

Teleconference/Virtual

AGENDA

Board of Wildlife Resources
Wildlife and Boat Committee
7870 Villa Park Drive
Henrico, Virginia 23228

October 7, 2020
10:00 am

Committee Members: Ms. Catherine Claiborne, Chair, Mr. Leon Boyd, Mr. Frank Adams, Ms. Karen Terwilliger, Alternate and Mr. Tom Sadler, Alternate

DWR Staff Liaisons: Dr. Gray Anderson and Dr. Mike Bednarski

1. Call to Order and Welcome
Ms. Catherine Claiborne

This meeting is proceeding under Item 4-0.01, subsection G of the Appropriation Act and section 2.2-3708.2 of the Code of Virginia. It is being held by electronic communication, as the COVID-19 virus has made a physical meeting of the Committee impracticable. This emergency imposed by COVID-19 is observed by Executive Orders 51, 53, and 55 issued by the Governor of Virginia. The Committee's actions today shall be solely limited to those matters included on the agenda; there is no public comment on non-agenda items. All of these proposed actions are statutorily required or necessary to continue operations and discharge lawful purposes, duties, and responsibilities of the Board.

(Call on Frances Boswell for a Roll Call Vote of board members present)

2. Approval of January 22, 2020 Committee Meeting Minutes ***Final Action***
Ms. Catherine Claiborne
(Call on Frances Boswell for a Roll Call Vote for approval of minutes)
3. 2021-22 Wildlife Regulations Update
Dr. Gray Anderson

4. Boat Ramp Fee Update **Action**
Dr. Gray Anderson

5. Camping on WMA Regulation Update **Action**
Dr. Gray Anderson

6. Alabama Bass
Dr. Mike Bednarski

7. Wildlife Division Update
Dr. Gray Anderson

8. Fish Division Update
Dr. Mike Bednarski

9. Director's Report
Mr. Ryan Brown

10. Chairman's Report
Ms. Catherine Claiborne

11. Next Meeting Date: TBD
Ms. Catherine Claiborne

11. Additional Business/Comments
Ms. Catherine Claiborne

12. Adjournment
Ms. Catherine Claiborne

Draft Meeting Minutes

Education, Planning, and Outreach Committee
Board of Game and Inland Fisheries
7870 Villa Park Drive, Board Room
Henrico, VA 23228

January 22, 2020

3:00 pm

Present: Ms. Karen Terwilliger, **Chair**, Ms. Catherine Claiborne; Mr. Tom Sadler; **Board Members in attendance:** Mr. Leon Boyd, Dr. Mamie Parker, Mr. G. K. Washington; **Assistant Executive Director:** Mr. Gary Martel; **Director's Working Group:** Mr. Darin Moore, Mr. Lee Walker, Dr. Gray Anderson, Dr. Mike Bednarski, Ms. Paige Pearson.

The Committee Chair called the committee meeting to order at 3:00 pm, welcomed everyone, and noted for the record a quorum was present for the meeting.

Approval of the October 23, 2019 Meeting Minutes: The Chair called for a motion to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2019 meeting. Ms. Claiborne made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 23, 2019 meeting. Mr. Sadler seconded the motion. Ayes: Terwilliger, Claiborne, and Sadler

Public Comments — Non-Agenda Items: The Chair called for Non –Agenda items, hearing none she continued with the Agenda.

Welcome the New Creative Content Manager and Special Events Coordinator: The Chair called on Mr. Lee Walker for Introductions.

Mr. Lee Walker introduced Ms. Molly Kirk as the New Creative Content Manager and Ms. Lindsay Kagalis as the Special Events Coordinator

Outreach 2019 RBFF Boating Reactivation Update: The Chair called on Mr. Lee Walker for a 2019 RBFF Boating Reactivation Update.

Mr. Lee Walker gave a 2019 RBFF Boating Reactivation Update.

After discussion and comments, the Chair thanked Mr. Walker for his update.

R3 Update: The Chair called on Mr. Eddie Herndon for an R3 Update.

Mr. Eddie Herndon gave an R3 update.

After discussion and comments, the Chair thanked Mr. Herndon for his update.

Recreational Outdoor Plan/Relevancy Roadmap Update: The Chair called on Mr. Brian Moyer for a Recreational Outdoor Plan/Relevancy Roadmap Update.

Mr. Moyer gave a Recreational Outdoor Plan/Relevancy Roadmap Update.

After discussion and comments, the Chair thanked Mr. Moyer for his update.

DGIF Website Update: The Chair called on Mr. David Murr and Mr. Tim Tassitano for and DGIF Website Update.

Mr. David Murr and Mr. Tim Tassitano gave an informative Update on the DGIF Website.

After discussion and comments, the Chair thanked Mr. Murr and Mr. Tassitano for their website update.

Director's Report: The Chair called on Deputy Director Mr. Gary Martel for a report.

Mr. Martel commended the Outreach and Education Division on all the progress they are making and how great this is for the agency.

Chair's Report:

The Chair asked for additional business and comments and hearing none, she announced the next meeting would be Wednesday, March 18, 2020 and adjourned the meeting at 4:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Boswell

/s/

2021-22 WILDLIFE REGULATIONS: SUGGESTED SCHEDULE



CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

2021-22 Wildlife Regulation Milestones

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Oct - Dec 2020 | Public Scoping Period |
| Oct 22, 2020 | DWR Board Meeting |
| Jan 2021 | DWR Board Meeting |
| Dec 2020 - Feb 2021 | Committee Recommendation Development Period |
| Mar 2021 | DWR Board and Committee Meetings: Proposal-stage Recommendation |
| Mar - May 2021 | Regulation Amendment Proposal Public Comment Period |
| May 2021 | DWR Board and Committee Meetings: Final Recommendations |
| August 1, 2021 | Effective date for regulation amendments adopted by the Board |



Suggested Board Meeting Dates

Key Meeting Topics

Oct 22, 2020 Aquatics Regulations - Final Action

**Jan 21, 2021 2021-22 Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits - Proposal Stage
2021-22 Hunting and Trapping Regulations - Significant Issues Review**

**Mar 18, 2021 2021-22 Migratory Game Bird Seasons and Bag Limits - Final Action
2021-22 Hunting and Trapping Regulations - Proposal Stage**

May 27, 2021 2021-22 Hunting and Trapping Regulations - Final Action



BOATING ACCESS FEES ON DWR LANDS

PROPOSED REGULATION
Staff Recommendation



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Boating Access Fees on DWR Lands

4VAC15-20-66. Admittance, Parking, or Other Use Fee at Certain Department-Owned and Department-Managed Facilities.

Summary

The recommendation is to amend the regulation to i) include department-managed facilities, ii) add boat launch sites to the list of facilities where the department charges a fee, and iii) exempt certain persons who are a passenger on the vessel rather than the vessel's owner or operator from such a fee.



Boating Access Fees on DWR Lands

Recommended language:

4VAC15-20-66. Admittance, Parking, or Other Use Fee at Certain Department-Owned and
Department-managed Facilities.

A.a daily fee of \$3.00 or an annual fee equal to the price of an annual basic state resident fishing or hunting license is established for admittance, parking, or other use at department-owned ~~wildlife management area~~ or department-managed lands, boat launch sites, and public fishing lakes. Such fee shall not apply to (i) any person holding a valid hunting, trapping, or fishing license, or a current certificate of boat registration issued by the department; (ii) persons 16 years of age or younger; or (iii) ~~the use of department-owned boat ramps~~ any person who is a passenger in but not the owner or operator of a paddlecraft or registered vessel.



Boating Access Fees on DWR Lands

Rationale:

These amendments align the regulation with recent legislation changes expanding the types of facilities where the department charges a fee and requiring an access permit or equivalent on boat launch sites.



Public Comments

10 Comments to date:

2 negative

I think this proposal makes no sense ... we need our boat ramps to remain open at no fee for canoes, kayaks , tubers.

This proposal would cause financial hardships for people trying to enjoy non motorized river activities that should otherwise be free.

If fees are to be imposed it should be for motorized watercraft only as there is little to no environmental impact from self propelled watercraft to justify a charge for use.



Public Comments

10 Comments to date:

8 positive

It will help provide needed funds to maintain these areas

I agree with adding the fee. It's appropriate for those who use the waterway public accesses

I don't see any negative impacts. As an angler the current status is unfair.

I feel it is all Virginia boaters' responsibility to support and help maintain public boat access sites



Questions?



Motion

I move that the Board of Wildlife Resources approve for advertisement to the public the amendments to 4VAC15-20-66 regarding the expansion of facilities types where the department may charge a fee as presented by staff.



CAMPING ON DWR LANDS

PROPOSED NEW REGULATION
Staff Recommendation



CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

Camping on DWR Lands

4VAC15-20-155. (New) Camping on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and other DWR-owned or managed lands.

Overall Summary

- **Establishes base rules and expectations for appropriate use of DWR lands for overnight camping opportunities.**
- **Camping has not been regulated in the past but continued pressure on the resource and sometimes misuse of our lands has led staff to request a regulation be considered.**



Camping on DWR Lands

4VAC15-20-155. (New) Camping on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and other DWR-owned or managed lands.

Summary

- A. Authorization – requires Camping Authorization Form
- available through GoOutdoorsVirginia.com**
- B. Camping Periods - only 14 nights within a 28 day period**
- C. Locations – away from facilities
- no clearing of vegetation**



Camping on DWR Lands

4VAC15-20-155. (New) Camping on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and other DWR-owned or managed lands.

Summary

D. Removal of Personal property – clean up after yourself

E. Food security – don't create a wildlife problem



Public Comments

9 comments to date:

All positive

This will keep people from over staying and I feel this is a good idea.

Knowing that a registration process is required will help to ensure the safety of all users of department owned lands.

I think the changes are a positive step for safety of campers

Anytime you can offer more outdoor recreational opportunities, such as camping, I believe Virginia DWR is thinking and acting the way they should. This is a good thing.



Questions?



Motion

I move that the Board of Wildlife Resources approve for advertisement to the public the new regulation proposed as 4VAC15-20-155 Camping on Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and other DWR-owned or managed lands as presented by staff.



Virginia's Alabama Bass Strategy

Aquatic Wildlife
Resources Division

Outreach Division

Presented by:
Dr. Mike Bednarski
Chief of Fisheries



CONSERVE. CONNECT. PROTECT.

What are Alabama Bass?



Alabama Bass - Invasive



Spotted Bass



Largemouth Bass

Photos Courtesy of the iNaturalist Angling for Black Bass Conservation Project

- One of approximately 12 black bass species
- First recognized - 2008 – Previously subspecies of spotted bass
- Native to parts of Georgia and Alabama
- Nearly identical to spotted bass
- Common name – Coosa spotted bass

Changes in Black Bass Population Characteristics after the Introduction of Alabama Bass in Lake Norman, North Carolina

Lawrence G. Dorsey, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, 1721 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699

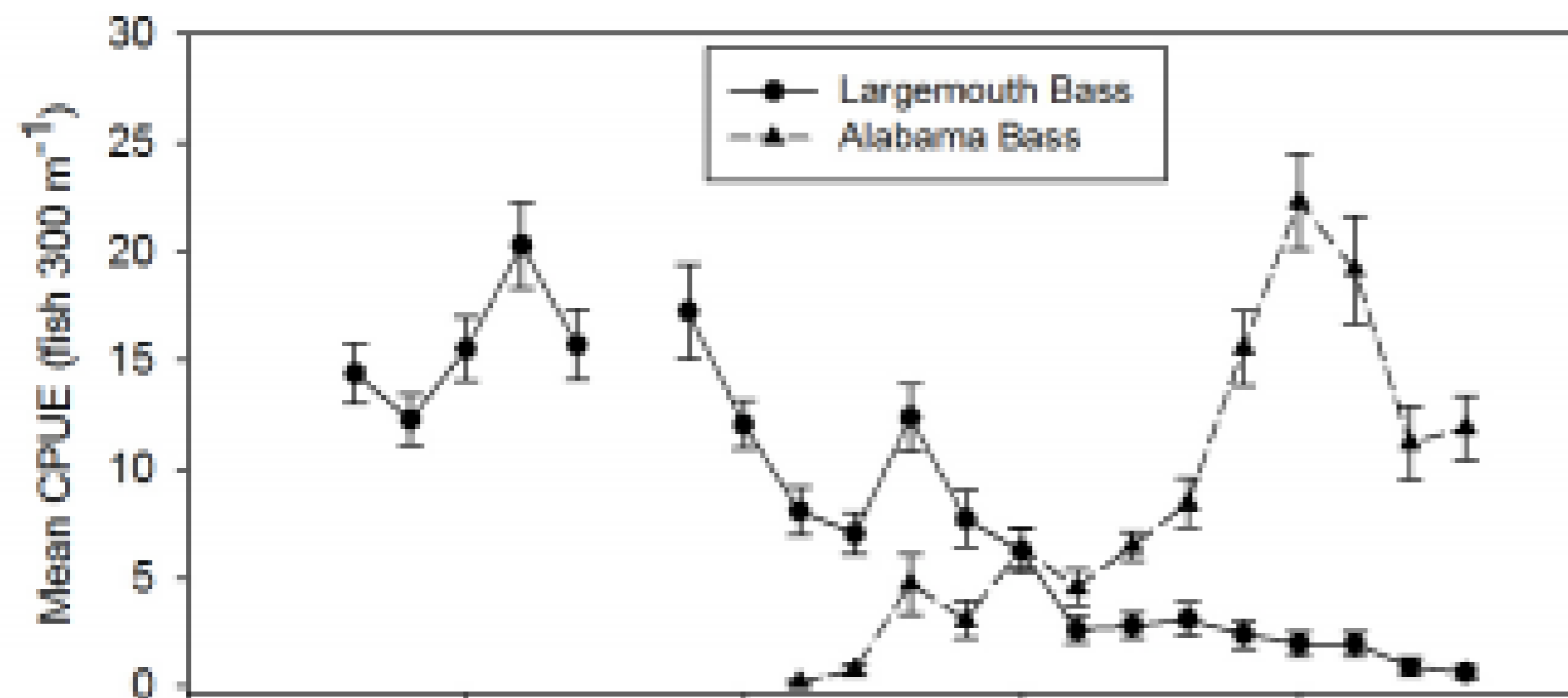
Michael A. Abney, Duke Energy Carolinas. Water Strategy. Hydro Licensing and Lake Services, 562 S. Church St., Charlotte, NC 28202

Abstract: Lake Norman, North Carolina, has a popular fishery for largemouth bass (*Micropterus salmoides*), but in 2001, annual surveys by Duke Energy documented the unauthorized introduction of Alabama bass (*M. henshalli*). Concerns over the effects of this introduction on the existing largemouth bass fishery prompted this study, the objective of which was to use the existing standardized sampling program to document expansion of the Alabama bass population and describe changes in the population characteristics of largemouth bass in Lake Norman. Following Alabama bass introduction, the species quickly spread throughout the main channel of the reservoir, with a concomitant decline in largemouth bass abundance, although mean total length of largemouth bass increased. While the sampling protocol used was effective at documenting the changes in the main reservoir channel population characteristics between the two species, it did not document population characteristics in all areas of the reservoir. Additional samples collected in 2010 and 2013 by the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission in the upper area of the reservoir indicated that largemouth bass remained dominant in creek and cove areas but not along the main reservoir channel. This study illustrates that, while standardized sampling is a sound method for comparing black bass population characteristics between specific areas of interest, the addition of other habitat areas may be necessary to address

What's the Problem

-Aggressive – Outcompete largemouth bass

-Hybridize – Smallmouth bass and spotted bass



Cytonuclear Introgressive Swamping and Species Turnover of Bass After an Introduction

J. C. Avise, P. C. Pierce, M. J. Van Den Avyle, M. H. Smith, W. S. Nelson, and M. A. Asmussen

Species-specific RFLP markers from mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) were identified and employed in conjunction with previously reported data for nuclear allozyme markers to determine the genetic structure of the population of spotted bass in the Potomac River. The results indicate that the formerly abundant smallmouth bass population has declined dramatically over this period and been replaced by spotted bass and spotted/smallmouth hybrids, which together now account for more than 99% of the sampled specimens. The

Download

What's the Problem

- Aggressive – Outcompete largemouth bass
- Hybridize – Smallmouth bass and spotted bass



What's the Problem (Part 2)



-Popular with anglers

-Intentional introduction is the primary vector of transport



Status in Virginia



-State record “spotted bass” from Claytor Lake – late 2017

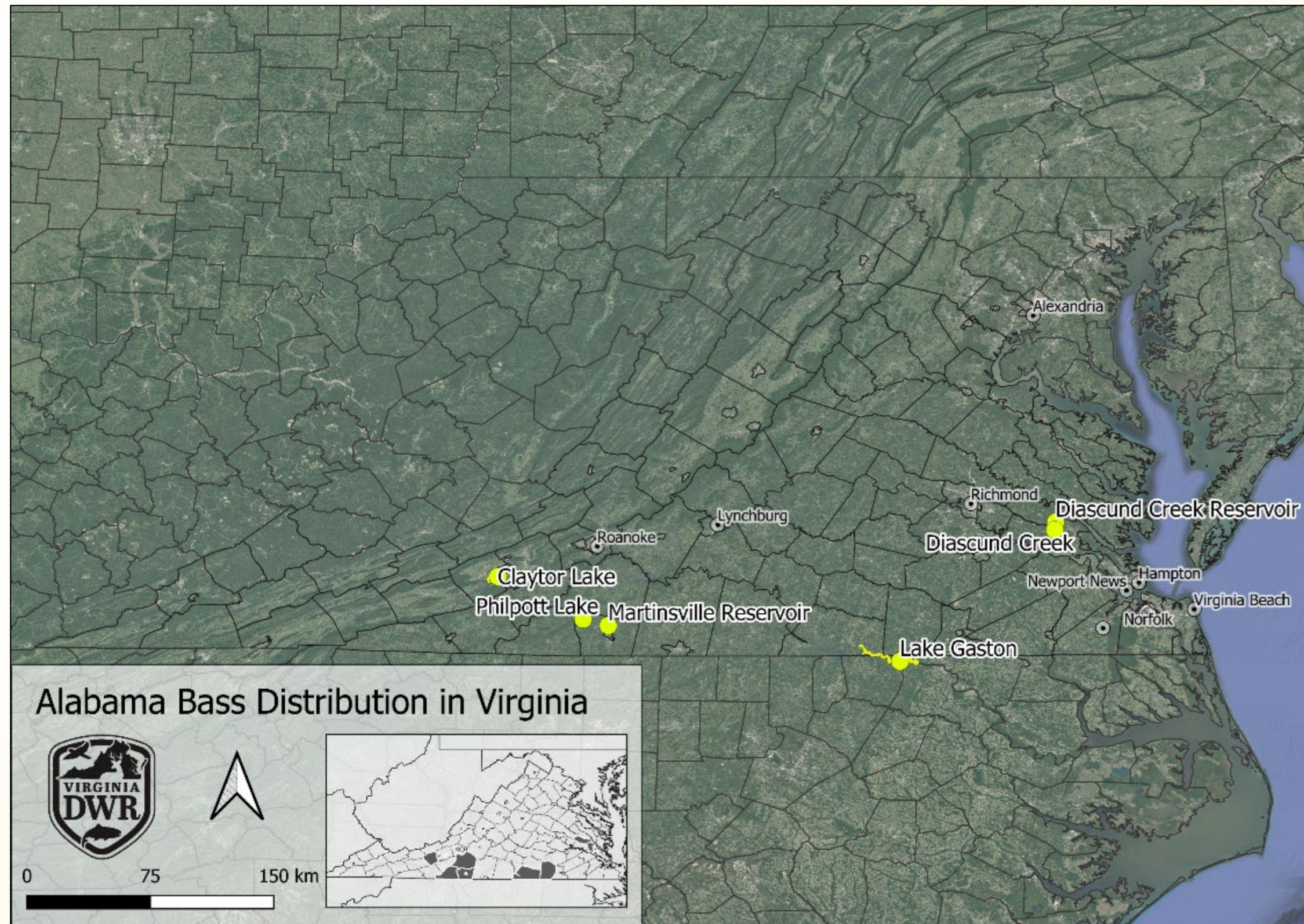
-Follow up testing indicated extensive hybridization with spotted bass and smallmouth bass

-Present in Claytor Lake, Lake Gaston, Martinsville Reservoir, Philpott Lake, Diascund Reservoir*, Chickahominy River (Diascund Creek)*

-Susceptible water bodies: Smith Mountain Lake, Lake Anna, Lake Moomaw, James River, Shenandoah River, New River



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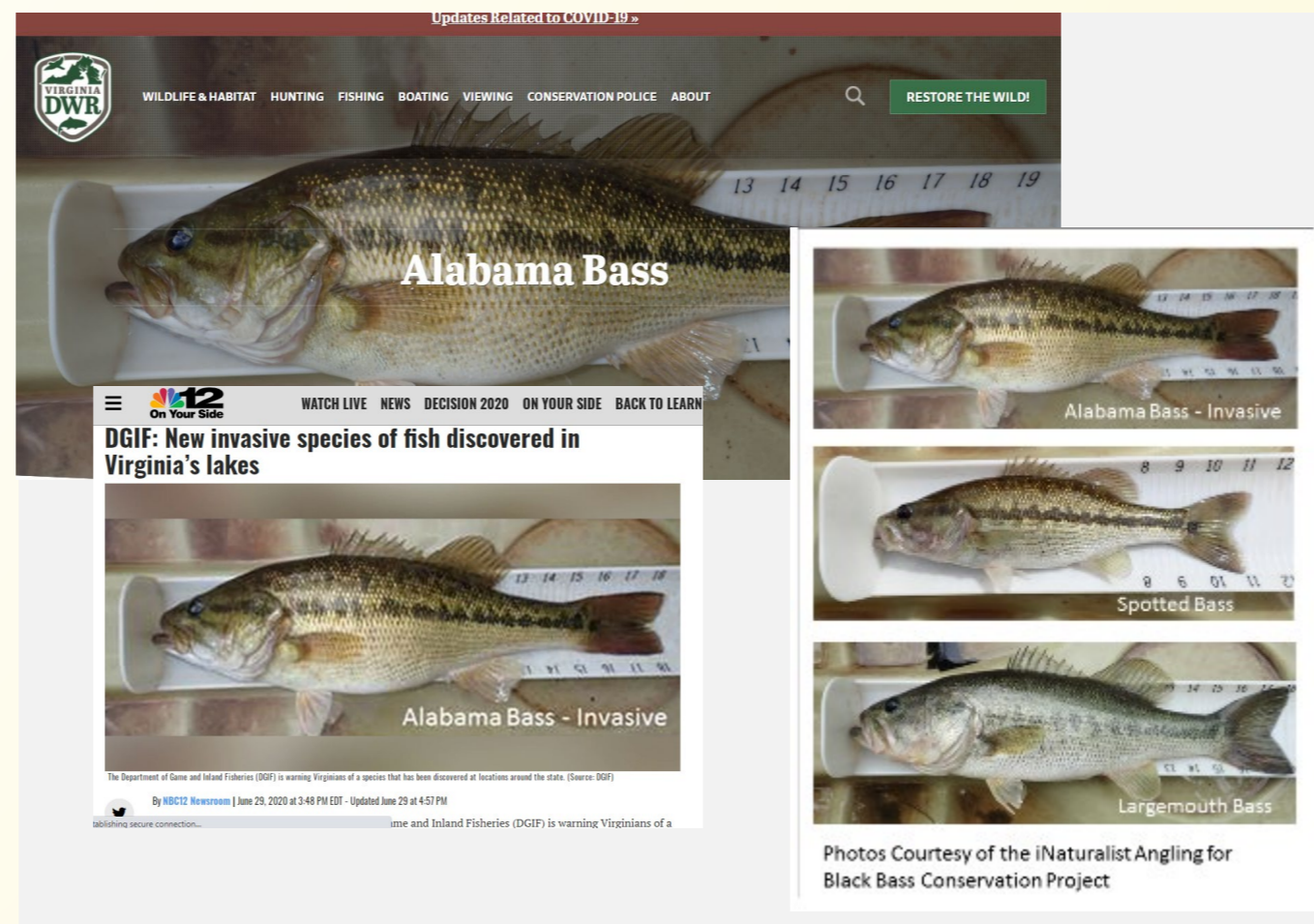
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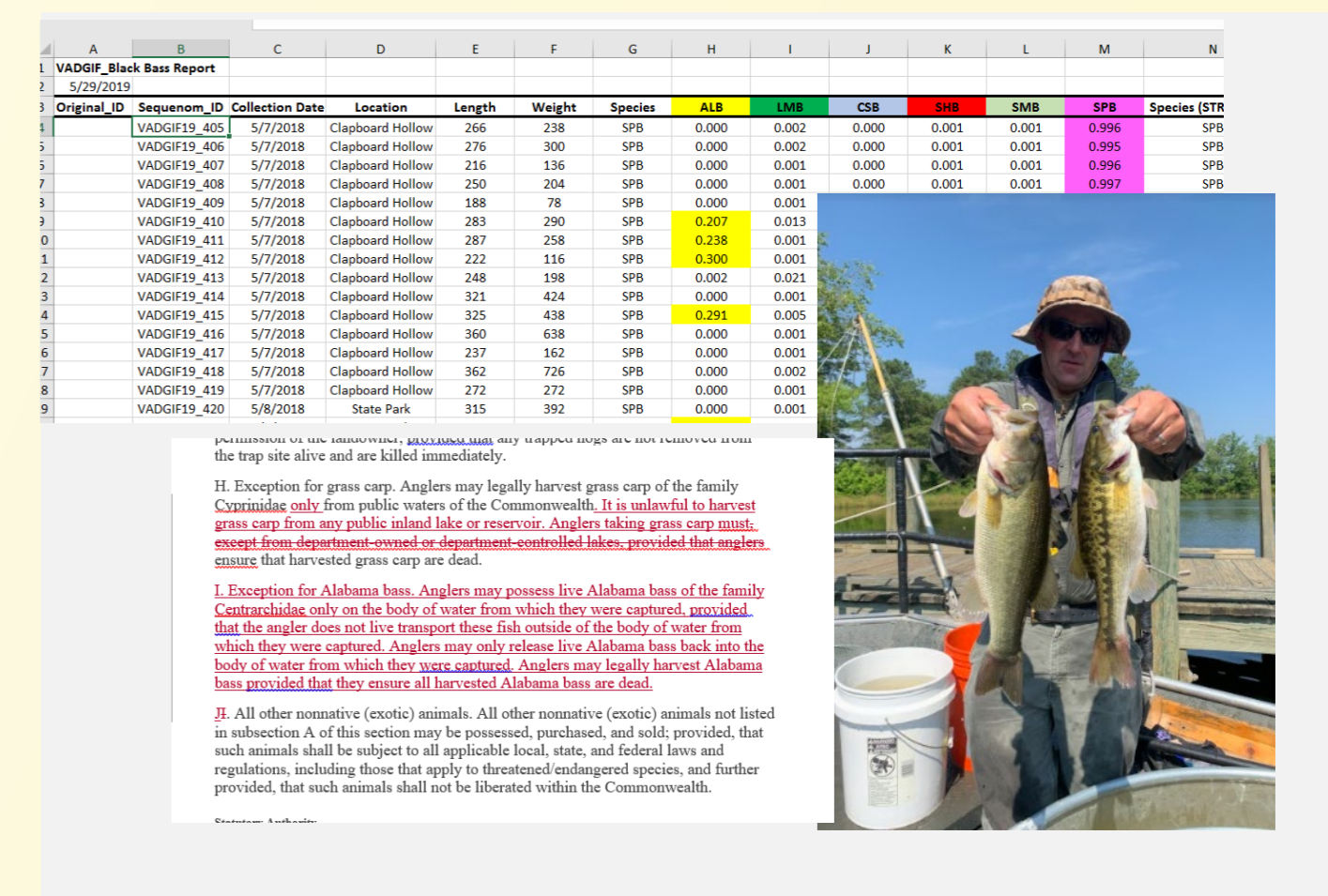
Virginia's Strategy



Partnership



Outreach



Management

MAIN GOAL – Prevention and Containment





Partnership

-Bass Angler's Sportsman's Society

-Conservation Summit

-Information Campaign

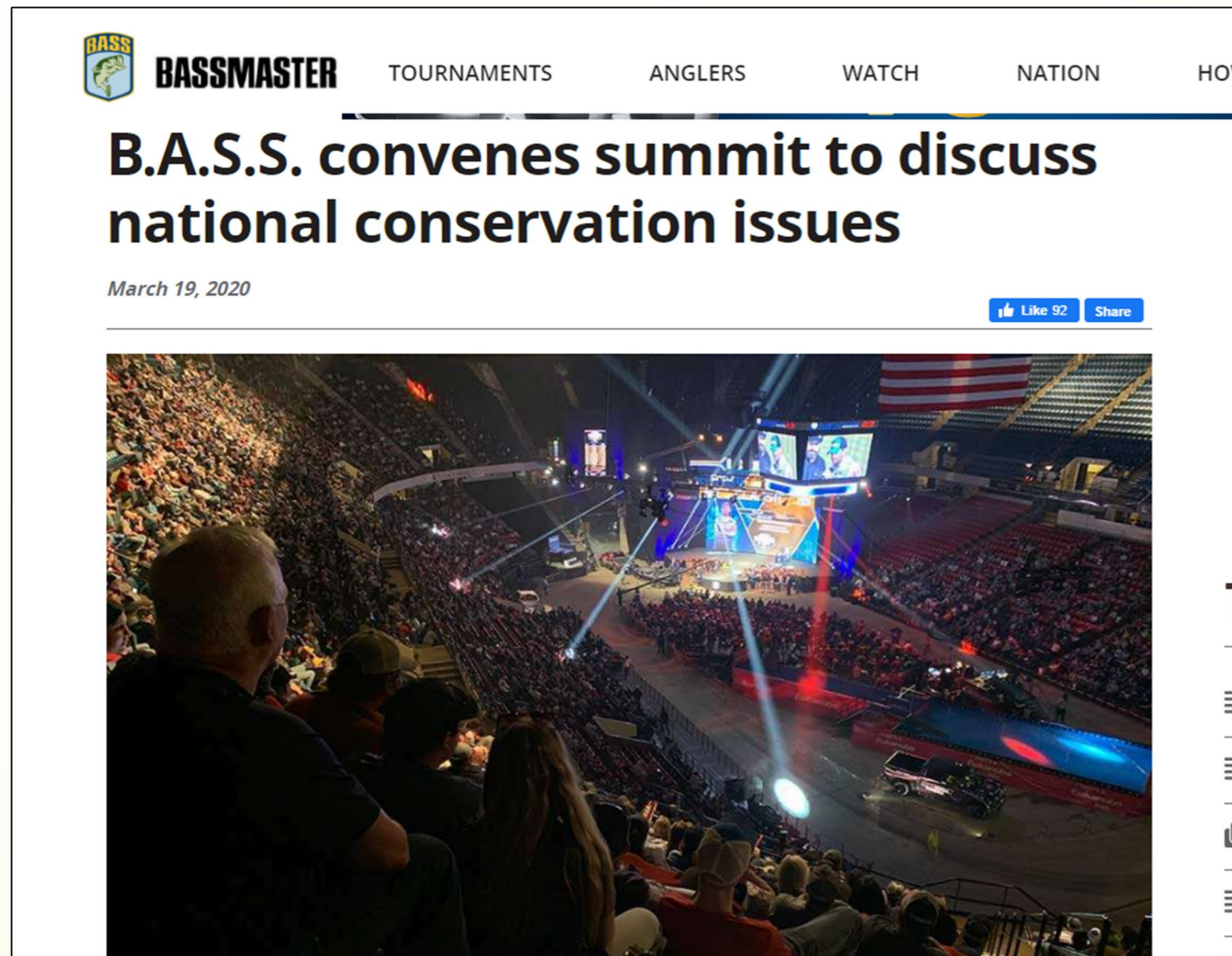
-The Bass Federation

-Bass Fishing Hall of Fame Grant

-Newsletter Articles

-Other States

-Professional Societies/Academia





Partnership

- Bass Angler's Sportsman's Society
 - Conservation Summit
 - Information Campaign

- The Bass Federation
 - Bass Fishing Hall of Fame Grant
 - Newsletter Articles

-Other States

-Professional Societies/Academia

BASSMASTER TOURNAMENTS ANGLERS WATCH NATION HOW

B.A.S.S. convenes summit to discuss national

March 19, 2020

Alabama bass invasion

November 29, 2019

Like 624 Share

Steve Sammons, Auburn

BASS BIG 2020 TOURNAMENTS ARE ON! Enter your





Partnership

- Bass Angler's Sportsman's Society
- Conservation Summit
- Information Campaign



- The Bass Federation
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- Newsletter Articles

-Other States

-Professional Societies/Academia



Outreach

-Communication Plan

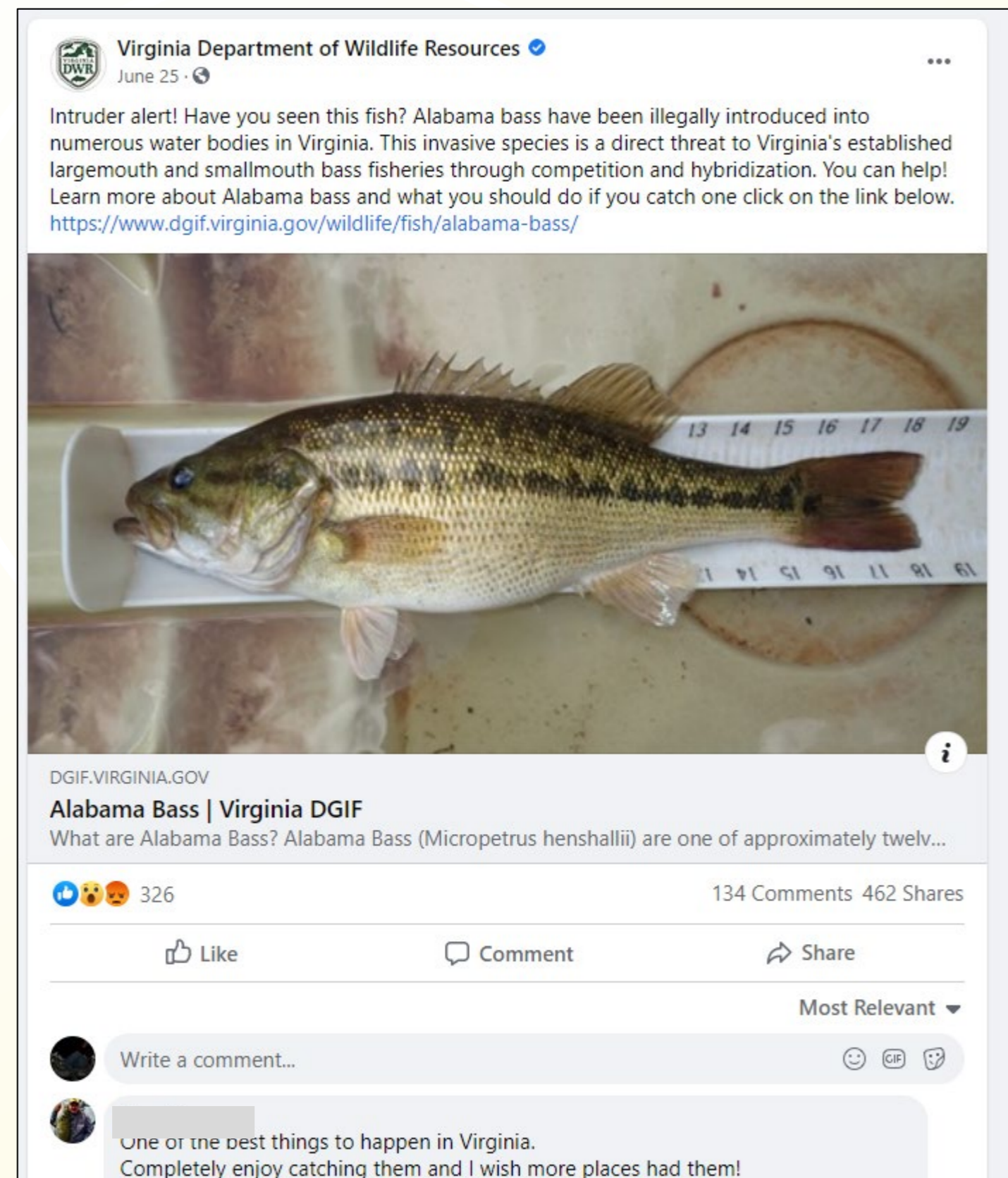
-Social Media

-Press Releases

-Web Content

-”Know the Difference” poster

-Brochure and Envelopes – TBF – BFHOF Grant



Alabama Bass in Virginia lakes are threatening state's bass population

Species has been found in Claytor Lake, could jeopardize Smith Mountain Lake



DGIF warns that Alabama Bass, an invasive species, poses a threat to other bass populations (iNaturalist/Angling for Black Bass Conservation Project)

ROANOKE, Va. – While for some, all bass are the same, that's far from the truth when it comes to this invasive species being found in lakes across Virginia.

Outreach

-Communication Plan

-Social Media

-Press Releases

-Web Content

-”Know the Difference” poster

-Brochure and Envelopes – TBF – BFHOF Grant



Alabama Bass in Virginia lakes are threatening state's bass population

Species has been found in Claytor Lake, could jeopardize Smith Mountain Lake



WATCH NOW: Invasive little fish are causing big problems

Alabama bass are invading two bodies of water in Martinsville and Henry County, and that's not good news for the fishermen and industry.

Bill Wyatt Aug 24, 2020 0



Outreach

-Communication Plan

-Social Media

-Press Releases

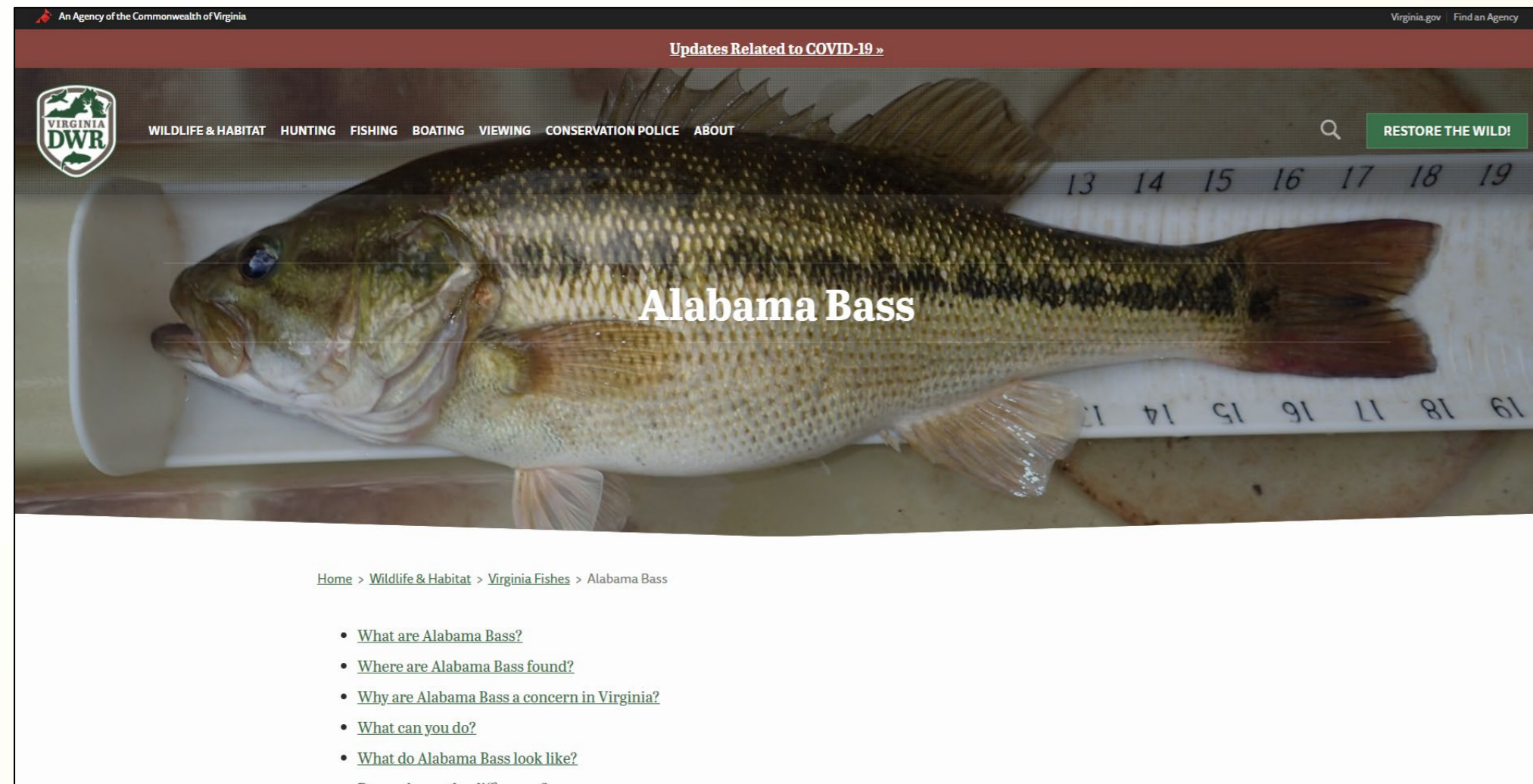
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Outreach



-Communication Plan

-Social Media

-Press Releases

-Web Content

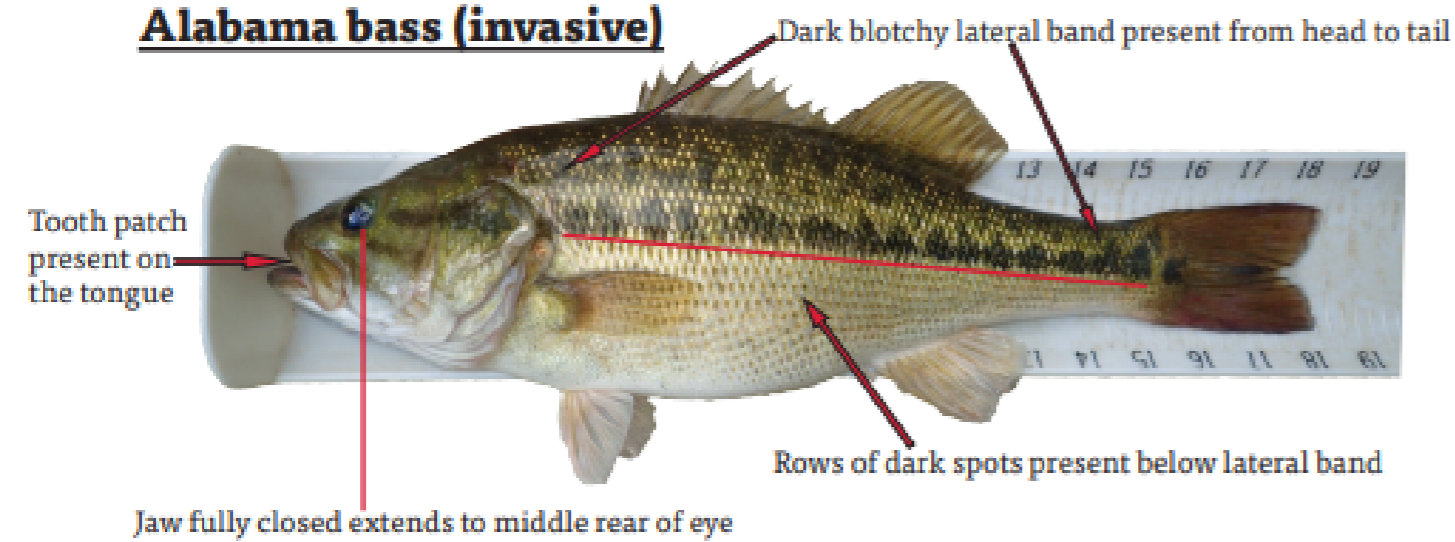
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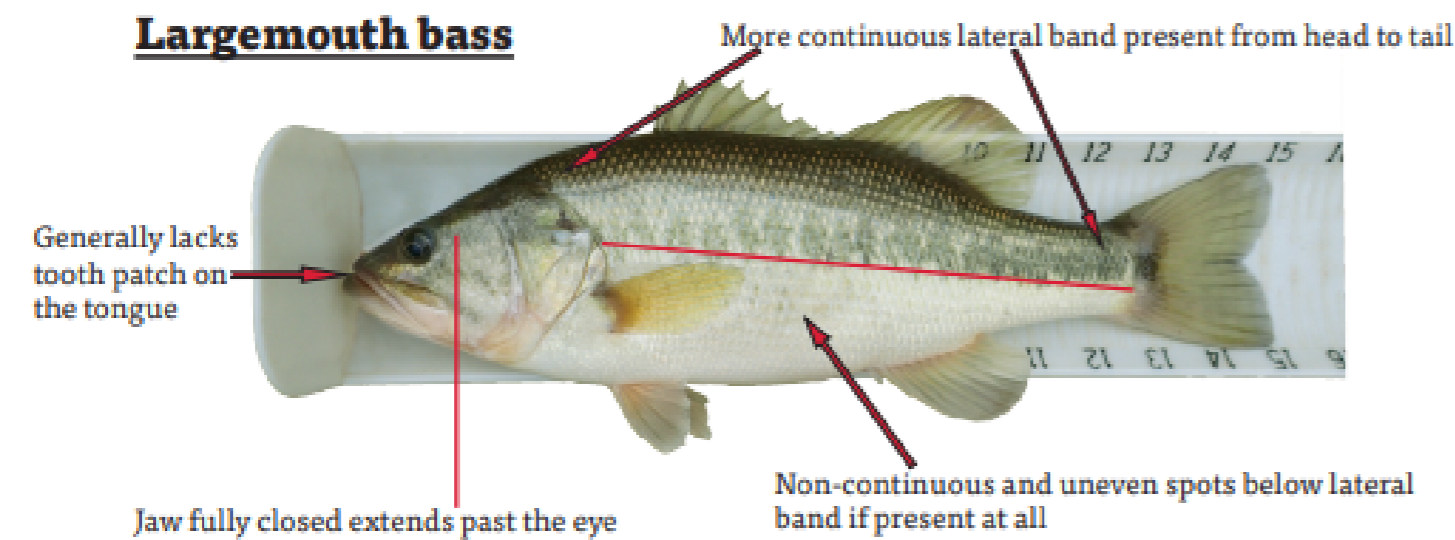


DO YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE?

Alabama bass (invasive)



Largemouth bass



• Anglers are reminded that the introduction of novel predators can have unforeseen impacts on native or established ecosystems.

• The introduction of Alabama bass is illegal in Virginia. Alabama bass have been scientifically shown to out-compete established populations of largemouth bass and hybridize with small-mouth bass.

• Invasive species cause negative ecological and/or economic harm.

• Anglers who suspect they have captured an Alabama bass should take a picture of the fish, clip off a thumbnail-sized portion of one of the pelvic fins, and store the fin clip dry in an envelope. The pelvic fins are located on the bottom of the fish, just under the head. They should then either contact the Department of Wildlife Resources at: fisheries@dwr.virginia.gov or 804-367-1293.



CONSERVE. CORRECT. PROTECT.

Outreach

-Communication Plan

-Social Media

-Press Releases

-Web Content

-”Know the Difference” poster

-Brochure and Envelopes – TBF – BFHOF Grant



Outreach

INVASIVE SPECIES ALERT

REPORT: ALABAMA BASS (*Micropterus henshallii*)



Photos Courtesy of the iNaturalist Angling for Black Bass Conservation Project

Alabama Bass are nearly identical in appearance to the Spotted Bass, which is native to the southwestern portion of Virginia. The jaw of Alabama Bass lines up with the middle rear of the eye, while Largemouth Bass jaws extend past the eye. Alabama Bass have a dark, blotchy lateral band from head to tail, and have spots below this band. Largemouth Bass have a more continuous lateral band. Alabama Bass also typically have a tooth patch on their tongue, which is rare in Largemouth Bass.

Alabama Bass represent a tremendous threat to Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass fisheries. Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass are Virginia's most popular angling targets, with more than 60% of anglers targeting either species over the course of a fishing season. These Bass fisheries in Virginia are valued in the millions of dollars. Declines in either population will result in not only the loss of sport fishing opportunities, but in economic harm to the region. As an invasive species, Alabama Bass are capable of outcompeting Largemouth Bass, causing declines in abundance. For example, in Lake Norman, North Carolina, the relative abundance of Largemouth Bass decreased to less than 8% of their former abundance following the introduction of Alabama Bass. Declines in Largemouth abundance seem to be most pronounced in lakes that are relatively clear and which have limited vegetation. Systems in Virginia such as Smith Mountain Lake, Lake Anna, South Holston Reservoir, and Lake Moomaw are likely to see declines of Largemouth Bass populations if Alabama Bass are introduced into those water bodies.

BE PART OF THE SOLUTION:

Protect our fisheries and help stop the spread of ALABAMA BASS and REPORT all suspected ALABAMA BASS catches to VA DGIF.

REPORTING PROCESS: Anglers who suspect they have caught an Alabama Bass should (1) take a picture of the fish, (2) clip off a thumbnail-sized portion of one of the pelvic fins (pelvic fins are located on the bottom of the fish, just under the head), (3) store the fin clip dry in an envelope and (4) email picture to: for verification with Name of Angler, Location Caught, Date Caught, & Phone Number. (5) Mail the fin sample collected to the address provided when requested.

Anglers are the primary vector for the spread of Alabama Bass in Virginia. Current populations are the results of angler introductions that have occurred over the last ten years. Anglers are reminded that it is *illegal* to stock fish into a public body of water without an authorization from the DGIF. Anyone with knowledge of intentional stockings of Alabama or Spotted Bass should contact DGIF law enforcement at 800-237-5712 or WildCrime@dgif.virginia.gov.



"Working together to Save our Fisheries"

-Communication Plan

-Social Media

-Press Releases

-Web Content

-“Know the Difference” poster

-Brochure and Envelopes – TBF – BFHOF Grant



Management



-Surveillance

- Engage constituents
- Rapid response – follow up surveys
- General monitoring

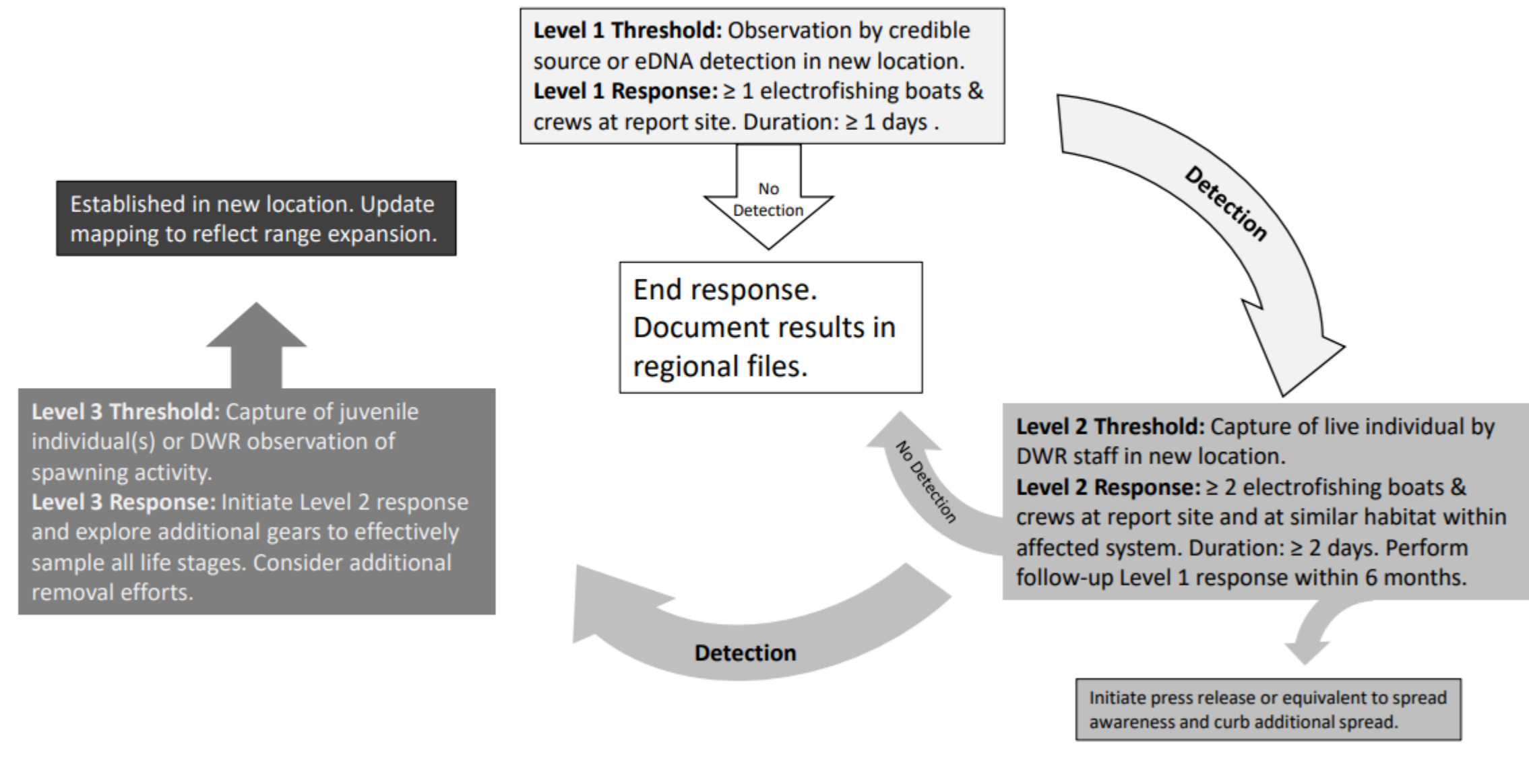
-Regulation

- Addition to Predatory and Injurious Species List
- Restrictions on live possession
- Restrictions on stocking spotted bass
- No restrictions on harvest



Management

Rapid Response for Invasive Fish Species Occurrence in New or Sensitive Locations



-Surveillance

- Engage constituents
- Rapid response – follow up surveys
- General monitoring

-Regulation

- Addition to Predatory and Injurious Species List
- Restrictions on live possession
- Restrictions on stocking spotted bass
- No restrictions on harvest



Management



-Surveillance

- Engage constituents
- Rapid response – follow up surveys
- General monitoring

-Regulation

- Addition to Predatory or Undesirable Species List
- Restrictions on live possession
- Restrictions on stocking spotted bass
- No restrictions on harvest



Management

permission of the landowner, provided that any trapped hogs are not removed from the trap site alive and are killed immediately.

H. Exception for grass carp. Anglers may legally harvest grass carp of the family Cyprinidae only from public waters of the Commonwealth. It is unlawful to harvest grass carp from any public inland lake or reservoir. Anglers taking grass carp must, except from department-owned or department-controlled lakes, provided that anglers ensure that harvested grass carp are dead.

I. Exception for Alabama bass. Anglers may possess live Alabama bass of the family Centrarchidae only on the body of water from which they were captured, provided that the angler does not live transport these fish outside of the body of water from which they were captured. Anglers may only release live Alabama bass back into the body of water from which they were captured. Anglers may legally harvest Alabama bass provided that they ensure all harvested Alabama bass are dead.

J. All other nonnative (exotic) animals. All other nonnative (exotic) animals not listed in subsection A of this section may be possessed, purchased, and sold; provided, that such animals shall be subject to all applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations, including those that apply to threatened/endangered species, and further provided, that such animals shall not be liberated within the Commonwealth.

Statutory Authority:

-Surveillance

- Engage constituents
- Rapid response – follow up surveys
- General monitoring

-Regulation

- Addition to Predatory or Undesirable Species List
- Restrictions on live possession
- Restrictions on stocking spotted bass
- No restrictions on harvest





Next Steps

-Further Outreach

-Next push – January 2021

-Leverage Partnerships

-TBF Grant, B.A.S.S. Media

-Continue Constituent Engagement

-Monitor Presence/Status Throughout Virginia



Questions?

