Marine Resources Committee
Town of Bar Harbor
Minutes from Wednesday, January 20, 2016

CALL TO ORDER – 4:00 p.m. Port Authority Building, Bar Harbor Municipal Pier

Committee Members Present: Megan McOsker (chair), Chris Petersen, Ron Landis, Matt Gerald, Scott Swann, Natalie Springuel. Harbor Master: Charlie Phippen.
Guests: David Dunton, Richard Taylor, Joshua Hodgkins, Josh Kane, Heidi Leighton (DMR), Theo de Koning, Anna Farrell, Michael Cornish, Nicholas Tonti.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November minutes were approved 6-0.

OLD BUSINESS.

A. Autumn 2015 clam surveys. College of the Atlantic students Michael Cornish and Nicholas Tonti presented a summary of clam census work done by COA's marine biology class during the fall of 2015. The summary document has been attached to these minutes. The main study site, Hadley Point east, had a large number of recruits in 2014, many or most of those recruits have survived, but have not grown much (an estimated average of one-quarter inch from May-November). DMR biologist Heidi Leighton suggested that the town consider transplanting some of these clams to other areas where there has been poor recruitment, and the committee asked the commercial clammers present to make recommendations for locations at the next meeting. Some of the areas discussed were around Thomas Island, with a concern that the area could no longer support clams, but that the east side of the Twinnies might be better. If we decide to move clams we will need a permit, but Heidi verified that the process would be straightforward.

B. Hadley Point Signboard. Natalie went over a new draft of the signboard content. The overall impression was that it was in very good shape. Megan, Scott, and Natalie agreed to look over the format and content, share edits, and bring a revised version to the February meeting for final approval. Members asked if it was possible to add a QR code to the poster to link to closure information. The committee expressed its thanks to Maine Sea Grant for their work on design and content on the poster.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Bar Harbor Waterfront & Ferry Terminal. The committee reviewed what was known about the potential change of the ferry terminal to a cruise ship terminal. The committee and guests had many questions, and virtually all of them had no known answers. Assuming a move, will the harbormaster deal with cruise ship work, will the anchorages shift, will cruise ship charges change, what town committee will be involved in the process? If cruise ships let passengers off directly, how much larger will the pier structure there have to be? I general estimate was about 1000 feet, with 500 feet of solid pier. Someone asked if dredging would be required, the general though was little of any. Many of the impacts would happen shoreside, including traffic along route 3 and in town. Currently the limits to cruise ships is three ships, and either 5,500 passengers (May, June, September, October) or 3,500 (July and August), and several wondered if that would change.

B. Rockweed. Charlie mentioned that someone had called from Ocean Approved looking for people to harvest horsetail kelp (*Laminaria digitata,* not rockweed) over the winter, but thought Bar Harbor was in Penobscot Bay. Chris said that Frenchman Bay Partners is having a steering committee meeting next week to go over rockweed harvesting issues and plan a larger public meeting on the issue in early spring. In a related intertidal harvesting issue, harvestor David Dunton said that he had contacted the park about harvesting within its boundaries intertidally, and

they said that they are not enforcing any harvesting restrictions at the moment, and are waiting for clarification of their jurisdiction, although they believe that they do have jurisdiction to enforce a harvesting ban there.

Update on Conservation Hours: Chris summarized current conservation hours for 2015-16. Richard Taylor, David Dunton, and Joshua Hodgkins have met or exceeded the 7-hour conservation time requirement. Josh Kane has 2 hours, and no other individuals have time conservation time recorded.

5:15pm - Meeting adjourned.

ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

The next committee meeting is scheduled for February 24, 4pm at the Port Authority Building. This is one week later than our scheduled time to accommodate schedules of committee members. The meeting will have final signboard edits, and possibly additional data from mudflat research last fall.

CONSERVATION HOURS: Richard Taylor, Joshua Hodgkins, Josh Kane and David Dunton received 1.5 hours of conservation time each for attending the meeting.

Fall 2015 Adult Clam Census of Hadley Point East, West, Trenton Boat Ramp, and Indian Point

Introduction:

Over the course of late September through early November 2015, a series of adult clam censuses were conducted at specific sites around Mount Desert Island and Trenton, Maine. These censuses were conducted by students in the College of the Atlantic Marine Biology Class taught by Dr. Chris Petersen. Data were collected at Hadley Point East (9/27), the Trenton Airport Boat Ramp (10/24), Hadley Point West (10/25), and Indian Point (11/01), respectively. The number of plots surveyed varied by site with each plot designated by a 1'x2' quadrat. This data collection primarily focused on soft-shell clams (*Mya arenaria*), with additional data collected on mud clams (*Macoma balthica*) and hard-shell clams (*Mercenaria mercenaria*) when applicable.

Number of Clams Per Plot:

Location	Number of Plots	Average Clams per Plot	Clams per Plot ≥ 2"	% Clams per Plot ≥ 2"
Hadley Point East	12	138	1	0.6%
Hadley Point West	11	74.58	2.50	3.35%
Indian Point (Mercenaria)	6	2.33	1	43%
Trenton Boat Ramp	18	9.44	6.06	64%

Table 1: Size frequency distribution of clams. Clams two inches or higher can be legally harvested.

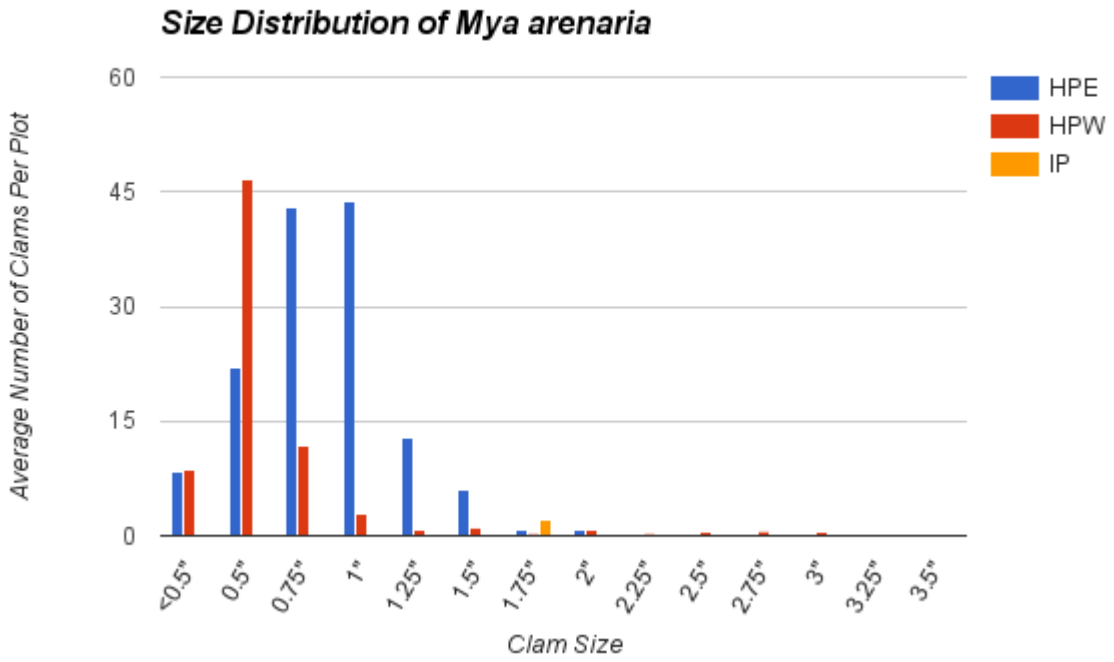


Figure 1: Size frequency distribution of soft-shell clams. Clams two inches in size or higher can be legally harvested

In order to understand how clam populations have changed at the various sites, we compared our data with historical records of the Hadley Point clamming flats. Table 2 outlines the total clam density data (including the density and proportion of harvestable clams) from 1999 through 2015 where applicable. Though 2014 data for the Bar Harbor Bar and 2015 data for the Trenton Boat Ramp are included, we paid most attention to Hadley Point East and Hadley Point West due to the amount of time the data spans. We found that the overall density of clams at Hadley Point West nearly tripled between 2014-2015 and remained relatively stable at Hadley Point East. However, the density of clams above 2" at Hadley Point West dropped from an average of about 9 clams to 2.5. This decline in harvestable clams suggests that there was a change in distribution of size but not necessarily a negative decline in overall clam population.

(a) Hadley Point East

Location	Year	Total Clam Density (clams/plot)	Density of Clams ≥ 2"	% of Clams ≥ 2"
HPE	Fall 2015	138	1	0.6
HPE	Fall 2014	142.5	0.125	0.09
HPE	Fall 2013	1	0.846	84
HPE	Fall 2012	12	6.8	57
HPE	Fall 2011	46	11.6	25
HPE	Spring 2011	30.7	7.25	24
HPE	Fall 2010	27.3	5.83	21
HPE	Fall 2009	26.4	2.10	8
HPE	Spring 2008	19.7	5.33	27
HPE	Fall 2007	30.5	6.17	20
HPE	Fall 2006	29.8	1.53	5
HPE	Spring 2006	17	0.31	2
HPE	Fall 2005	41.71	0.45	1
HPE	Fall 2003	0.92	0.65	71
HPE	Summer 1999	9.24	4.31	47

(b) Hadley Point West

Location	Year	Total Clam Density (clams/plot)	Density of Clams ≥ 2"	% of Clams ≥ 2"
HPW	Fall 2015	75	2.5	3.4
HPW	Fall 2014	29.14	9.14	12.19
HPW	Fall 2013	8.08	6.08	75.3
HPW	Fall 2012	25	14.6	58
HPW	Fall 2011	38	11.9	31.5
HPW	Fall 2010	49.6	11.92	24
HPW	Spring 2010	88.6	5.27	6
HPW	Fall 2009	20.3	2.41	12
HPW	Fall 2006	4.03	0.55	14
HPW	Fall 2006	17.81	2.25	13

HPW	Spring 2006	10.39	0.95	9
HPW	Fall 2005	29.2	0.35	1
HPW	Fall 2003	0.73	0.48	65

(c) Hadley Point Far West

Location	Year	Total Clam Density (clams/plot)	Density of Clams ≥ 2"	% of Clams ≥ 2"
HPFW	Fall 2013	7.45	6.636	89
HPFW	Fall 2012	15	11.6	77

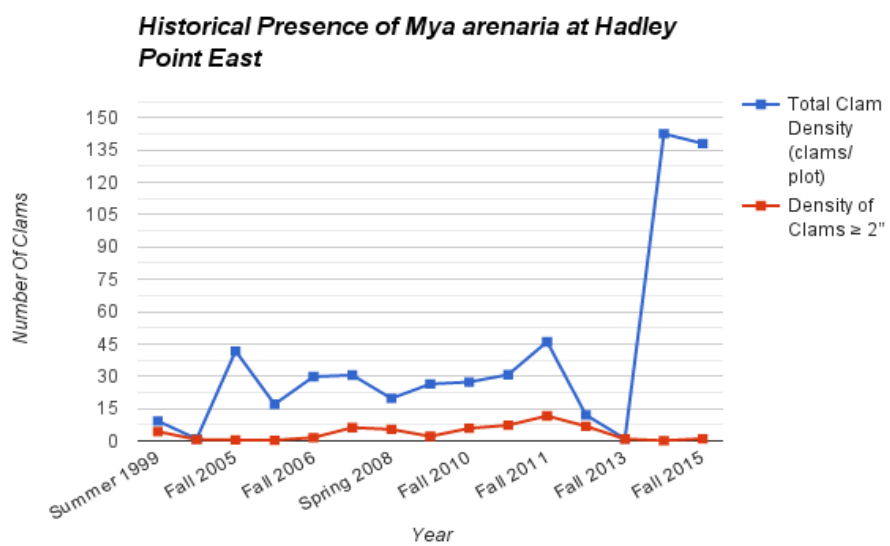
Table 2: Table of total clam densities, densities of legally harvestable clams, and percentage of legally harvestable clams for Hadley Point East (a), Hadley Point West (b), Hadley Point Far West (c)

In 2015, Hadley Point East showed a slight drop in overall clam density with virtually no harvestable clams. In contrast, Hadley Point West had an increase in density of almost 50 clams per plot, while the density of harvestable clams declined sharply. It appears that though 2015 has shown a large total number of clams, the low number and percentage of harvestable size suggests that the amount of juveniles has significantly increased. For Indian Point, the number of hard shelled clams (*Mercenaria mercenaria*) continues to be low, with virtually no recruits for the third year in a row.

Table 3. Indian Point (*Mercenaria mercenaria*) census results

Year	Number of Plots	Avg # clams/plot	# clams/plot ≥ 2"	% clams/plot ≥ 2"
Fall 2015	6	2	1	50
Fall 2014	12	3	2.58	86
Fall 2013	5	2.4	1.2	50

a)



b)

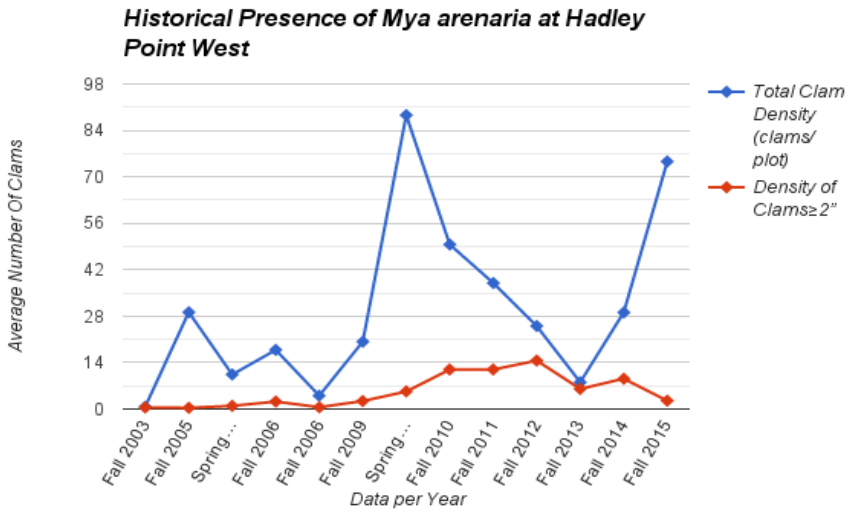


Figure 3: Historical densities for Hadley Point East (a) and Hadley Point West (b). Overall densities are designated in blue, while density of legally harvestable clams (2" or larger) are in red.

Written by Michael Cornish, Nicholas Tonti, and Anna Wolfson under the supervision of Dr. Chris Petersen for the Bar Harbor Marine Resource Committee for January 20, 2016 meeting.