

Ocean City Video Project Update

December 2021 Council Meeting

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Data Collection

Data collection began in early July 2020, later than anticipated due to Covid. Video was recorded consistently until March 2021, when the camera failed. Getting the problem diagnosed and issues with obtaining and installing a replacement (under warranty) meant that recordings started again in mid-July 2021. Recording has been ongoing since then. This is the location of the recording from a December 1, 2021 recording screen capture:



Next Steps

Staff has had challenges downloading the recordings in high definition without the recorder being “in house.” The recorder is on site, and large remote downloads fail due to connectivity issues. Automated cloud storage and retrieval may be an option if video was eventually used for actual effort estimation. Staff has also done some investigation of the potential for machine learning processes for automated counting, but vessels that hang around the inlet threshold (as in the picture above and as appears to frequently occur) seem likely to make machine learning processes challenging. Once a human count is developed, training a machine learning process may be a subsequent follow-up investigation. Given part of the goal of this pilot project was to evaluate the appropriateness of the zero effort assumption for Wave 1, the current plan is to stop recording March 1, 2022, and then bring the recorder back to the Council office to facilitate downloading the recordings in high definition to backup media that can be easily reviewed.

Once that process has been completed, staff will review several types of days and times and finish a draft template for counting several different vessel types (that cover all vessels). This will be generally modeled after existing methods used on the west coast, and will focus on vessels crossing the eastward inlet jetty threshold, which would align with ocean trips as estimated by the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP). Staff will then schedule a small hybrid-participation workshop that includes local constituents and the Research Steering Committee to review and get input on the vessel counting scheme while some high definition video can be reviewed. Input from an initial workshop indicated that buy-in from individuals familiar with the area would be facilitated by seeing what the contract reviewer would see, necessitating being able to see high definition recordings in person. After, the vessel type counting scheme will be finalized and the contractor can begin reviewing and producing the vessel count data. Staff will spot check several random periods from each week to ensure protocol adherence. While the counting is underway, staff will consult with workshop participants and MRIP staff about a range of reasonable assumptions for each vessel type (e.g. what percent of sailboats might be recreational fishing?).

Staff will provide an update by the end of March 2022 regarding progress on creating the backup media to facilitate viewing and data collating. Staff anticipates that the workshop to finalize the vessel count scheme could be held in late April 2022 if the Covid situation allows. Staff would schedule another workshop to review results before completing a final project report.