



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

PO Box 1163, Richmond, Virginia 23218

www.vdacs.virginia.gov

Joseph W. Guthrie
Commissioner

Blue Catfish Work Group

HB 135 Chapter 218

Agenda

March 13, 2025

Oliver Hill Building, 102 Governor Street, 2nd Floor Board Room

Richmond, VA 23219

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| I. | Call to Order | Commissioner Guthrie |
| II. | Introductions | Commissioner Guthrie |
| III. | Legislative Report | Legislators |
| IV. | New Business | Commissioner Guthrie |
| | a. Election of Chair | Commissioner Guthrie |
| | b. Election of Vice Chair | Chairperson |
| | c. Remote and Virtual Meeting Policy | Chairperson |
| V. | Waterman's & Processor's Remarks | Chairperson |
| VI. | Review of Objective & Topic #1 | Chairperson |
| | "Review past and ongoing efforts to promote the creation of a market for blue catfish." | |
| VII. | Discussion | Chairperson |
| VIII. | Public Comment Period | Chairperson |
| IX. | Next Meetings: | Chairperson |

Friday, April 25, 2025, 1 pm – 3 pm

Location: TBD

Topic: "Identify and explore potential sectors for the blue catfish market."

Friday, May 9, 2025, 10 am – 12 pm

Location: TBD

Topic: "Identify any actions that the Commonwealth can take to promote and expand the market for blue catfish."

Friday, July 11, 2025, 10 am – 11 am

Location: Virtual

Topic: Review of Report

- X. Adjournment

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY -- 2024 SESSION

CHAPTER 218

An Act to direct the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to convene a work group relating to blue catfish; report.

[H 1135]

Approved March 28, 2024

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. § 1. *That the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (the Department) shall, in order to support and encourage coordination regarding efforts to create a robust and resilient market for blue catfish, convene a work group of stakeholders that have a vested interest in reducing the negative ecological effects of blue catfish and increasing the marketing, processing, and sale of blue catfish in the Commonwealth. The work group shall include representatives of the following: the Marine Resources Commission, the Department of Corrections, the Department of Education, the James River Association, the Virginia Seafood Agricultural Research and Extension Center, the Marine Products Board, the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, the Virginia Waterman's Association, the Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association, current and prospective blue catfish processors, Friends of the Rappahannock, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and other state agencies or stakeholders deemed necessary by the Department. The work group shall (i) review past and ongoing efforts to promote the creation of a market for blue catfish, (ii) identify and explore potential sectors for the blue catfish market, and (iii) identify any actions that the Commonwealth can take to promote and expand the market for blue catfish. The Department shall submit a report of the findings and recommendations of the work group to the Governor, the Secretary of Agriculture and Forestry, the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, and the Chairs of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Conservation and Natural Resources, the Senate Committee on Finance and Appropriations, the House Committee on Agriculture, Chesapeake and Natural Resources, and the House Committee on Appropriations no later than September 1, 2025.*

**POLICY ON PARTICIPATION IN BLUE CATFISH WORK GROUP BY ELECTRONIC
COMMUNICATIONS PURSUANT TO VA. CODE § 2.2-3708.3**

It is the policy of the Blue Catfish Work Group (Work Group) that individual members of the Work Group may participate in meetings of the Work Group by electronic communications as permitted by § 2.2-3708.3 of the Code of Virginia. This policy shall apply to the entire membership and without regard to the identity of the member requesting remote participation or the matters that will be considered or voted on at the meeting. This policy shall be adopted at least once annually.

Whenever an individual member wishes to participate from a remote location, the law requires a quorum of the Work Group to be physically assembled at the primary or central meeting location.

When such individual participation is due to a personal matter, such participation is limited by law to two meetings per calendar year or 25 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater.

Further, it is the policy of the Work Group that the Work Group may hold all-virtual public meetings pursuant to subsection C of § 2.2-3708.3. Such all-virtual public meetings are limited by law to two meetings per calendar year or 50 percent of the meetings held per calendar year rounded up to the next whole number, whichever is greater. Additionally, an all-virtual public meeting may not be held consecutively with another all-virtual public meeting.

Requests for remote participation or that the Work Group conduct an all-virtual public meeting shall be conveyed to the Program Manager for the Office of Agriculture and Forestry Development, who shall then relay such requests to the Chairman of the Work Group.

Individual participation from a remote location shall be approved unless such participation would violate this policy or the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act (§ 2.2-3700 et seq. of the Code of Virginia). If a member's participation from a remote location is challenged, then the Work Group shall vote whether to allow such participation.

The request for remote participation or that the Work Group conduct an all-virtual public meeting shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting. If the Work Group votes to disapprove of the member's participation because such participation would violate this policy, such disapproval shall be recorded in the minutes with specificity. The minutes shall include other information as required by §§ 2.2-3707 and 2.2-3708.3 depending on the type of remote participation or all-virtual public meeting.

This policy applies to all committees and subcommittees of the Work Group.

Version History		
Version	Date	Change Summary
1	3/13/2025	Original