PRESENT - MEMBERS:

Commissioners John T. Parran, Jr., James E. Douglas, Jr., Richard E. Lankford, J. Clifford Hutt, Roy E. Julie, Jr., James L. Sisson, Jr.

OFFICERS: K. Thomas Everngam, Legal Officer; Robert M. Norris, Jr., Executive Secretary; Kirby A. Carpenter, Assistant Executive Secretary.

VISITORS:

Messrs. William E. Green, Willard Elliott, James W. Dutton, Diller Harding, W. Everett Green; E. Ralph Dameron, Virginia Marine Police; Harvey C, Cook, Maryland Marine Police; Philip R. Mohler, Ext. Service, Maryland DNR; E. H. Powell, Elgin A. Dunnington, Jr., of Chesapeake Biological Laboratory; Dr. Jackson Davis, of Virginia Institute of Marine Science.

PRESS:

Dick Myers, of Radio Station WKIK; Frank Delano, of Fredericksburg Free Lance Star.

At 1:15 p.m. (DST) the meeting was called to order by Mr. John Thomas Parran, Jr., Chairman.

The following motion was made and seconded:

"That the Minutes of the meeting held August 24, 1973, mimeographed copies of which had been circulated to each Commissioner, be approved." The motion was approved.

Mr. Lankford presented a committee report regarding the experimental planting, growing, and harvesting on currently barren natural oyster bars of hatchery seed oysters, under supervision of the two state marine laboratories in cooperation with private or commercial oyster hatcheries and recommended that this program would not be feasible without enabling legislation. After full discussion, the following motion was made and seconded:

"That an addendum to Article III, Section 3, of the Maryland-Virginia Potomac River Compact of 1958 be requested of the Legislatures of the two respective states, meeting in January 1974 to wit: 'THE POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION SHALL HAVE THE POWER TO MAKE, ADOPT AND PERMIT SUCH RULES AND REGULATIONS AND TO TAKE SUCH ACTION AS MAY BE NECESSARY OR ADVISABLE FOR AUTHORIZING AND REGULATING A PILOT PROGRAM FOR EXPERIMENTAL OYSTER HATCHERY SEED PLANTING, GROWING, AND HARVEST-ING WITH PRIVATE PLANTERS AND PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCIENTIFIC AGENCIES ENGAGED IN SIMILAR WORK IN ITS JURISDICTION, AND MAY SET ASIDE AVAILABLE BARREN NATURAL OYSTER ROCKS FOR THIS PURPOSE AND TO ALLOW DREDGING OF SAME FOR INSPECTION, SAMPLING, AND HARVESTING UNDER THE SUPERVISION AND CONTROL OF THE POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COM-MISSION AND IN COOPERATION WITH THE MARYLAND AND/OR VIRGINIA PUBLIC SCIENTIFIC AGENCIES, CHESAPEAKE BIOLOGICAL LABORATORY AND VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE'." The motion was unanimously approved. It was understood that this amendment shall not take effect until and unless it is enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia and Maryland. Prior to the vote being taken on the above motion, Mr. Hutt asked if the Commissioners agreed that an affirmative vote would mean that each state delegation would support this action in their respective Legislatures this year - the Commission unanimously accepted this suggestion.

Mr. Carpenter presented a summary of efforts to get satisfactory proposals on 2-way base station radio equipment. He said that there had been such a wide range of prices and specifications in proposals, that the committee had considered asking a private consultant to work up specifications and submet a quote. However, that the committee was now working with a communications specialist at the Naval Weapons Laboratory, Dahlgren, Virginia and he felt that they would have a reasonable and workable proposal in a few days. In answer to a question, the committee was reminded that at the August 24th meeting no dollar limitation was attached to the selection and purchase of a workable system.

Mr. Everngam presented a prepared statement in resolution form relative to environmental protection of the Potomac River, as suggested at the last meeting. A few changes in wording were incorporated, and a motion was made and seconded that the resolution that follows in quotes below be adopted:

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"Resolution of Potomac River Fisheries Commission. General Policy Statement Relative to Environmental Protection of Potomac River

WHEREAS, the State of Maryland and the Commonwealth of Virginia have entered into a solemn Compact known as the Maryland and Virginia Potomac river compact of 1958 for the independent control, conservation, repletion and improvement of the valuable fishery resources of the tidewater portion of the Potomac River, which Compact was enacted into law by the legislatures of both states, approved by the Congress of the United States and signed by the President, in conformity with Article I Section 10 of the United States Constitution; and

WHEREAS, this bi-state Commission consisting of three members from each state (appointed by their respective Governors) has been carrying out its duties for over ten years and in connection therewith has adopted regulations having the force and effect of law with respect to taking of commercial seafood and related licensing and regulatory activities, and has expended large amounts of public funds in rehabilitation, replanting and conservation efforts on the tidewater section of the Potomac River, and said Commission is vitally concerned with the protection of the natural and seafood resources of this great river.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Potomac River Fisheries Commission adopts the general policy that it opposes any private or other project located on the shores of the Potomac River and the tributaries thereof or in any area which drains into said River, which would in any manner pollute, damage or adversely affect the river waters, the oysters, crabs, clams, fish and other seafood, or their spawning and growing areas and the natural rocks and habitats in which they exist; further that this Commission urges that sewage treatment facilities in Maryland and Virginia areas (which may affect the purity of the waters of the river), shall not be approved by or allowed by any government body or instrumentality having jurisdiction thereof in either state, which shall be damaging to the production or marketing of seafood.

That it is the general sense of this Resolution that the Potomac River Fisheries Commission encourages all governmental and private efforts to improve the waters and natural and fishing resources of the Potomac River; and deplores all efforts and activities which will or may have an adverse or ruinous effect in any manner thereon." The motion was unanimously approved. The Executive Secretary was requested to distribute this resolution to the proper public agencies, departments and individuals in Charles and St. Mary's Counties, and elsewhere in Maryland and likewise in Virginia.

Mr. J. W. Dutton was recognized by Mr. Parran and suggested that the Mary-land-Virginia 1958 Potomac River Compact should be amended to give the Commission the authority to affirm or nullify permits for effluent discharges into the Potomac River. At the request of Mr. Parran, Mr. Everngam is to research this suggestion.

Dr. Jackson Davis reported on a joint survey of "deep water" oyster populations in the Potomac River on October 10-11th by Chesapeake Biological Laboratory and Virginia Institute of Marine Science. Inspection of oyster beds in the middle and lower river indicated that mortality had occurred in the past two weeks in water depths of 17' and deeper and was attributed to oxygen deficiency caused by heavy rainfall in August, followed by two weeks of hot weather with very little wind to cause mixing. The report indicated that if the above conditions had not occurred, there would have been substantial numbers of oysters in the 18 to 22-foot depth zone. Only a few evidences of oyster populations were found in depths greater than 22 feet. After a question and discussion period, the following motion was made and seconded:

"That there be no program of moving oysters from deeper edges to shallows on bars at this time." The motion was approved. The written reports by the two laboratories were ordered to be filed in the permanent records of the Commission.

There was a general discussion concerning "hand scraping" for oysters in lieu of tonging utilizing small dredges in the Potomac. Mr. J. W. Dutton recommended that the Compact be changed to allow this method of taking oysters; that with proper restrictions, it would be beneficial to the oyster beds. He feels it is necessary, because very few young men are learning to oyster with hand tongs — if modest dredging is not allowed, that the industry will soon be without harvesters. Mr. Diller Harding suggested that if handscraping is allowed, that it be restricted to cold weather. Mr. Dunnington spoke to the subject saying that some dredged oyster bars have been destroyed, others have been able to repopulate themselves after being overworked by dredging. He said that much caution would be necessary in regulating harvesting of oysters in this manner.

Under "old business", Mr. Norris reported that a contract has been signed with Virginia Electric & Power Company calling for a two cents (2¢) per kilowatt hour rate instead of four cents (4¢) per kilowatt hour, and that VEPCO therein agrees to rebate the difference paid by the Commission since May 16, 1972.

Mr. Norris said that a \$377,000 application for financial aid grant has been submitted to the Virginia Office of Emergency Services for complete mortalities due to Tropical Storm AGNES of seed oysters bought in 1969, 1970 and 1971.

Mr. Norris said that a conference will be arranged with the U.S. Corps of Engineers as soon as possible to discuss mutual regulatory problems in the river, such as requiring lights on nets, and maintaining or removing stakes, et cetera.

Mr. Hutt reported that grading and masonry work for proper drainage was now in progress in the rear of the building - that it had been impossible to get this work done during the spring and summer.

There being no further old business, Mr. Parran took up "new business" on the agenda. Disbursements for the month of August 1973 totaling \$4,564.35 were itemized for the Commissioners. The following motion was made and seconded:

"That disbursements for the month of August 1973 totaling \$4,564.35 as itemized for the Commission be approved." The motion was approved.

Mr. Norris reported that funds on hand for budgetary and repletion programs that cannot be used until seed or shell planting season, in the amount of \$76,640.00 had been invested in U. S. Treasury Bills due 3-14-74 at a rate of 8.70%.

Mr. Norris also said that itemized disbursements for the months of September, October and November 1972, in amounts of \$4,616.01, \$5,074.11 and \$18,712.64 (including \$14,000 for purchase of building lot) had not been recorded in the Minutes of the meeting held December 8, 1972 in La Plata, Maryland, even though they had been approved at that time. He exhibited the said itemized disbursement sheets, and a motion was made and seconded as follows:

"That the aforementioned disbursements be re-approved and recorded in the Minutes of this meeting." The motion was approved.

Mr. Parran asked for proposed regulation modifications, as prepared by the Legislative Committee. Copies of these were furnished the Commissioners and spectators; some minor changes were made in the proposed amendments. All modifications or additions concern Regulation III, Sections 10, 11 and 12.

Section 10 proposed to reduce the length of stretched mesh in poun nets from 2 inches to 1-1/2 inches; add restriction making maximum size of stretched mesh in gill nets 6 inches and allow a reasonable tolerance for shrinkage in pound, seine, fyke or hoop nets; remove restriction on use of monofiliment webbing material for catching fish or seafood; add that pound nets or pots set within 1000 feet of the mean low water line shall not be limited by anything in this section.

In Section 11, strike out words "any perch, white Roccus Americana or", which would allow same to be used for crab bait; add the word "perch" under (c) between the words "yellow" and "Perca"; strike the words "except King William or silver perch Bairdiella chrysura"; and add the words under (d) "except when caught in gill nets all over 15 pounds may be kept" thus allowing gill net fishermen to keep striped bass over 15 pounds when found drowned in gill nets rather than requiring them to be thrown away and wasted.

In Section 12, add the following sentence at the end of the section: "A tolerance of four (4) undersized hard crabs per bushel per bushel, and ten (10) undersize hard crabs per barrel shall be allowed."

A motion was made and seconded as follows:

"That the above proposed amendments to Sections 10, 11, and 12, of Regulation III, be approved to be advertised as provided in the Mayyland-Virginia 1958 Compact, and that a public hearing on same be held Friday, November 16, 1973 at 9:30 a.m. (EST) in La Plata, Maryland, and that a copy of Sections 10, 11 and 12 as amended and advertised be attached hereto and made a part of these Minutes."

The following motion was made and seconded:

"That the Potomac River above a line from the lower end of Cobb Island, Maryland to lower side of Westmoreland State Park, Virginia be closed to all oystering for any purpose until further notice to allow recovery and rehabilitation of oyster resources, except for scientific and experimental purposes authorized and approved by the Potomac River Fisheries Commission only." Motion approved unanimously.

The following motion was made and seconded:

"That the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, or Executive Secretary be and are authorized to approve the expense accounts of the Assistant Executive Secretary." Motion approved.

The following motion was made and seconded:

"That the ship-to-shore AM 2 way-radio, which had been in use in the former commission office, be declared surplus in order that it be charged off the accounts of the Commission, since the purchase of a new VHF-FM 2-way set is being considered." Motion was approved.

The following motion was made and seconded:

"That oyster tonging shall stop each day at 3:00 p.m. and that all cull boards shall be clear by 3:15 p.m. daily." Motion was approved.

Mr. Ed Powell, of the Windmill Point Oyster Company, was recognized. He exhibited some hatchery-produced oyster seed roughly 1/2 inch in size, explaining that growth this season had been slow. He said that his motive in attending the meeting was to show that, despite adverse environmental conditions, his hatchery had been able to produce seed and he would like to negotiate with the Commission to produce seed for the Potomac River. He said that due to increased costs that seed of the sizeand time of late fall delivery the Commission would desire would mean that the cost of the seed would run around \$2.75 per thousand. He would want to base his capital risk investment based on a two-year contract.

Mr. Norris briefed the Commission on an application from a group of four (4) Washington, D. C. scientists trading as "Institute for Research Management, Inc.", which has applied to the Town of Colonial Beach for a permit to treat 100,000 gallons of contaminated waste water from the Oyster Creek Generating Plant at Forked River, New Jersey, a subsidiary of the Jersey Central Power & Light Company. The contaminated water resulted from an accidental discharge of the water from the primary coolant loop of the Oyster Creek plant. Dr. Leonard, one of the principals in the Institute, in a conference with Mr. Norris, said that the water is somewhat radioactive but not harmfully so; that it has been treated with certain chemicals to prevent corrosion (one containing chrome) but that Dr. Leonard downgraded the danger from radioactivity or heavy metals. The plan calls for the water being run through the Town's sewerage plant with any solids or sludge-type residues being shipped to Sheffield, Illinois for burial in a licensed waste burial site at that point. Mr. Norris said that Dr. Leonard, (plus correspondence he has), has indicated that if the Institute gets a green light on this project that they plan to make Colonial Beach their treatment location for contaminated waste from other nuclear or atomic generating plants, and industrial and commercial operations. The Institute is also applying to the Virginia Water Control Board and the Atomic Energy Commission for permits or licenses to carry on the above work. These latter agency permits are necessary before the Institute can carry out their plans.

Mr. Dunnington, of Chesapeake Biological Laboratory, and Dr. Davis, of Virginia Institute of Marine Science, spoke strongly against approval of this project, saying that the accumulation of heavy metals and other substances discharged through the sewerage treatment plant into Monroe Bay, a tributary of the Potomac River, over a series of waste treatment operations would be most inconsistant with seafood production and use. After discussion, a motion was made and seconded that the following resolution be adopted:

"RESOLUTION CONCERNING TREATMENT OF CONTAMINATED WASTE WATERS AND DISCHARGE OF RESULTING EFFLUENTS THROUGH THE COLONIAL BEACH, VIRGINIA MUNICIPAL SEWERAGE TREATMENT PLANT

WHEREAS, the Institute for Resource Management, Inc., Bethesda, Maryland, has applied to the Town of Colonial Beach, Virginia for a permit to treat contaminated waste water in the amount of 100,000 gallons which resulted from an accidental discharge from the Oyster Creek Generating Plant at Forked River, New Jersey, a subsidiary of the Jersey Central Power and Light Company, and is seeking permits from the Virginia State Water Control Board, Richmond, Virginia and the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission for the same purpose; and

WHEREAS, the said Institute has indicated that if this proposal is approved they will make Colonial Beach, Virginia a center for the treatment and discharge into Monroe Bay, a short tributary of the Potomac River, of the effluents resulting from the treatment of contaminated waste water from many sources and types of energy production, industrial and commercial operations; and

WHEREAS, the effluents that will be discharged into Monroe Bay will contain in solitary and accumulative totals substances and elements which are not beneficial to marine life and actually may have a very harmful effect on such life and are most incompatible with seafood production and operations; and

WHEREAS, the effects of such effluent discharges will extend beyond the confines of Monroe Bay into the Potomac River, which is under the jurisdiction of the POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Potomac River Fisheries Commission vigorously opposes the establishment of this waste processing plant by the Institute for Resource Management, Inc."

The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Norris referred to the wording in permits specifically prohibiting dredge being aboard issued to watermen to move boats from one tributary to another of the Potomac with dredging equipment aboard such as winders, masts, gaffs, spools, et cetera. He said that in some cases prohibiting the transportation of a dredge, or patent tongs, causes hardship when a boat goes daily to and from the Chesapeake Bay. A motion was made and seconded as follows:

"That the Administration has the authority to use its own judgement whether or not to write a permit for the transportation of patent tongs or dredging equipment including the dredge or patent tongs in the waters of the Potomac River."

The suggestion that this Commission request the U.S. Corps of Engineers to require Steuart Investment Corporation, Piney Point, Maryland, to conduct an environmental study of the effects of extending its pier 974 feet was not approved.

In answer to a question of installing a fence on the back line of the Commission's lot, the Commission instructed Mr. Norris to work this out in his best judgement with the adjoining landowner.

Mr. Carpenter said that Potomac Electric & Power Company has invited the Commission to tour the Douglas Point power plant site and the Chalk Point Plant, at Benedict. Mr. Parran suggested that the Commissioners (and others) be polled to determine who may be interested and to make arrangements with PEPCO on that basis.

At Mr. Norris' request, the purchase of a refrigerator for the office was approved.

Mr. Parran requested that the Executive Secretary arrange that the Commissic be placed on the mailing list for dates of public hearings on PEPCO's application for a permit to build a nuclear electric generating plant at Douglas Point, Charles County, Maryland.

There being no further new business, the Commission set the date of the next meeting for Friday, November 16, 1973 at 9:30 a.m. (EST) in La Plata, Maryland, at which time the public hearing would be held on the proposed and advertised regulation modifications.

Mr. Norris was requested to send notices to newspapers and radio stations prior to November 16, 1973 to give reasonable notice to the public that following the hearing on regulation changes, that an open forum would be held on the subject of proposing that dredging with hand scrapes be legalized and that the Commission would like to hear expressions from the general public on this proposal.

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The meeting was adjourned at 4:30 P.M.

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John T. Parran, Chairman

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J. Clifford Hutt, Secretary

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NOTE:

Yellow Lined Words Indicate New Matter Added to Existing Regulations. CAPITALS Indicate Matter Stricken From Existing Regulations.

August 24, 1973

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS OF THE POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION

Pursuant to the Potomac River Compact of 1958, as duly enacted into law by the General Assemblies of the States of Maryland and Virginia and duly ratified by the Compress of the United States of America, the following Amendments to existing Regulations are proposed by the Potomac River Fisheries Commission.

Regulation III, Section 10 proposed to be amended and re-enacted to read as follows:

Section 10. Sizes of Mesh. It shall be unlawful to take or catch, or attempt to take or catch, finfish on the Potomac River with any net whose size of stretched mesh is less than herein provided, to wit: POUND NET 2 INCHES: pound net 1-1/2 inches; haul seine 2-1/2 inches; GILL NET 2-1/2 INCHES: fyke or hoop net 2 inches, and gill net 2-1/2 inches except that the maximum size of stretched mesh in gill nets shall not exceed 6 inches. A reasonable tolerance for shrinkage shall be allowed for pound, seine, fyke or hoop nets. NO NET OR TRAP MADE OF MONOFILAMENT WEBBING MATERIAL SHALL BE USED IN CATCHING FISH OR SEAFOOD ON THE POTOMAC RIVER. Nothing in this section shall apply to the use of pots or/net structures used in the catching of eels or catfish.

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Regulation III, Section 11 proposed to be amended and re-enacted to read as follows:

Section 11. Sizes of Commercial Fish. No person shall commercially catch on the Potomac River or take or kill, sell, offer to buy or sell or expose for sale, or have in possession (a) any black bass, large or small mouth; (b) any catfish less than 3 inches; (c) ANY PERCH, WHITE ROCCUS AMERICANA OR any yellow Perca flavescens less than 3 inches, except King William or silver perch Bairdiella chrysura; (d) any pike less than 14 inches; (e) any rock, otherwise known as striped bass, less than 12 inches in length or weighing more than 15 pounds, except when caught in gill nets all over 15 pounds may be kept; (f) any sturgeon weighing less than 25 pounds; (g) any taylor or bluefish less than 8 inches; (h) any sea trout or weakfish less than 10 inches; (i) and any hardheads or croakers less than 10 inches. Measurement in the case of each fish shall be from tip of nose to the end of the caudal fin or tail.

Regulation III, Section 12 proposed to be amended and re-enacted to read as follows:

Section 12. Kinds and Sizes of Crabs. It shall be unlawful for any person to take, catch or have in possession any hard crabs measuring less than five (5) inches across the shell from tip to tip of spike, or any peelers (which are hereby defined as having soft shell fully developed under the hard shell, on which there is a pink line or rim on the edge of that part of the back fin next to the outer section of this fin) measuring less than three and one-half (3-1/2) inches across the shell from tip to tip of spike; nor shall any person take, catch or keep in floats or in his possession any fat crab, or any crab known as a snot crab or green crab, or buckram crab (a crab that has a paper shell), or any sponge crab, spawn crab, blooming female crab and mother crab, or the female crab from which the egg pouch or bunion has been removed. The enforcement officers on the Potomac River are hereby authorized to confiscate and liberate into the waters of the Potomac River any fat crab, snot crab, green crab, buckram crab, sponge crab, spawn crab, blooming female crab, and mother crab, or the female crab from which the egg pouch or bunion has been removed, where found, and held in violation of this section, and said officers are further authorized to confiscate any hard crabs, peelers or soft crabs of a size less than the measurements herebefore provided, wherever found and shall dispose of any crabs so confiscated. A tolerance of four (4) undersized hard crabs per bushel, and ten (10) undersized hard crabs per barrel shall be allowed.

NOTICE OF HEARING

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO REGULATIONS OF THE POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION

Pursuant to the Potomac River Compact of 1958, as duly enacted into law by the General Assemblies of the States of Maryland and Virginia and duly ratified by the Congress of the United States of America, the following Amendments to existing Regulations are proposed by the Potomac River Fisheries Commission.

Regulation III, Section 10 is hereby repealed and re-enacted to read as follows:

Section 10. Sizes of Mesh. It shall be unlawful to take or catch, or attempt to take or catch, finfish on the Potomac River with any net whose size of stretched mesh is less than herein provided, to wit: pound net 1-1/2 inches; haul seine 2-1/2 inches; fyke or hoop net 2 inches; and gill net 2-1/2 inches except that the maximum size of stretched mesh in gill nets shall not exceed 6 inches. A reasonable tolerance for shrinkage shall be allowed for pound, seine, fyke or hoop nets. Nothing in this section shall apply to the use of pots or to pound net structures set within 1000 feet of the mean low water line.

Regulation III, Section 11 is hereby repealed and re-enacted to read as follows:

Section 11. Sizes of Commercial Fish. No person shall commercially catch on the Potomac River or take or kill, sell, offer to buy or sell or expose for sale, or have in possession (a) any black bass, large or small mouth; (b) any catfish less than 8 inches; (c) any yellow perch Perca flavescens less than 8 inches; (d) any pike less than 14 inches; (e) any rock, otherwise known as striped bass, less than 12 inches in length or weighing more than 15 pounds, except when caught in gill nets all over 15 pounds may be kept; (f) any sturgeon weighing less than 25 pounds; (g) any taylor or bluefish less than 8 inches; (h) any sea trout or weakfish less than 10 inches; (i) and any hardheads or croakers less than 10 inches. Measurement in case of each fish shall be from tip of nose to the end of the caudal fin or tail.

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NOTICE OF HEARING

Notice is hereby given to all interested persons that a public hearing will be held by the Potomac River Fisheries Commission on the adoption of the aforegoing Proposed Amendments to Regulations on Friday, November 16, 1973 at 9:30 a.m. at the Milton M. Somers School, La Plata, Maryland.

POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION

By: John T. Parran, Jr.
Chairman

ATTEST: