

MASSACHUSETTS BAYS PROGRAM (MBP) RESEARCH & PLANNING GRANTS FY 2011

Project Title: River Herring Warden Network

Amount Funded: \$15,000

Total Project Cost: \$25,056

Project Summary

River herring, a once-abundant fish stock, are now in severe decline along the Atlantic seaboard. Working and communicating together, herring wardens and advocates have the opportunity to learn from mistakes or advancements that other runs have made, and work to support the full recovery of the river herring runs throughout Cape Cod Bay, Massachusetts and New England.

The Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association proposes to partner with the town of Wellfleet's herring warden, Jeff Hughes, to build capacity among the wardens through the creation of an interactive and collaborative River Herring Warden Network group. Our goal is to empower herring wardens to be more effective at enhancing coastal habitat necessary for the recovery of river herring and other anadromous and catadromous fish species. This will be done by creating networks for sharing information, both in person and online. We will build a comprehensive but easy to navigate website for the wardens to use to share information, including an online forum for informal discussions. Included in the website will be infrastructure to link volunteers and advocates to wardens and projects that need assistance.

Project Scope

The following tasks will be performed under this contract:

Task 1. Conduct project kickoff meeting: MBP and representatives from the Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association (CCCHFA) will meet to agree upon the scope of work and deliverables. During the meeting, the role of MBP, CCCHFA, and project partners will be clearly identified.

COMPLETE ! Deliverable 1a: A final scope of work and contract
Delivery Date: April 28, 2011

Task 2. Gather stakeholder feedback on planned River Herring Warden Website and manual: CCCHFA will complete the following tasks in order to develop a draft River Herring Warden Web Page and Best Practice Manual.

- Develop a list of Herring Wardens in Massachusetts
- Develop a list of regional, state and federal fisheries managers; who will be invited to participate in the web site and manual development process
- Facilitate meetings of Herring Wardens and stakeholders to gather opinions on website content, navigation options, best practice manual, and content for individual pages.
- Develop Draft Plan summarizing opinions, input, and proposed website content.
- Distribute Draft Plan for comment; revise and create Final Plan.

Deliverable 2a: Meeting agendas, minutes, and lists of attendees

Delivery Date: June 10, 2011

Deliverable 2b: Final plan summarizing opinions, input from wardens, proposed information for manual and proposed website content. List of website design group (committee).

Delivery Date: June 24, 2011

Task 3. Develop a River Herring Warden Web Page: To complete this task, the CCCHFA will:

- Secure website domain and develop site plan.
- Design website and forums.
- Determine best options for volunteer outreach/recruitment.
- Using the draft and final plan from Task 2 to guide selection of content, populate website with content:
 - Community: historical and current information for each town, stories, town contacts, other advocate contacts, field trip opportunities.
 - Volunteer outreach coordination.
 - Run maintenance: manual, expenditures (acknowledgement), info exchanges, current projects.
 - Regulations: moratorium, explanations of council rulings and how they affect river herring, editorials, meeting calendars.
 - Fish counts: updates, dynamics of the runs, sharing of run status/timing.
- Develop media plan to ensure all stakeholders (wardens and potential volunteers) are aware of new resource;
- Develop a basic Outreach Kit for herring wardens, other groups and organizations and the media;
- Outline the best practices manual and start developing content for a draft manual.

Deliverable 3a: Draft website

Delivery Date: August 5, 2011

Deliverable 3b: Draft Outreach Kit and Media Plan

Delivery Date: August 19, 2011

Task 4: Kickoff/Annual Network Meeting: Facilitate kickoff meeting of Herring Wardens to share information (policy, management, etc.) and gather feedback on website content, navigation options and information for best practice manual.

Deliverable 4a: Meeting agenda, minutes, and list of attendees.

Delivery Date: September 30, 2011

Task 5: Develop Best Practices Manual CCCHFA will develop a River Herring Warden Best Practice Manual The manual will be designed to identify appropriate techniques for monitoring, maintaining and restoring fish run passages, methods for habitat improvement, lessons learned, and resources. The manual will be posted at the website for downloading by wardens and others.

Deliverable 5a: Draft Best Practices Manual
Delivery Date: November 4, 2011

Task 6. Conduct a series of trainings and workshops to publicize and refine the website and best practices manual: CCCHFA will conduct a series of training sessions with Herring Wardens and other stakeholders to walk through the resources contained in the web site and the best practices manual. A Fall/Winter wrap up meeting of Herring Wardens will outline steps for maintaining resources and communication, and ensuring the longevity of the network.

Deliverable 6a: Meeting agenda, minutes, and list of attendees at all training workshops and final wrap-up session.

Delivery Date: December 23, 2011

Deliverable 6b: Final report outlining next steps for the network and final revisions to the web site and Best Practices Manual.

Delivery Date: December 30, 2011

Goals and Objectives

Working and communicating together, herring wardens and advocates have the opportunity to learn from mistakes or advancements that other runs have made, and work to support the full recovery of the river herring runs throughout Cape Cod Bay, Massachusetts and New England. The Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association proposes to partner with the town of Wellfleet's herring warden, Jeff Hughes, to build capacity among the wardens through the creation of an interactive and collaborative River Herring Warden Network group (possible name: Alewife Alliance).

Our goal is to empower herring wardens to be more effective at enhancing coastal habitat necessary for the recovery of river herring and other anadromous and catadromous fish species. This will be done through the following objectives to build capacity among the wardens and volunteers/advocates:

1. Develop and maintain a contact list of herring wardens and their respective herring run maintenance committees;
2. Establish a website that herring wardens can use to post information, communicate about their runs, share techniques for cultivation of a healthy run, post volunteer fish counts, and stay up to date on regulations that will affect all river herring throughout the region. The posting of real-time data from volunteer herring counts throughout the Cape will help fisheries managers to track and better understand the status of the overall stock.
3. Create an online forum (community) for wardens and advocates to discuss what they are observing, describe what work has to be done, post work schedules, identify needs for restoration or other assistance, develop collaborative projects, and update others on the state of the runs.
4. Develop a mechanism to link volunteers to coastal habitat volunteer opportunities, either through existing volunteer recruitment sites (i.e., capecodvolunteers.org) or creating space on the website for volunteer recruitment.

5. Develop a “Herring Run Best Practices” manual to establish a more uniform understanding of what works and what doesn’t work in maintaining and restoring fish run passages, methods for habitat improvement, lessons learned, and resources. This manual will be posted at the website for downloading by wardens and others.
6. Convene meetings of herring wardens and supporters to exchange ideas and news, provide training and mentoring opportunities, and learn about special topics from invited speakers.

Partner Responsibilities

CCCHFA- lead community organizing activities and stakeholder meetings, design and construct website and forums, coordinate press/media, train stakeholders to use website.

Jeff Hughes- guide content of website and forums, reach out to fellow wardens, lead this newly formed community to fully utilize the website and forums.

Budget

We are requesting \$15,000 from MBP to implement a \$25,056 project to develop the Rover Herring Warden Network.. The MBP funds will primarily be used to pay Jeff Hughes to recruit herring wardens to the network and develop content for the website, to cover the cost of developing the website infrastructure, and to reimburse travel expenses for participating wardens to attend planning, training, and feedback meetings. The match of \$11,231 (mostly cash, some in-kind) is provided by CCCHFA, to cover our staff time related to the project, incidentals of postage and printing, and hosting of the meeting space. The matching funds are not used to match any other federal funding and are sourced from a private foundation that funds staff time to work on herring issues.