

MINUTES OF THE MEETING
POTOMAC RIVER FISHERIES COMMISSION
KING GEORGE, VIRGINIA
NOVEMBER 1, 1984

PRESENT: COMMISSIONERS - William A. Pruitt, Francis J. Russell, R. Wayne Browning, John T. Parran, Lee E. Zeni and Henry S. Braithwaite

OFFICERS - Kirby A. Carpenter, Executive Secretary and J. Clifford Hutt, Legal Officer

VISITORS - Torrey Brown, Secretary MD Dept of Natural Resources; Verna Harrison, George Krantz, Charles Frisbee, Dept. of Natural Resources; Paul C. Wentzell, Frank I. Wood, Henry C. Batchelor, Dept. of Natural Resources Police; Elgin Dunnington, CBL; Frank Wojcik, Herbert M. Austin, VIMS; Robert Markland, Donald O'Bier, VMRC Marine Police; Ben Daniels, VMRC; David Loveland, D. C. Government; Brady Bounds, David Scholten, Mid-Atlantic Sport Fishing Council; James Rasin, Commission on Potomac River Basin; Robert M. Norris, Jr., Brian Lococo, Clarence Clark, Eugene Bowie, Stanley Marks, Paul Zanko, Willard Dutton, Charles S. Bourne, Herman Beasley, Jimmy Dent, Jerry Decatur, Kenneth Cumberland, Louis Persinger, William Squires, Charles Squires, Larry Thrift, Douglas Jenkins, Sr., George Hundley, Wayne France, Allen Daiger, James L. Jones, John Burch, William Rice, Albert Campbell, Donald Markwith, Walter Parkinson, J. C. Owens, Paul Kellam, Charles S. Bourne, Sr., Hampton Covert, John A. Higgins, Leontine Higgins, Hazel Owens, Wallace Owens, Lee Arnest, Warren McKenney, James Bowen, Bill Brann, Mark B. Allen, Kenneth Wicker, George Herbert, Forrest Bullock, Norman Tolson, Jr., Billy Elliott, Gregory Chatham, Willis Harding, Edward Arnest, Cornelius Little, James Saunders, Warren Yates, Robert Shymansky, Ricky Pilkerton, Joe Morgan, Paul Smith, Walter Lane, Arthur Beauverd, Ryland Yeatman, John Schaefer, Jay M. Thompson, Paul Perry, Drew Jewell, Bill Goldsborough, Wayne Morgan, Sr., Wayne Morgan, Jr., Robert T. Brown, Eugene Booth, Thomas E. Lewis, Jeffery Newsome, Robert Brent, Jr., Ernie Harding, Henry C. Parker, Jr., Roger Hill, Henry C. Parker, Sr., Joseph Bowles, Randy Harding, Charles O'Bier, Ernest Woodall, Thomas Blackistone, Louis Hodges William Green, Conroy Newton, Marvin Newton, Hugh Newton, Stanley Hill, William A. Bowles, Elgin Nininter, Roy Fenwick, James Wilkerson, Truett Shook, William Smith, Olen Bryant, James Ficklin Melvin Beach, Ted Slick, Harry Bullis, Gary Bullis, William C. Cumberland, Thomas King, William Atwell, Jeff Walters, Julian Powell, Wayne Balderson, Richard Daiger, Bill Bowie, George Perry, Charles Abell, Buddy Coulby, William Feldman, Dennis Gallahan, Charles Clift, Bryn Jewell, Todd Messick, Charles Jones, Leslie Wilson, allen T. Brann, Jr., Joe Welch, F. Chisley, John Fowler, Alcova Jones, Francis Hardwick, Dennis Woodruff, Thomas Hall, Sr. Thomas Hall, Jr., Lewis T. Dameron, Jr., William Dent, Clarence McKenney, Garnett Reamy, George Robertson, James Mazingo, Kevin Hundley, Donald Clark, Al Hoyt, Melvin Welch, Buz Boykin, Charles Snead, William Boswell, Thomas Adams, Charles Mason, Robert Pearson, Richard Sandy, Robert Reamy, Rudolph Rogers, Robert Gutridge, Russell Gouldman, L. L. Curley, Jr., L. L. Curley, Sr., Clay Jones, Ken Smith, Mike Hutt, Gilbert Cliff and several others who did not sign the register.

PRESS - Larry Evans, The Free Lance-Star; Mary Mertz, King George Journal; Vicki Volk, WPTX; Joseph Norris, Enterprise

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chairman Pruitt. Mr. Douglas Jenkins gave the invocation at the request of Mr. Pruitt. Mr. Pruitt requested consideration of the Minutes of the August 3, 1984 meeting, copies of which had previously been sent to each Commissioner. The following motion was made by Mr. Browning and seconded by Mr. Russell:

THAT THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 3, 1984 MEETING BE APPROVED AS WRITTEN AND DISTRIBUTED. The motion was approved.

O P E N P U B L I C H E A R I N G

At 7:10 p.m. the Chairman opened the public hearing and announced that each of the three items on the agenda would be heard separately. He asked that each speaker limit his remarks to three minutes and speakers would be called in the order in which their name appeared on the list provided before taking additional comments from the floor. Mr. Carpenter reported that each of the items scheduled for public hearing today had been advertised in accordance with the requirements of the Compact.

The first proposed regulation change dealt with changing the minimum mesh size of eel pots from 1/2" x 1/2" to 1/2" x 1" beginning January 1987 (Reg. I, Sec. 2(m)(3)). Two persons spoke in favor of the change and one opposed it.

The second proposed regulation change dealt with an extension of the hand scrape area (Reg. II, Sec. 2(a)(4)). Three persons opposed the extension and seven supported it, some if a catch limit was included.

The third proposed regulation change dealt with modifications or extensions of the temporary restrictions on fishing (Reg. II, Sec. 12(c)). Thirteen persons spoke against imposing any additional restrictions, and most said they could live with the current restrictions. Three persons favored additional restrictions up to and including a total moratorium. Several persons complained that pollution was the problem and nothing was being done about it. Two persons addressed the issue of the commercial hook and line license and who needs one.

There being no other comments, the public hearing was closed at 9:13 p.m. (For summary statements of individuals, see attached Hearing Record.)

C L O S E P U B L I C H E A R I N G

The Chairman declared a 15 minute recess at 9:15 p.m. and the meeting was reconvened at 9:30 p.m.

INSTALLATION OF NEW COMMISSIONER

Mr. Henry S. Braithwaite was introduced as the new Commissioner from Virginia. He resides in Virginia Beach where he operates a seafood restaurant and has worked on the water with his father. He presently serves on the Virginia Marine Resources Commission. He was welcomed aboard and at this point Mr. Pruitt introduced each Commissioner and members of the staff to the public.

MARYLAND REPORT ON STRIPED BASS

Dr. Torrey E. Brown, Secretary of the Department of Natural Resources introduced the members of his staff who were present: Ms. Verna Harrison, Assistant Secretary and Dr. George Krantz, Director of Tidal Fisheries Division. He asked Dr. Krantz to present his report to the Commission.

Dr. Krantz said he would like to discuss recent Maryland actions in relation to the Potomac River. He said Maryland DNR would support the proposed regulation and request they be more stringent. Programs are

already in place in both states to help environmental and habitat problems but improvement will not occur overnight. He presented graphs depicting harvest reports. The harvest has been doing down and this same trend has been occurring in the Potomac as well as the Chesapeake Bay. He compared the differences in reproduction in the past with today's reproduction. It is very important that the small fish be allowed to return to the bay and ocean to mature. The Potomac River produces 25% of the spawn and eggs for the Chesapeake Bay. He urged that the PRFC take action similar to Maryland's moratorium. He presented slides indicating that the 1982 young-of-the-year class are the fish that are now being caught and his belief that they should be allowed to mature. He advised the Commissioners to think carefully and consider taking action similar to Maryland.

Dr. Torrey Brown emphasized that the young-of-the-year index was less than one-half of what was needed to sustain the fishery. The 1978 fish are not back to spawn. If the 1982 year class is harvested, it will not come back to spawn. If we could increase egg deposition in five years instead of 10, everyone would benefit. He asked that this new information be considered and advertise for a public hearing on taking action similar to Maryland.

Mr. Pruitt asked about the graph of the Boarman projection of egg deposition showing a 55% reduction in harvest. Dr. Krantz reviewed the graph adding that it shows an upward swing but recovery would take several more years than would a total moratorium.

Mr. Willard Dutton asked if Maryland is going to put a moratorium on building because that is what is killing the fish, not the watermen. Dr. Brown replied that the areas of sediment control, sewage disposal, etc., are being improved. Mr. James Wilkerson asked for an explanation as to why the year 1982 was a good year for young-of-the-year. Dr. Krantz replied that the natural conditions were right. Mr. Allen Dent asked if there were a 6 lb. minimum, would that help. Dr. Krantz replied only if you had a minimum of 26" to 28".

OYSTER SHELLS

In response to Mr. Zeni's recommendation of returning all fresh oyster shells to the river, Mr. Carpenter reviewed the report which indicated that the financial limitations of the Commission make the suggestion impractical at this time.

DISBURSEMENTS AND CASH ON HAND

Disbursements for the first quarter of FY 84-85 (Jul-Sep) were presented by budget item which totaled \$153,916.38. Of this amount \$124,931.67 was spent on oyster repletion for work completed before June 30, and it should be adjusted during the upcoming annual Joint Audit.

A statement of cash balances as of October 31, 1984 was presented as follows:

First VA Bank - Northern Neck:

Checking (Includes \$200.00 Petty Cash)	\$ 20,058.02
Certificate of Deposit	100,000.00

Maryland National Bank:

Savings: (Maryland Office)	25,276.84
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Maryland Bank & Trust Company:

Certificate of Deposit	150,000.00
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Peoples Bank of Montross:

Certificate of Deposit	50,000.00
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Grand Total in Banks	\$345,334.86
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The following motion was made by Mr. Browning and seconded by Mr. Zeni:

THAT THE FY 84-85 FIRST QUARTER DISBURSEMENTS OF \$153,916.38 BE APPROVED.
The motion was approved.

OYSTER SURVEY

Mr. Elgin Dunnington gave a report on the fall oyster survey. The survey was very disappointing as there was virtually no spat. The 1984 set was a total failure. There was no spat or other fowling organisms on the recently planted shells, which indicates there are some serious ecological changes in the river. The lack of this year's setting will be reflected in lower harvests in several years. Seed from some other area must be found to supplement harvest. Allowing hand scraping in additional areas would temporarily increase the harvest and then it would decline sharply. Given the complete lack of 1984 set, he recommended against extension of the hand scrape area.

OYSTER HARVEST REPORT

A report on the oyster harvest through October 31, 1984 showed only half as many tongs this year as last. The number of hand scrape licenses issued also showed a decrease. The most productive bar was Sheepshead, followed by Cobb Bar, Jones Shore, Ragged Point and Kitts Point, all of which received repletion over the last several years. The reported harvest is 14,927 bushels and compared favorably with the same period last year.

HOOK & LINE LICENSES

Mr. Carpenter reported that through November 1, 157 commercial hook and line licenses had been issued for 1984. This compared with a total of 24 issued in 1983.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Chairman Pruitt appointed Mr. Russell and Mr. Braithwaite to the nominating committee and asked that they report at the next regular meeting.

OYSTER REPLETION COMMITTEE

The oyster repletion committee will be appointed by the Chairman in the near future to report on a 1985 program at the next meeting. Mr. Carpenter suggested that the repletion committee should consider the purchase of James River seed.

PROPOSED REGULATION CHANGES

The Commissioners considered the proposed regulation changes. The following motion was made by Mr. Parran and seconded by Mr. Browning:

TO AMEND REGULATION I, SEC. 2(m)(3) AS ADVERTISED. The motion was approved.

The following motion was made by Mr. Parran and seconded by Mr. Browning:

TO TAKE NO ACTION ON REGULATION II, SECTION 2(a)(4) SO AS TO LEAVE THE HAND SCRAPE AREA AS IT PRESENTLY STANDS. The motion was approved with only Chairman Pruitt voting "No".

The Commissioners considered the proposed regulation dealing with licenses. The following motion was made by Mr. Browning and seconded by Mr. Russell:

TO EXTEND THE TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS (REGULATION III, SEC. 13(c)) AS ADVERTISED AND ADD A MORATORIUM ON ALL HOOK & LINE LICENSES. The motion was approved.

At this time Mr. Zeni made the following motion:

THAT THE COMMISSION GIVE NOTICE THROUGH ADVERTISEMENT THAT IT INTENDS TO CONSIDER AMENDMENTS TO REGULATION III, SECTION 13(c), TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS ON FISHING, EXTENDED FOR 1985 THAT WILL:

1. IN ADDITION TO THE PROHIBITIONS ALREADY ENACTED, PROHIBIT THE TAKING AND POSSESSING OF ROCK FISH FROM FEBRUARY 15 THROUGH APRIL 1 AND JUNE 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31.
2. IN THE ALTERNATE, IN ADDITION TO THE PROHIBITIONS ALREADY ENACTED, PROHIBIT THE TAKING AND POSSESSING OF ROCK FISH FEBRUARY 15 THROUGH APRIL 1.
3. IN ADDITION TO THE PROHIBITION ALREADY ENACTED, PROHIBIT THE SETTING OF ANY GILL NETS FROM FEBRUARY 15 TO APRIL 1 AND FROM JUNE 1 THROUGH DECEMBER 31.
4. IN THE ALTERNATIVE, IN ADDITION TO PROHIBITION ALREADY ENACTED, PROHIBIT THE SETTING OF ANY GILL NET FROM FEBRUARY 15 THROUGH APRIL 1.

Mr. Parran said he had asked Mr. Carpenter to review the information supplied to the Commission earlier by Maryland.

Mr. Carpenter said his review of the report which Maryland supplied suggested to him the possibility of raising the minimum size limit on the rock fish in lieu of a complete moratorium as one possible option. Mr. Parran recommended adding a fifth alternative to those suggested by Mr. Zeni, that of raising the minimum size on rock fish to 24". Mr. Zeni agreed to the addition and Mr. Parran seconded the motion as amended.

Mr. Browning believed that we should give the present restrictions a fair opportunity to work and prove themselves. He did not believe that we need the additional restrictions at this time.

Mr. Russell stated his belief that the current restrictions are adequate.

Mr. Pruitt believes that the ASMFC plan is working.

The Chairman called for a roll call vote on Mr. Zeni's motion. Messrs. Browning, Braithwaite, Pruitt and Russell voted "No" and Messrs. Zeni and Parran voted "Yes". The motion was not approved.

DELINQUENT CATCH REPORTS

Mr. Carpenter read the list of 35 licensees delinquent in filing required seafood catch reports. The following persons appeared:

Mr. James R. Pilkerton - The following motion was made by Mr. Russell and seconded by Mr. Browning:

THAT MR. PILKERTON BE ALLOWED TO PURCHASE A LICENSE BUT WOULD BE ON PROBATION FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR FOLLOWING THE ISSUANCE OF THE LICENSE. The motion was approved.

Mr. Eldridge T. Messick - The following motion was made by Mr. Browning and seconded by Mr. Russell:

THAT MR. MESSICK BE ALLOWED TO PURCHASE A LICENSE BUT WOULD BE ON PROBATION FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR FOLLOWING THE ISSUANCE OF THE LICENSE. The motion was approved.

Mr. James R. Messick - The following motion was made by Mr. Parran and seconded by Mr. Browning:

THAT MR. MESSICK BE ALLOWED TO PURCHASE A LICENSE BUT WOULD BE ON PROBATION FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR FOLLOWING THE ISSUANCE OF THE LICENSE. The motion was approved.

Mr. Thomas D. Blackistone - The following motion was made by Mr. Browning and seconded by Mr. Braithwaite:

THAT MR. BLACKISTONE BE ALLOWED TO PURCHASE A LICENSE BUT WOULD BE ON PROBATION FOR A PERIOD OF ONE YEAR FOLLOWING THE ISSUANCE OF THE LICENSE. The motion was approved.

Mr. Thomas L. Arnest - Mr. Carpenter briefly reviewed Mr. Arnest's failure to comply with the requirement of sending in catch reports. Inasmuch as Mr. Arnest is a chronic offender, he recommended that Mr. Arnest's licenses be limited to personal licenses rather than Captain's licenses and then he would not be required to submit catch reports. The following motion was made by Mr. Zeni and seconded by Mr. Browning:

TO ALLOW MR. ARNEST TO PURCHASE A TONGER'S LICENSE BUT NOT A TONG BOAT OPERATOR'S (CAPTAIN'S) LICENSE. The motion was approved.

The following motion was made by Mr. Browning and seconded by Mr. Zeni:

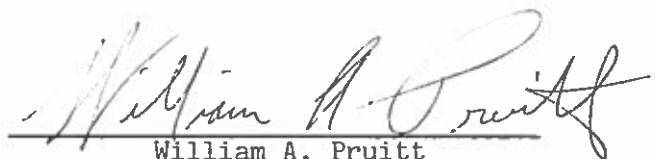
TO ACCEPT THE REMAINING RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE HEARING OFFICER. The motion was approved.


NEXT MEETING

Mr. Pruitt said that the date and time of the next meeting would be announced at a later date.

ADJOURNED

A motion was made, seconded and approved at 11:20 p.m.


William A. Pruitt
Chairman


R. Wayne Browning
Secretary

HEARING RECORD

Mr. Willard Dutton said that when the legislative committee met, they had agreed on the change of eel pot mesh size from 1/2" x 1/2" to 1/2" x 1" and that they would be given two years to accomplish this. He asked if this would be given. Mr. Carpenter read the portion of the proposed regulation which would allow a two year period for conversion of the gear.

Mr. Jimmy Dent spoke in favor of leaving the mesh size at 1/2" x 1/2".

Mr. Robert T. Brown said this was something they had been working toward for some time. St. Mary's County was in favor of the change as it was presented and he asked the Commissioners to support this change.

The next item was the proposed expansion of the hand scrape area.

Mr. Willard Dutton spoke against the expansion of the hand scrape area. He realizes that hand tonging is hard work but he was not in favor of this change.

Mr. Richard Daiger commended the Commission on its decision to hold this meeting in the evening, giving more persons the opportunity to attend. He reminded the Commission that the original request from the Westmoreland County Watermen's Assoc., had included a catch limit on hand scraping. Mr. Hutt believed that a catch limit would be within legal boundaries. Mr. Pruitt said it would be taken into consideration. Mr. Daiger, speaking as an individual and on behalf of the Westmoreland County Watermen's Assoc., spoke in favor of the extension as advertised, with a catch limit. They believe that the hand scraping will help clean the oyster bars and assist in getting a set. He gave a report on the statistics of the hand scrape area which they believe verified the value of hand scraping. Hand scraping with a catch limit will not deplete the oyster beds.

Mr. Robert T. Brown spoke in favor of extending the hand scrape area and pointed out the limited working hours permitted for hand scraping. The watermen need the additional areas to sustain themselves.

Mr. John Allen agreed that hand scraping is a more efficient method for harvesting oysters but some years ago when the hand scraping was proposed in the lower part of the river, it was set out to increase the set and make oysters grow faster. He said it is not working. He cited statistics that indicated the money the oystermen are making. He was very much against the expansion. He asked that this be given serious consideration before making the change.

Mr. Randy Harding believes the catch limit on hand scraping should parallel the catch by hand tongs.

Mr. Roger Hill spoke against the expansion because the dredge would destroy the bottom if it were worked long enough.

Mr. Joseph Bowles spoke in favor of hand scraping. Everything else is modernizing and it is time to improve the method of oystering.

Mr. Lewis Hodges believes they should be able to harvest the same number of oysters with a dredge as with tongs and make it easier.

Mr. Leslie Wilson spoke in favor of the proposal because the water in that area is deep and cannot be hand tonged. He mentioned that hand tongs freeze in the winter which limits their use. He also disputed Mr. Allen's statistics.

Mr. Paul Smith suggested using James River seed oysters in the Potomac because without seed neither tonging nor hand scraping can last very long.

Mr. George Herbert spoke in favor of the expansion. He believes hand tongs should be banned. He said there has been very little planting in the hand scrape area with the exception of shells and he suggested putting the revenue back where it came from.

Mr. Richard Daiger said the present hand scrape area has been worked and nothing has been put back. Attempts have been made to bring the upper river back with seed. He believes the watermen should be given an improved form of harvesting.

There were no others wishing to speak regarding hand scraping. The Chairman asked Mr. Carpenter to read the proposed regulation dealing with temporary fishing restrictions (Reg. III, Sec. 13(c)).

Mr. Dutton would like to see the fishing regulations stay the same as in the past year. It seems that if a waterman cannot get a new gill net stand, why give someone a new hook & line license. If you close the river, who will pay the Potomac River watermen? He said he could not endorse a total ban unless all states took the same action.

Mr. Douglas Jenkins spoke on behalf of the Westmoreland Chapter of the Watermen's Assoc. Very often the results from both states fail to give the true picture. The Potomac River watermen do not have the opportunity that Maryland and Virginia watermen have. A lot of watermen depend on rock fish. He believes there are more rock fish in the river than there has been in 20 years. He asked that the watermen be treated fairly and be given their fishing rights back in the Potomac River. He said the Commissioners should not vote as representatives from DNR and VMRC.

Mr. John Wilson asked that the PRFC look into the toxicity from the upper river. Why not test shad and rock fish for toxicity. He complained that nothing has been done to clean up the river. He believes the toxicity should be checked in the spawning area.

Mr. Donald Markwith asked that the regulation be left as it now reads.

Mr. Walter Parkinson believes there are more rock fish in the river than he has seen in years. It is difficult to believe that there is a problem with rock fish when you see so many in the river. Just because you don't catch them all the time does not mean they are not there. He asked that no further restrictions be placed on fishing.

Mr. John Higgins would like to see the moratorium lifted in the Potomac River. A herbicide is being used in Cobb Island that is very toxic. The problem is more than the watermen, you have to clean up the environment.

Mr. Charles Mason questioned the five fish limit and whether a commercial fisherman can take a party out that does not have a license. Mr. Hutt responded that it would be a matter of conscience and whether the inspector believed that a person without a license had only caught five fish. Also the position the judge takes.

Mr. Charles Snead, speaking as an attorney for Willard Elliott, said that if you take away the livelihood of these watermen without taking away the fishing privilege of the sport fishermen, you are creating a problem. He discussed the way the catch goes up and down over the years. The commercial waterman has borne the brunt of the problem.

Mr. Kenneth Wicker said he is catching approximately the same amount of fish as he was during the early '70's, therefore, he sees no need for additional restrictions on the watermen.

Mr. Jerome Watson would like to see the restrictions remain as they are.

Mr. Melvin Headley said there are more rock fish than he has seen since the '60's.

Mr. Robert Reamy said there are more rock fish now than we had in the late '70's. Times have changed and we need to catch fish. If we have to have a closure he prefers to have the same one we have at present. He mentioned the amount of rock fish that he had purchased for the week and asked that the present regulations remain and not to make any more.

Mr. Wayne Morgan, Sr., asked for clarification on the rules for hook & line fishing license. He said Mr. Carpenter had told him that his eight year old son should have a fishing license.

Mr. Robert T. Brown said that last year the Potomac River put forth a ban which was more stringent than Maryland or Virginia. He believes that the commercial man is the one who can tell you what's in the river. The Federal Government spent millions of dollars and came up with so much that the state of Maryland has asked for a total moratorium. He caught more rock fish this year than any year since 1972. He had to stop fishing in August because he was catching so many small rock fish that he could not cull them out. It is bad to stop the commercial man from fishing. They cannot stand a total ban. He asked that the present regulations be left as they are.

Mr. Richard Daiger recalled August 1983 when this regulation was adopted. The Westmoreland County Watermen's Assoc., asked for an alternate plan of closing the river during the spawning season. The Commission and the state agencies find it easy to regulate the watermen but it is difficult to do anything about the pollution.

Mr. Dennis Woodruff said there are more rock fish than he has ever seen. The rock fish are on the way back. The size of the gill net stands have been cut back but the catches are up. The PRFC has a plan that is working and there is no reason to change it.

Mr. William Smith asked for clarification on the hook & line license. He cited conflicting reports on what is legal. Mr. Hutt repeated his theory concerning conscience and the possible actions of the inspectors and judges.

Mr. Frank Labinger would like to see something done to protect the remaining spawn. The problem always seems to be in someone else's backyard. Do not relax our regulations until we are sure.

Mr. Tayloe Dameron thinks that everybody sees more rock fish in the river. He has thrown more rock fish overboard than he has ever seen. He has seen the rock when he has been tonging oysters.

Mr. Allen Dent said there are more rock fish than anyone has ever seen. They can live with the restrictions they have presently but please don't put any more on them.

Mr. Bill Goldsboro, Chesapeake Bay Foundation said rock is a migratory fish. They should be considered by all concerned agencies together. CBF supports a strong fishing ban as they believe if the pressure continues on the rock fish, in 10 years there will be no fish to catch. It is critical to preserve the stock that we now have. Continued fishing pressure can permanently damage the Chesapeake Bay stock. They believe that all areas where the rock fish migrate should ban rock fishing until they recover.

Mr. Brady Bounds said he can live with the 45 day window. He believes that you have to at least continue the ban which we now have. The 1982 year class has to be protected. It is not strictly a Potomac River problem, it is an East Coast problem. He asked that the Commissioners listen to the DNR presentation carefully.

The public hearing closed at 9:13 p.m.