

Connecticut Shellfish Initiative

Overview

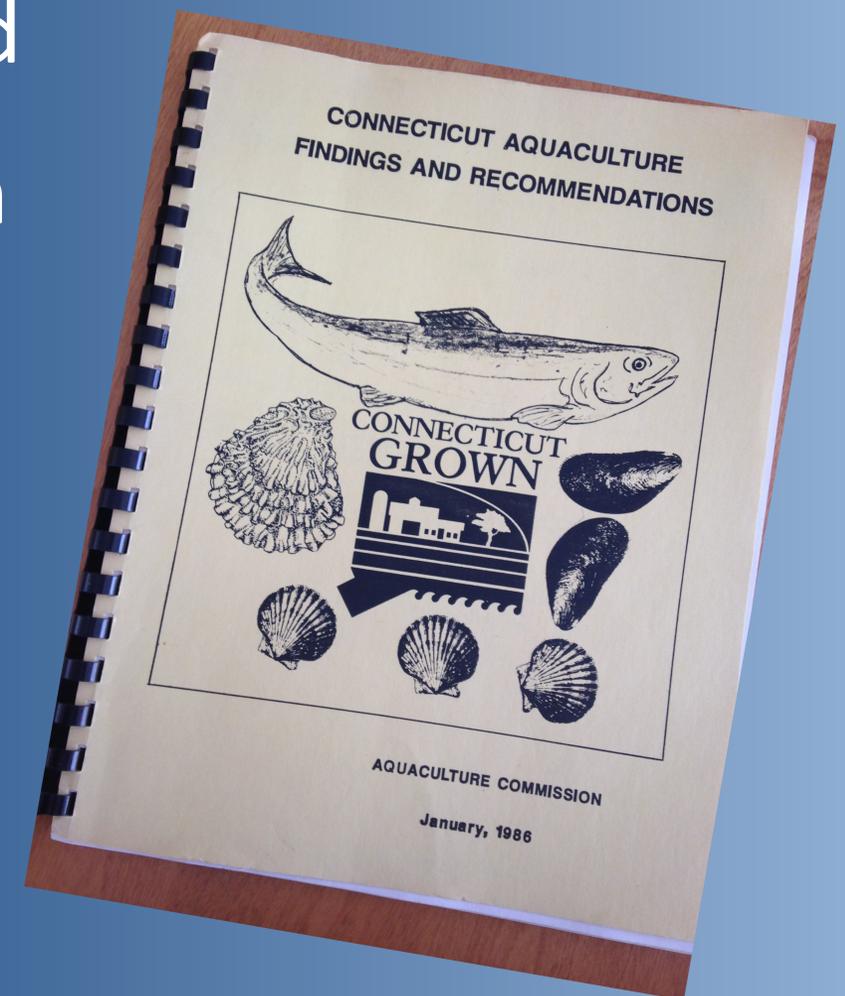
About

Recognizing the potential for growth among important shellfish sectors, Connecticut Sea Grant/UCONN Extension is facilitating the development of a *Vision Plan* for Connecticut's natural, recreational, and commercial shellfish resources



Background

- **Connecticut Aquaculture Commission Report (1986)**
 - Identified top priorities for shellfish aquaculture
 - Successful in generating funding for industry-related needs
 - Connecticut Seafood Council was formed
 - One of the drivers for vo-aqua education
 - Commission was disbanded shortly after report was published



Background

- Connecticut Shellfish Initiative (2013)
 - Similar “needs assessment” approach
 - Broader context (natural, recreational, commercial interests)
 - A committee established to help guide initiative and track progress into the future

Background

CSI will result in a written plan:

- Documents importance of industry, recreation, natural shellfish resources
- Identifies issues of importance
- Frames a vision for the future
- Establishes measurable goals and objectives

Task Force

- Charged with:
 - Hosting website (<http://smp.uconn.edu>) and list serve
 - Organizing public meetings and conferences
 - Soliciting stakeholder input
 - Outlining and revising the written Vision Plan

[Tessa Getchis](#), Connecticut Sea Grant and UCONN Extension

[Julie Rose](#), NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, Milford Laboratory

[Nancy Balcom](#), Connecticut Sea Grant and UCONN Extension

[Anoushka Concepcion](#), Connecticut Sea Grant and UCONN Extension

Steering Committee

- Charged with identifying concerns, sources of conflict, and opportunities for improving shellfish resource use and management.
- Includes:
 - shellfish businesses and industry associations
 - recreational harvest interests
 - Industry service providers
 - town, state, and federal government officials
 - environmental organizations
 - extension professionals

Connecticut Department of Agriculture
Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development
Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection
Connecticut Farm Bureau Association
Connecticut Seafood Council
Connecticut Sea Grant (*ex officio*)
Connecticut Shellfish Commissions
Connecticut Harbor Management Commissions (seeking a representative)
EPA Long Island Sound Study
EPA Office of Ecosystem Protection
Harbor Watch (representing community environmental monitoring groups)
Industry liaisons (shellfish harvesting and farming)
NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
UCONN Extension, UCONN College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
USDA Farm Service Agency
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
US Army Corps of Engineers-New England District
US Fish and Wildlife Service

(as of 11/06/13)

Public Scoping Sessions

- Initial public scoping meetings held to discuss:
 - Commercial industry (9/24/13)
 - Recreational harvest (10/01/13)
 - Natural shellfish resources (10/08/13)
- Participants asked to identify issues / opportunities
- Nearly 100 individuals participated
- Information distributed for public comment

Issues

X					Allow industry participation in pro-active vibrio testing
X					State lacks equipment for microbial (fecal coliform) source tracking
X					Increase consumer confidence with respect to Connecticut shellfish products
X					Provide public education on effects of pesticides and fertilizers
X					Information on options available for post harvest processing
X					DA/BA laboratory should be well staffed/funded to collect/analyze water & shellfish meat samples necessary to current & future commercial and recreational activity
X					Expand the scope and frequency of water quality monitoring in LIS, especially comm. & recr. shellfishing areas
X					Allocate funding for state to purchase the equipment and supplies to test for pathogenic Vibrio strains; hire staff knowledgeable and trained in use of equipment
	X	X	X	X	Upgrade the status of shellfish classification areas to increase recreational and commercial opportunities
	X	X	X		Address encroachment on natural and recreational shellfish beds
	X	X	X		Improve relationships between industry, recreational harvesters, and regulatory agencies
	X	X		X	Put in place better protections for designated natural beds used for aquaculture
	X	X		X	Designated natural beds used for aquaculture should be worked so that their function can be restored
	X	X			Revisit (with industry input) the state leasing process for shellfish beds and seek alternatives
	X	X			Simplify permitting process for aquaculture

- Climate change
- *Vibrio*
- Shoreline access
- Site selection
- Enforcement
- Permitting

And many, many, many, many more



omg
help!!!

Narrowing the Scope

- Task Force and Steering Committee Meeting
 - Similar topics grouped together
 - Five major themes
 - Cross-cutting areas
 - Overarching goals

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Thematic Areas

The following are thematic areas of the *CSI Vision Plan*:

1	Seafood Consumption (Consumer Health and Safety)
2	Regulations and Management
3	Commercial Shellfish Industries
4	Recreational Shellfish Opportunities
5	Natural Shellfish Resources

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Goals

Suggested overarching goals of the *CSI Vision Plan*:

1	Improved Public Understanding of Benefits and Risks of Seafood Consumption
2	Transparent and Coordinated Regulation, Management, and Enforcement
3	Prosperous and Sustainable Commercial Shellfish Industries
4	Improved Understanding of and Access to Recreational Shellfish Opportunities
5	Protected and Enhanced Natural Shellfish Resources

Cross-cutting Themes

- Communication
- Education
- Marketing/Promotion

Overarching goals:

- Improve communication among stakeholders
- Improve public knowledge about shellfish topics

Important First Steps

1. Address cross-cutting themes:
 - Bring shellfish interest groups together
 - Maintain steering committee to discuss and address shellfish issues; track progress of Action Plan

A Vision for
The Future of Shellfish

in Connecticut



CSI Conference

Purpose:

- Introduce the Connecticut Shellfish Initiative
- Showcase the importance of Connecticut natural, recreational, and commercial shellfish resources
- Get stakeholders involved in developing Vision Plan

Summary

- 140 participants
- Diverse group of shellfish interest groups
- Established focus groups for each thematic area

Important First Steps

2. Address topical themes:

- Assemble focus groups (5 themes) + marketing /promotion
- Develop specific goals and actions
- Meet late spring/early summer
- To get involved contact us!

Connecticut Shellfish Initiative

Email: smp@uconn.edu

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Web: <http://smp.uconn.edu>



Questions?