

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 Interstate Tagging Committee was created to further develop and promote protocols for effective tagging programs.

Membership: The Committee 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 Interstate Tagging Committee (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 conference calls to discuss applications for certification. One in-person meeting per year may be conducted during Technical Committee or Board Meeting Weeks.

Primary activities:

- Coordinate tagging activities among states from Maine to Florida; administration of the Fish Tagging Website and Registry
- Strengthen cooperation between fisheries management data needs and tagging activities
- Administer Certification Process to ensure quality and consistency of tagging programs
- Provide information and technical advice to the MSC and ISFMP Policy Board as needed
- Certification Program Subcommittee administers the certification process, reviews applications, and makes recommendations to the ITC regarding certification of applicant programs. Additional duties assigned as needed.

Major accomplishments:

- **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 <http://www.fishtag.info/>
- **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
 - Location of file on shared drive: Science Department\Interstate Tagging Committee
 - Review and certification of Delaware's pilot weakfish tagging program (2009)

History of Chairmanship:

Present– August 2014: Chair, vacant & Vice-Chair, vacant

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

March 2002 – March 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