

(Attendees are listed at the end of the minutes.)

The Lobster Hearing:

Gauge regulations are geared towards divers.

Lobsters must first be gauged on the bottom. It is OK to then gauge them on the surface. Vinnie explained that this is low impact harvesting, as lobsters returned to the sea at the surface are less likely to make it back to the bottom alive. It was noted that perhaps the lobstermen should also have to find a safe return for shorts that are still in the traps when the traps are hauled to the surface.

Vinnie also mentioned that this is a small measure for the divers to concede. It shows good faith by the divers to the lobstermen while causing no real impact to the divers.

Public Hearing – Fairhaven MA 5-Nov-03

Angelo attended this hearing which was to address Addendum IV to Amendment 3. This is geared toward trap lobstermen. There was discussion of the vent size of which there was no change. Area 2 stock has crashed. They may have to shut down the fishery.

Ocean Management Task Force

Angelo was invited to attend this meeting. This task force studied Use Characterization and Data Gathering. The task is mapping the coastline of Area 1 (Maine to north of the Cape). From these studies, recommendations will go to the Secretary of Environmental Affairs.

[Excerpt from the BUAR Sept 03 Minutes: Joe Pelczarski reported that the Massachusetts Ocean Management Task Force is currently collecting data regarding ocean use and ocean characterization and is soliciting input regarding cultural resources.]

Coastal Zone Management: <http://www.mass.gov/czm/>

The draft of the Ocean management Task Force is available for review and comment (<http://www.mass.gov/czm/oceanmgtinitiative.htm>) as is Mitt Romney review (<http://www.mass.gov/czm/MOMI/oceanscommission.pdf>).

There is currently decentralized control but the state is on a fast track to getting centralized control which would not be good for recreational water users (like scuba)/

Everyone should take a look at this and provide feedback to your State Rep & Congressmen if anything is not warm and fuzzy.

Transect Dives for the year

The newest site (east of Graves, near The Romance) has a very flat bottom and very little boat traffic. It also has very little life that would be disturbed by an artificial reef with lots of potential for attracting species to the artificial habitat.

The next step is to have DMF have a look at the site. If it meets with their preliminary approval, then the application process would begin. This means that we need to define the materials we would desire to have put down as the reef. That also means we need to establish funding. NOAA restoration and the Hub Line monies are a possibility. But much more funding is needed.

Over the winter, our tasks include

- how to raise funds (NEARS?)
- short list of reef materials we would like see used
- find ways to get newspaper coverage on our efforts (to raise public awareness)
- renew the support from dive clubs
- renew the support from dive shops
- check with NEARS on their intended support role going forward

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There are Navy surplus ships that they would be glad to give to the artificial reef efforts. However, these ships are as-is and where-is. This means we would have to find a way to get the ships cleaned and transported to the intended reef site.

Dave Trubey from the Board of Underwater Archaeology Resources reported on his activities (summarized in this excerpt from the BUAR Sept 2003 minutes):

Stellwagen Bank Nation Marine Sanctuary Mission

Victor reported that he and David Trubey participated in the most recent mission of the staff of the Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary and the University of Connecticut's National Undersea Research Center to investigate the wrecks of the steamship *Portland* and the schooners *Crary* and *Palmer* with an ROV. Victor stated that the *Portland's* hull still looks very much intact; however the deck seems to be suffering from the effects of wood boring organisms. Victor noted that the site serves as a very large cod habitat. David Trubey reported that the day he was in the field was spent at the site of the *Crary* and *Palmer*. Only a small amount of video was shot due to the several layers of fish net that shroud the vessels. A film crew from the Science Channel recorded the entire mission for a show that is scheduled to air early next year. David reported that they also investigated what appears to be a 1950s trawler in the Sanctuary that was in remarkably good condition. Victor added that he has been asked to serve on the technical advisory committee of the Sanctuary for the review of its management plan as it relates to submerged cultural resources.

BSC Meetings for 2004

May 12 – with the Council Dive on May 23

Artificial Reef

Vinnie suggested that we consider surveying Loran-C 44295/13920. It is something to think about. (Darryl is to get us the report of the coordinates/map of what we have already done from the NEARS database.)

Money for Habitat Enhancement (from the pipeline project)

- full policy would have to be written. Permitting to be in-the-works (\$100,000)
- Money for sonar scanner (when we find the best site)... the other \$100,000
- Use this enhancement money to get Federal matching and if public money is combined with this, those dollars will also be matched.
- for example, Sport Fishing match is 25/75. The reimbursement happens after the cash is spent.

Initial permitting would be for ecological/habitat stuff.

Materials to consider would be heavy enough to stay where we put it (don't want it blowing around in the rough seas).

Ghost Gear Clean Up Effort (John Ezea)

The DMF is still working to coordinate this effort (spreading the word, where to bring gear, how owners can claim it...)

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