

FISHERIES SCIENCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Fish Passage Working Group

Committee Name: Fish Passage Working Group

History/Purpose: In April 2008, the Commission hosted a workshop on *Fish Passage Issues Impacting Atlantic Coast States*. The goals of that workshop were:

- Initiate development of a Commission fish passage protocol that can be applied by the states when addressing future passage issues
- Provide summary of current fish passage technologies and techniques to Commissioners and Technical Committee members
- Provide a forum to discuss recent experiences with dam re-licensing and potential future Commission/state involvement
- Discuss species-specific fish passage concerns and solutions

Recommendations formulated from the 2008 workshop were provided to the Policy Board for consideration. The Policy Board acted on several recommendations, including the convening of a Fish Passage Working Group to address 7 tasks developed from workshop recommendations. The group was formally established in March 2009, and has met in May and July of 2009, September of 2010, September of 2012, and February 2014.

Membership: The Commission Chair annually appoints the members of the Fish Passage Working Group. Each state may nominate a representative to the Fish Passage Working Group. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and NOAA Fisheries may nominate two experts (north and south regions) to the Fish Passage Working Group. Two seats are available on the Fish Passage Working Group for members from non-governmental organizations (NGO), and two seats are available to members of the hydropower industry.

Codifying Document: 2009 Action Plan

Type & Frequency of Meetings: The Fish Passage Working Group meets as needed to complete tasks from the Policy Board. The group last met in February 2014.

Primary activities:

Develop and carry out a plan of action for fish passage at the Commission, including:

1. Develop a policy on passage efficiency for diadromous fishes (and develop performance criteria) in cooperation with USFWS and NOAA.

2. Prioritize fish passage projects.
3. Identify effective fish passage approaches.
4. Recommend targets for increasing fish passage in each state.
5. Initiate an East Coast Fish Passage Plan.
6. Develop guidance for navigating the FERC dam relicensing process.
7. Task diadromous technical committees with evaluating positive and negative consequences of providing fish passage.

Major accomplishments:

- *Resolution on the Importance of Fish Habitat Connectivity to Commission Managed Species*
- *A Guide to Upstream Fish Passage Technologies*
- *Developed a protocol for prioritizing coast wide barriers in need of fish passage*

History of Chairmanship:

Current Chair & Vice-Chair: (present – 4/09): Chair, Steve Gephard, CT & Vice-Chair, vacant

Staff Lead: Jeff Kipp, Stock Assessment Scientist, JKipp@asmfc.org