

FISHERIES SCIENCE PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Interstate Tagging Committee

Committee: Interstate Tagging Committee (ITC)

Active Subcommittees: Certification Program Subcommittee

Purpose: The role of the ITC is to improve the quality and utility of data collected by scientific and angler-based tagging programs. In October 1997, the Commission issued the following *Resolution Concerning Anglers Tagging Programs*:

“The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission urges all states to establish their authority to coordinate and control fish tagging efforts conducted in their waters”.

The Commission resolved to work cooperatively with the National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and angler-based tagging programs to develop a plan for national coordination and registration of tagging programs and to conduct a tagging protocol workshop to develop an anglers’ tagging guidance document focusing on broad regional issues. In August 1998, a facilitated Tagging Protocol Workshop was hosted by the Management and Science Committee at the Annual Meeting of the American Fisheries Society during which protocols were established for developing program goals and objectives, proper fish handling technique, and education, training information, data management, and incentive programs. In 1999, the ITC was created to further develop and promote protocols for effective tagging programs.

Membership: The ITC is composed of a representative from each member state, two representatives from USFWS, two representatives from NMFS, one representative from the NEFMC, one representative from the GSMFC, and several representatives from private tagging organizations (e.g. American Littoral Society).

Codifying Document: The Commission Executive Committee appointed the ITC in 1999 to develop and promote protocols for effective tagging programs. The Management and Science Committee oversees the ITC; the Commission staff lead acts as liaison between the ITC and the Law Enforcement Committee.

Type & Frequency of Meetings: Most meetings are conducted via conference call as needed. The Certification Program Subcommittee may require more meetings dependent on submitted applications for certification. One in-person meeting per year may be conducted as needed.

Primary activities:

- Coordinate tagging activities among states from Maine to Florida; administration of the Fish Tagging Program Database

- Strengthen cooperation between fisheries management data needs and tagging activities
- Administer Certification Process to ensure quality and consistency of tagging programs. The Certification Program Subcommittee reviews applications and makes recommendations to the ITC regarding certification of applicant programs.
- Provide information and technical advice to the MSC and ISFMP Policy Board as needed
- Additional duties assigned as needed.

Major accomplishments:

- Review and certification of Atlantic coast tagging programs
 - American Littoral Society Fish Tagging Program (2007)
 - Delaware Weakfish Tagging Program Pilot Study (2009)
 - Georgia DNR Cooperative Angler Tagging Program (2013)
 - Massachusetts Summer Flounder Tagging Program (2013)
 - South Carolina DNR Marine Game Fish Tagging Program (2013)
 - Virginia Game Fish Tagging Program (2013)
- **Cooperative Tagging Website and Registry Redesign Completed (April 2011)**
 - Provides information about fish tagging programs and a forum for communication among fishery managers, anglers, scientists, and others interested in fish tagging. Includes educational information and a searchable database of tagging programs registered with the ITC.
 - Redesigned to improve usability and information quality
 - Accessible at <https://asmfc.org/programs/science/tagging/>
- **Report to the Policy Board on Atlantic Coast Fish Tagging Activities, and Tagging Program Certification (December 2003)**
 - Approved by Management and Science Committee and the ISFMP Policy Board (2003)
 - Outlines details of certification program process and provides overview of tagging efforts coastwide

History of Chairmanship:

Current Chair & Vice-Chair: vacant

2014 –2002: Chair, Paul Caruso (MA Division of Marine Fisheries) & Vice-Chair, Wilson Laney (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service)

2002 – 2000: Chair, Bill Hubbard (Coastal Conservation Association) & Vice Chair, Kurtis Gregg (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission)

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