Continually improve effectiveness of fish habitat conservation and restoration efforts by identifying and characterizing critical spawning, nursery and forage areas within the Bay and tributaries for important fish and shellfish, and use existing and new tools to integrate information and conduct assessments to inform restoration and conservation efforts.
Started to address our science need with the STAC Workshop

- Identified need and applied for STAC funding
- Compiled existing data on existing habitat and sensitivity to stressors
- Conducted workshop bringing together scientists
- Informed by user needs survey
- Provided recommendations including to move forward with a regional assessment & pursue further inventory of biological and environmental response data
Conceptual Model of the Process and Decision Points of a Regional Fish Habitat Assessment

**Phase 1:**
1. Assess Stakeholder Needs
2. Execute GIT funded Project (TetraTech)
3. Gather, Organize, Assess Biological Environmental Data

**Decision Pt 1:**
1. Identify criteria for methods development testing in tidal and non-tidal waters
2. Identify assessment analytical methods
3. Identify testing team members, roles, resources & responsibilities
4. Select testing areas or studies

**Phase 2:**
1. Communication and further engage with stakeholders
2. Develop & Test analytical methods for select geographical areas
3. Testing of nontidal fish-habitat methods at different scales where data are available
4. Nontidal watershed assessment at 1:100K (compare to NFHP)

**Decision Pt 2:**
1. Identify criteria for pilot studies and areas
2. Determine fish habitat assessment pilot based on methodology testing and lessons learned in Phase 2

**Phase 3:**
1. Identify funding and partners
2. Conduct fish habitat pilot assessments
3. Communication and further engage stakeholders
4. Provide recommendations for assessing remaining fish habitat data
Conceptual Model of the Process and Decision Points of a Regional Fish Habitat Assessment

Phase 1:
1. Assess Stakeholder Needs
2. Execute GIT funded Project (TetraTech)
3. Gather, Organize, Assess Biological Environmental Data

Decision Pt 1:
1. Identify criteria for methods development testing in tidal and non-tidal waters
2. Identify assessment analytical methods
3. Identify testing team members, roles, resources & responsibilities
4. Select testing areas or studies

Report of Stakeholder Needs
March 2020

Summary of fish metadata
Updated stressor inventory, summary of fish metadata and data gaps - October 2020

Timeframe for deliverables is proposed
Stakeholder Needs and Use Cases for Regional Assessment

In 2019, USGS staff met with state agency program managers to discuss their needs in a fish habitat assessment. NOAA staff targeted interviews with fishery/resource managers, land-use planners, and environmental consultants/reviewers in tidal waters.

Summary of Needs Report- March 2020

The use or application of a fish habitat assessment varies with the user and the habitat type. A list of potential use cases of an assessment has been developed based upon stakeholder input from the interviews.

Assessment Guiding Principals and Purpose Statement have also been developed:

Identify and assess the quantity and condition of fish habitat in the Chesapeake Bay and its watershed at the finest scale possible to inform conservation, restoration, and fishery management decisions
Conceptual Model of the Process and Decision Points of a Regional Fish Habitat Assessment

**Phase 2:**
1. Communication and further engage with stakeholders
2. Develop & Test analytical methods for select geographical areas
3. Testing of nontidal fish-habitat methods at different scales where data are available
4. Nontidal watershed assessment at 1:100K (compare to NFHP)

**Decision Pt 2:**
1. Identify criteria for pilot studies and areas
2. Determine fish habitat assessment pilot based on methodology testing and lessons learned in Phase 2

- **Summary of Stressor/Predictor Data at Finest Scale Possible**
  Scale evaluation, summary methods - October 2020;

- **Fish Occupancy Maps in nontidal waters**
  October 2020

- **Summary of Regional: National Assessment**
  Fine-scale stressor summary - October 2021

Timeframe for deliverables is proposed
Phase 3:
1. Identify funding and partners
2. Conduct fish habitat pilot assessments
3. Communication and further engage stakeholders
4. Provide recommendations for assessing remaining fish habitat data

Timeframe: Proposed 2022...