Commission - P.O. Box 9 - Colonial Beach, VA 22443
(804) 224-7148 - Fax: (804) 224-2712

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 1, 2017
Contact: Martin L. Gary
(804) 224-7148; Fax (804) 224-2712

Colonial Beach, VA

The Potomac River Crab Advisory Committee, which is comprised of private citizens and industry representatives, will meet at **6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 15, 2017**, in the John T. Parran Hearing Room of the PRFC Office Building, 222 Taylor Street, Colonial Beach, Virginia.

Items to be discussed include: 2017-2018 Chesapeake Bay Jurisdictional Blue crab management measures, possible 2017/2018 PRFC crab management responses related to low crab reproduction in 2016 (Possible Action), 2017 crab harvest report, designated crabber provision and draft regulation, conflict between crab pots and fishing gear, delinquency notices for late harvest reports, and a vacancy for a lower river VA crabber. The BCAC is meeting in advance of the PRFC's September quarterly business meeting to allow recommendations to be forwarded for the Commission's consideration when they meet on September 7th.

This and all PRFC meetings are open to the public, and all interested persons are invited to attend. PRFC does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities; therefore, if you are in need of reasonable accommodations due to a disability, please call (804) 224-7148 or (800) 266-3904 no later than three workdays prior to the meeting date and identify your needs.

For those that cannot attend in person, this meeting will be available via webinar. To participate in the webinar, please register for Meeting of PRFC's Blue Crab Advisory Committee (BCAC) on Aug 15, 2017 6:00 PM EDT at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5980770793819682819>

Potomac River Fisheries Commission Crab Landings Report

2017 Season (Preliminary)

-vs- 2016, 2015, 2014 and 31 Year Average

(20 yr. average for % female and 19 yr. average for soft crabs)

Month	Hard Crab (bushels)	%F	Peeler (lbs.)	Soft (lbs.)	# Boats Fishing Crab Pot	Crab Pots Set	----- Average Number For CP -----		
							Pots Fished	Days Worked	Bu/100 Pots
----- totals for all gear type -----									
April 17	3,933	39	38	0	91	22,386	246	7	2.69
April 16	1,987	25	20	23	63	16,317	259	5	2.26
April 15	98	17	0	0	25	4,900	196	2	0.96
April 14	178	24	0	0	27	5,859	217	3	0.98
April Avg.	1,589	18	8	1	77	15,323	199	6	1.35
May 17	6,684	27	2,871	159	136	34,544	254	9	2.26
May 16	3,057	19	1,617	58	111	27,861	251	8	1.41
May 15	2,558	14	1,669	53	90	23,130	257	8	1.31
May 14	1,989	27	1,432	83	97	24,056	248	7	1.12
May Avg.	4,963	18	9,881	197	160	32,960	206	11	1.29
June 17	10,228	25	3,147	283	160	35,360	221	10	2.88
June 16	8,683	22	5,426	291	173	37,714	218	9	2.46
June 15	6,764	26	4,517	334	141	31,302	222	10	2.22
June 14	4,713	29	3,842	224	138	30,912	224	9	1.62
June Avg.	13,102	27	12,466	307	215	41,280	192	13	2.35
July 17	3,563	19	1,041	92	131	25,152	192	6	2.41
July 16	13,092	23	4,250	444	194	40,934	211	12	2.73
July 15	10,222	22	3,010	321	169	35,490	210	12	2.41
July 14	7,230	25	2,852	255	151	34,428	228	12	1.80
July Avg.	16,899	27	8,289	361	233	44,503	191	14	2.58

Totals:

2017	24,408	7,097	533
2016	26,819	11,313	816
2015	19,642	9,196	708
2014	14,110	8,126	562
Avg.	36,553	30,624	866

Prior year totals are for
the same months

Report Run Date: 8/1/2017

**ORDER #2017-06
(replaces #2016-12)**

2017 CRAB SEASON

THE POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION, having found it necessary for the preservation of the crab population, having considered the protection, promotion, growth and conservation of the crab resources, and pursuant to its authority under Regulation I, Section 7(a) and Regulation VII, Section 4.

HEREBY DECLARES AND ORDERS: it shall be unlawful for any person to take or catch, or attempt to take or catch any crabs by any means in the Potomac River during the closed season(s) as follows:

- (1) Hard crabs: – December 1 through March 31 next succeeding.
Mature females –In addition to the season see Order 2016-11 for bushel limits.
- (2) Soft crabs – October 31 through April 30 next succeeding.
- (3) Peeler crabs – October 31 through April 30 next succeeding.

IT IS FURTHER DECLARED AND ORDERED: it shall be unlawful to set, fish or use in the Potomac River any:

- (1) Crab pots – December 1 through March 31 next succeeding.
- (2) Trotlines and dip nets – December 1 through March 31 next succeeding.
- (3) Peeler traps – July 1 through April 30 next succeeding.

AND IT IS FURTHER DECLARED AND ORDERED: this Order #2017-06 shall become effective March 31, 2017 and remain in effect until further notice.

ORDER # 2017-09
(replaces #2016-11)

RIVER WIDE FEMALE CRAB HARVEST LIMITS
FOR MANAGEMENT YEAR 2017-2018

THE POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION, having found it necessary for the preservation of the crab population, having considered the protection, promotion, growth and conservation of the crab resources, and pursuant to its authority under Regulation I, Section 7(a) and Regulation VII, Section 7.

HEREBY DECLARES AND ORDERS: it shall be unlawful for any commercial crab pot licensee to take or catch, or attempt to take or catch more than fourteen (14) bushels for 300 pot licenses; nineteen (19) bushels for 400 pot licenses and twenty-four (24) bushels for 500 pot licenses of female crabs per day from June 10, 2017 through September 17, 2017 in the Potomac River.

AND IT IS FURTHER DECLARED AND ORDERED: this Order #2017-09 shall become effective June 10, 2017 and remain in effect through September 17, 2017.

7/11/2017

Draft Regulation I, Section 2(d)(7) Assigned User of Crab Pot License

When a person (i.e. company, corporation, limited liability company, partnership, firm or association) holds a valid PRFC commercial crab license, a natural person must be recorded as the assigned user on the license. It shall be unlawful for any person (i.e. company, corporation, limited liability company, partnership, firm or association) who holds a valid PRFC commercial crab pot license to assign the user of such crab pot license to any natural person who (1) holds a valid Potomac River Fisheries Commission commercial crab pot license; (2) is currently assigned as a user of a valid Potomac River Fisheries Commission commercial crab pot license; or (3) has any Potomac River Fisheries Commission license(s) revoked. Whenever crab pots are being set, fished, or removed the assigned user must be aboard the boat or vessel and have the license available for inspection by an authorized enforcement officer of the State of Maryland or Virginia or agent of the Potomac River Fisheries Commission.



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NOTICE OF DELINQUENT SEAFOOD CATCH REPORT(S)

Date

Name

Address

Dear Mr./Ms.

As of the date of this letter, the PRFC has not received your seafood harvest report(s) for the gear(s) listed below for the week ending [date]. Your harvest reports are due **weekly** whether you fish or not. Regulation II, Sec. 5(a) states "...Such daily records of the catches and dealings shall be delivered to, or mailed in time to arrive at, the Commission Office no later than Thursday of the following week." **Please ensure the delinquent report(s) are delivered to our office no later than fourteen (14) days from the date of this Notice.**

Type of License: [Fish/Crab/Oyster]

License/Tag No: [Barcode #/Tag #]

This will be the **only Notice** you will receive from our office regarding this delinquent report. **If you do not respond to this Notice within fourteen (14) days from the date of this notice, you will be notified by certified mail requiring you to appear at a hearing during a meeting of the Potomac River Fisheries Commission.** If a violation is found to exist, the Commission can suspend or revoke your license(s) and/or refuse to issue you any new license(s), pursuant to Regulation 1, Section 4.

If you feel you have received this notice in error, or have already submitted your report(s), please feel free to contact our office to ensure that your harvest report(s) have been received.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

PRFC Database Specialist

Office: 804.224.7148

Toll free: 800.266.3904

**Membership and Procedures for
Potomac River Advisory Committees**

March 6, 2009

The Potomac River Fisheries Commission voted unanimously in 1991 to establish two "user/industry" advisory committees one each for finfish and shellfish matters. On June 23, 2000 the Commission voted to restructure the finfish advisory committee and to divide the shellfish advisory committee into two separate committees – one for crab issues and one for oyster/clam issues. The oyster/clam advisory committee will assume the duties and responsibilities of the industry segment of the Oyster Repletion Committee, which is hereby disbanded. These committees will operate under the following general guidelines:

Finfish Advisory Committee: will have 16 voting members - 8 from each state as follows:

Maryland: four commercial representatives – two each from Charles and St. Mary's Counties - one the president or his designee of the county waterman's association and one at-large member; one charter boat representative from any of the counties bordering the Potomac; and three recreational fishermen – one who fishes the middle/upper river area, one who fishes the lower river, and one recreational fisherman at large.

Virginia: four commercial representatives – one from Northumberland Co., one from Westmoreland Co., and two upper river commercial representatives; one charter boat representative from any of the counties bordering the Potomac; and three recreational fishermen – one who fishes the middle/upper river area, one who fishes the lower river, and one recreational fisherman at large.

This committee would have 8 commercial, 6 recreational, and 2 charter boat representatives as voting members plus 6 ex-officio members.

Crab Advisory Committee: will have 10 voting members - 5 from each state as follows:

Maryland: four commercial and one recreational representative. The commercial representatives should include 2 hard crab potters, 1 peeler potter, and one crabber at-large and be representative of the upper, middle and lower river crabbing areas.

Virginia: four commercial and one recreational representative. The commercial representatives should include 2 hard crab potters, 1 peeler potter, and one crabber at-large and be representative of the upper, middle and lower river crabbing areas.

This committee would have 8 commercial and 2 recreational crabbers as voting members plus 6 ex-officio members.

Oyster/Clam Advisory Committee: will have 8 members- 4 from each state as follows:

Maryland: three commercial oystermen - one member of the Charles County Tongers Committee, one member of the St. Mary's County Tongers Committee, and one at large member; and the president or his designee of the St. Mary's Clammers Association.

Virginia: three commercial oystermen from representative areas and fisheries and one oyster buyer.

This committee would have 6 commercial oystermen, 1 oyster buyer and 1 clammer as voting members plus 6 ex-officio members.

Procedures: The committees shall establish a written set of by-laws for the conduct of their meetings and affairs. Each committee may, on its own motion, call a meeting to consider any problem within its sphere of interest and may submit from time to time recommendations to the Commission regarding enactment of orders or regulations or changes in existing orders or regulations. The Commission may from time to time refer, for recommendation, issues related to the Committee's field of interest.

Quorum: In order to constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business the minimum number of voting members, or their proxy, with the specified number from each state, must be present and must vote on the business being transacted, as follows:

Finfish Advisory Committee: 10 voting members, with at least 5 from each state.

Crab Advisory Committee: 6 voting members, with at least 3 from each state.

Oyster/Clam Advisory Committee: 5 voting members, with at least 2 from each state.

Proxy: If a committee member is unable to attend a meeting, they may select another individual, who is not a member of that committee, to serve as their proxy for that meeting. Providing, however, the committee member must notify PRFC before 12 o'clock noon on the day of the scheduled meeting of the individual's name, or the proxy's vote will not be counted.¹

Chairman and Vice Chairman: The chairman and vice-chairman shall be elected by a majority of the members and shall serve two-year terms.

Advisory Committee Membership: Membership terms shall be for four (4) years with ¼ of the terms expiring each year, except for the crabber-at-large positions which shall be for a one (1) year term. Each February the incoming PRFC Chairman shall fill any vacancies giving preference to PRFC licensees and written nominations from respective associations (i.e. charter boat associations, tongers committees, etc.). In the event a suitable candidate cannot be found to fill a specific position as outlined for any of the committees, the PRFC Chairman may appoint an individual from another area or who represents a different fishery to fill the vacancy.

Ex-officio Members: Each committee will have six (6) ex-officio members to provide technical assistance to the committees. They will be the appropriate scientific, law enforcement and fishery management personnel from each state.

Meetings: Committee meetings may be held at the PRFC office or such other place and at such times as may be selected by the Chairman. The proceedings of the meetings held at the PRFC office will be electronically recorded by a PRFC supplied recording secretary who will assist committees with minutes, mailings, correspondence, etc. Secretarial services may be provided, at the discretion of the Executive Secretary, for any such meetings not held at the PRFC office.

Sub-Committees: The Chairman of each advisory committee will have the authority to appoint sub-committees for specific tasks. The members of such sub-committees need not be members of the advisory committee, but the membership should be as representative as the full committee.

Advisory Committee Reports: Committee reports of findings and recommendations shall be reported to the Commission in writing and may be presented at any regularly scheduled Commission meeting. Any committee report containing recommendations which call for immediate action by the Commission must be submitted in writing at least 20 days prior to the next scheduled Commission meeting.

Staff Review: All written committee reports containing recommendations requiring Commission actions regarding regulations or policies shall be reviewed by staff for technical and legal purposes. This review could include appropriate representatives from MdDNR/VMRC, CBL/VIMS and the Maryland and Virginia Marine Police.

¹ Proxy can not be a member of the same committee, adopted March 6, 2009.