

Oysters in Maryland

Past, Present and Future

A presentation for the Citizens Advisory Committee

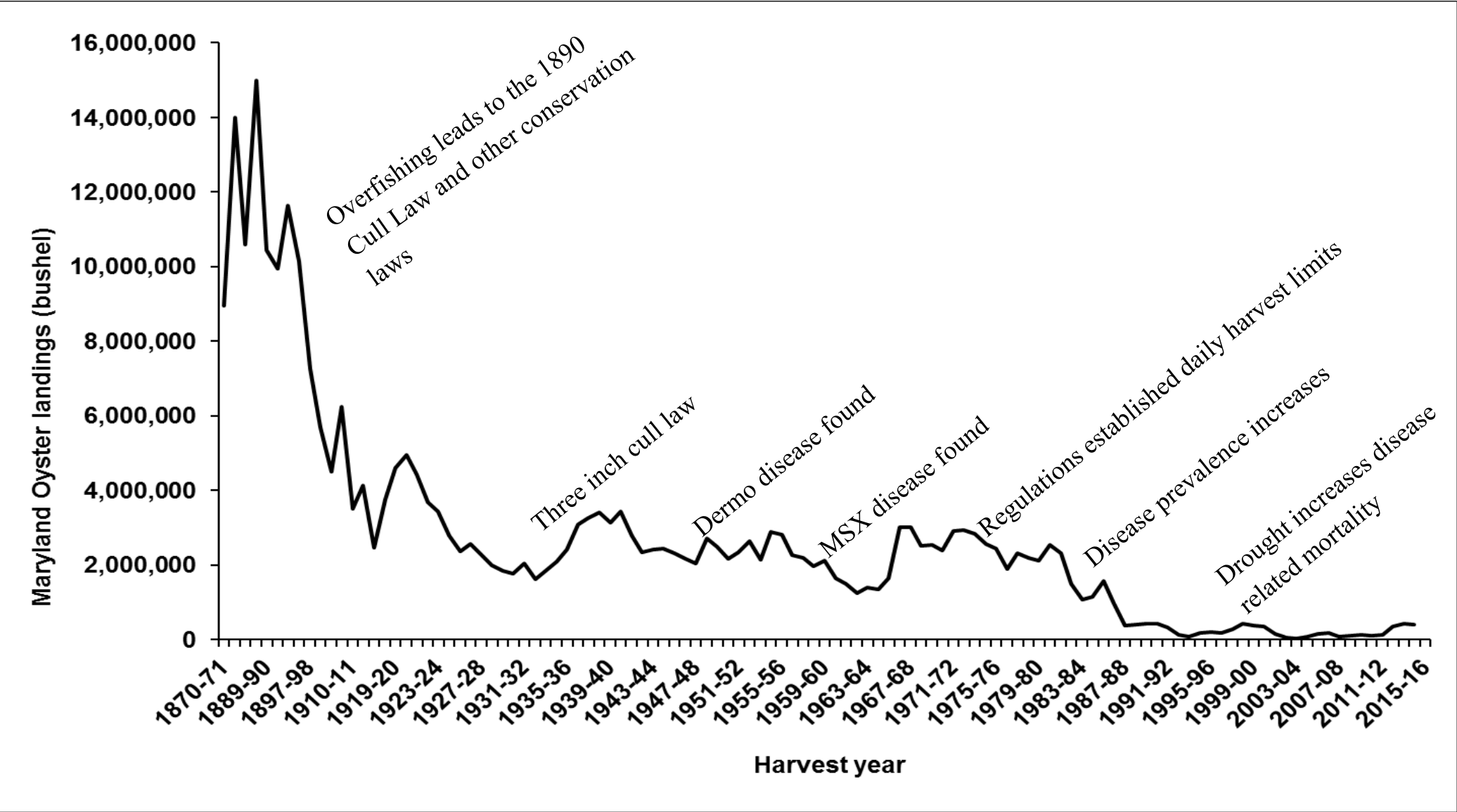
November 19, 2015

Lynn Fegley

Deputy Director, Fisheries Service

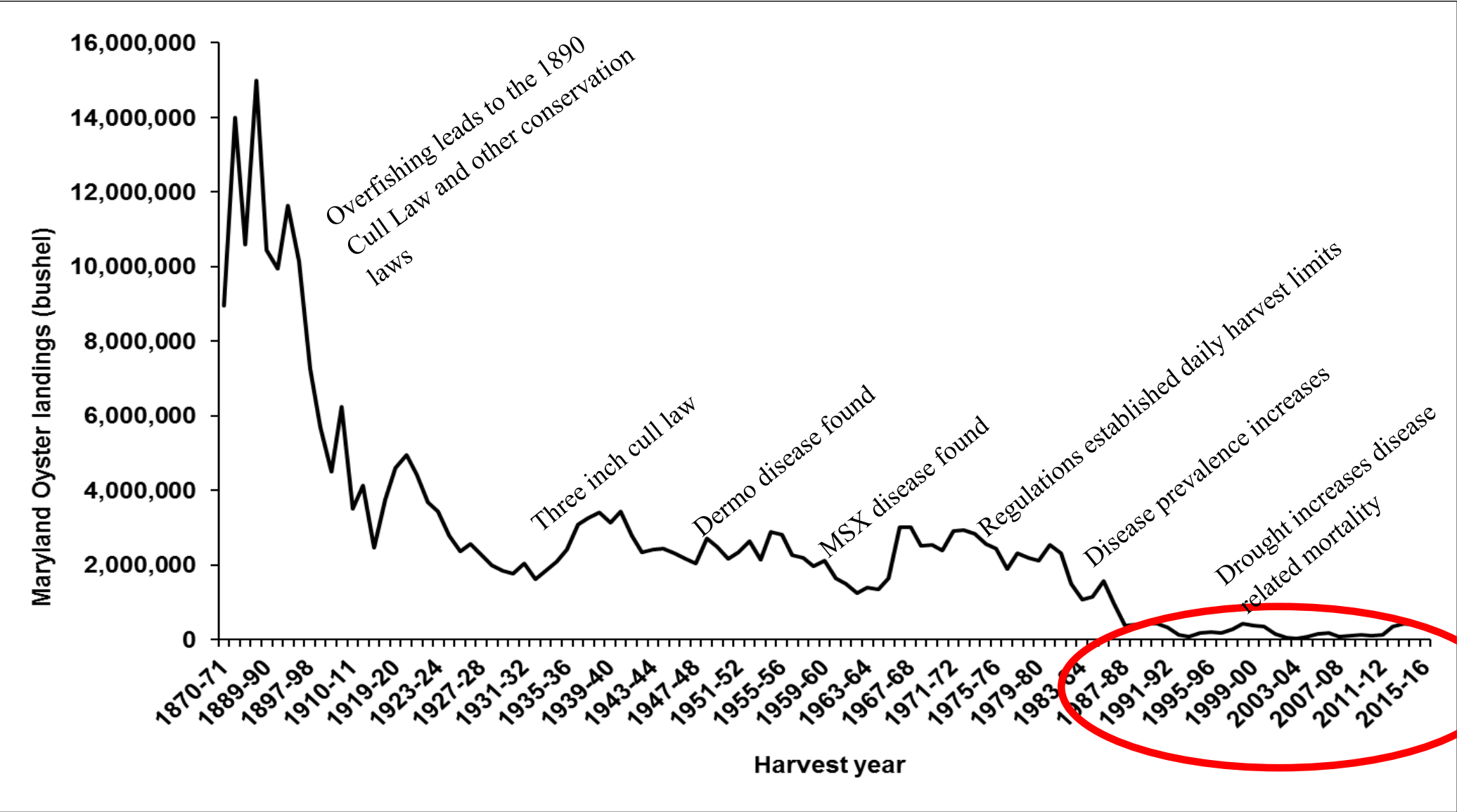


Historic and Current Oyster Population



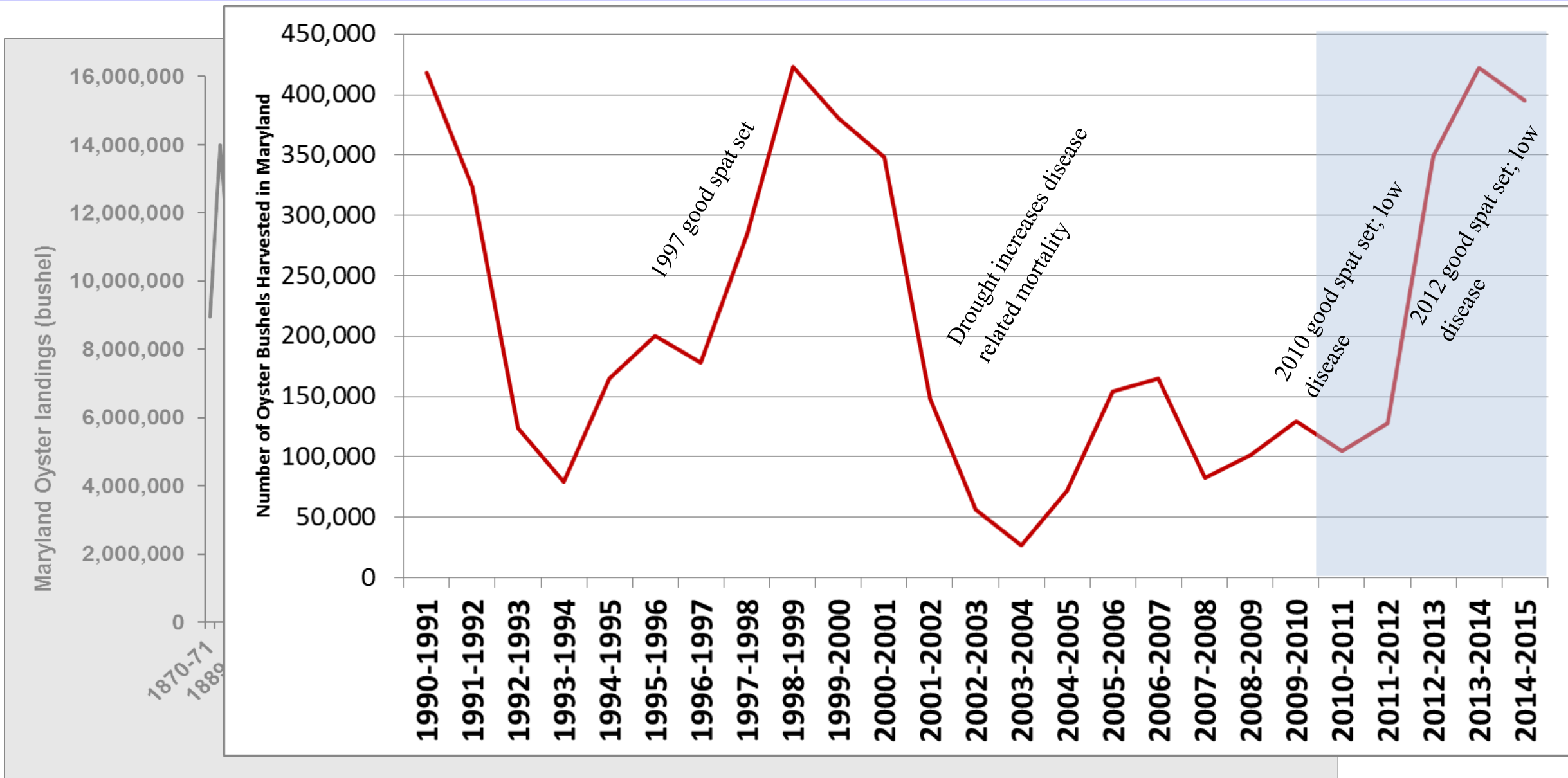
Can use harvest over time as a proxy to examine the Maryland oyster population

Historic and Current Oyster Population

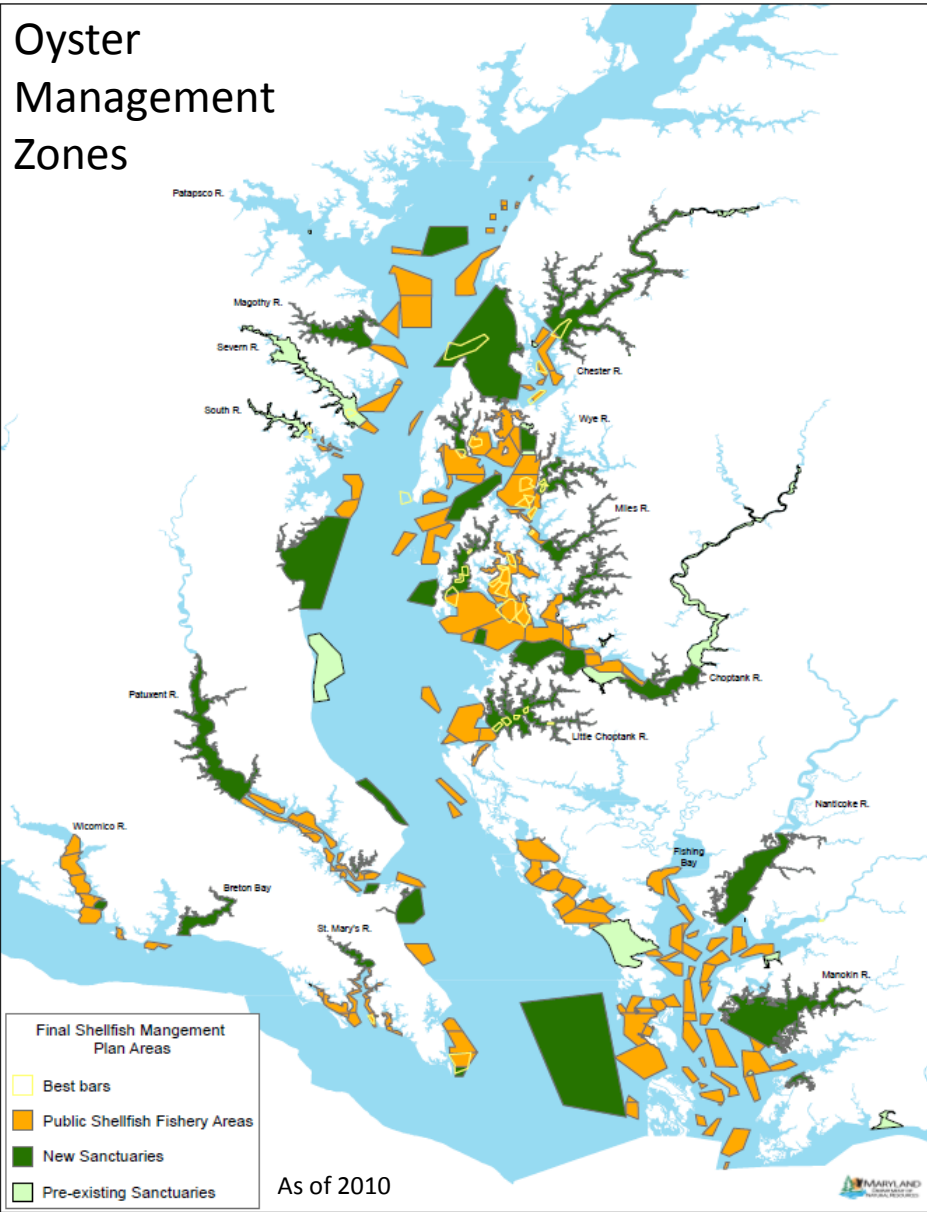


Can use harvest over time as a proxy to examine the Maryland oyster population

Historic and Current Oyster Population



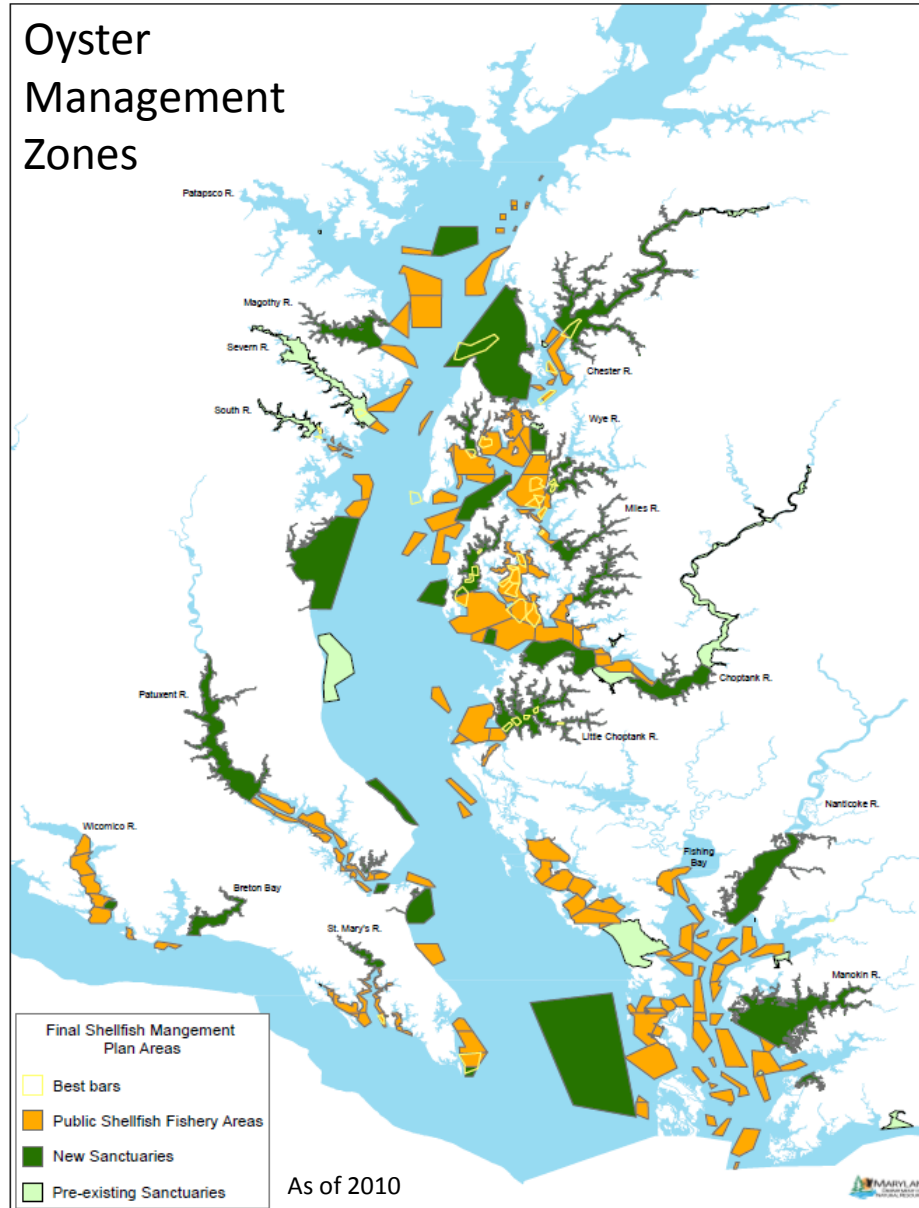
Basics of Harvesting and Sanctuaries



Basics of Harvesting and Sanctuaries

- Season: Oct 1 to Mar 31
- Minimum size: 3 inches
- Between 12 to 15 bushels per day (Monday-Friday) for most gear types (150 per day for sail dredge)
- Approximately 1,100 harvesters in 2014-2015
- Harvest allowed in PSFA and non-restricted MDE areas

Oyster Management Zones



Patent tongs



Sail dredge and power dredge



Diving for oysters



Hand tongs

Basics of Harvesting and Sanctuaries

- Season: Oct 1 to Mar 31
- Minimum size: 3 inches
- Between 12 to 15 bushels per day (Monday-Friday) for most gear types (150 per day for sail dredge)
- Approximately 1,100 harvesters in 2014-2015
- Harvest allowed in PSFA and non-restricted MDE areas



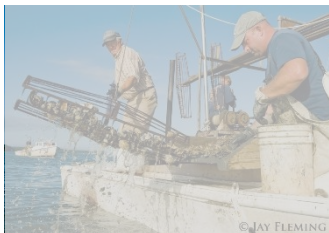
Patent tongs



Sail dredge and power dredge

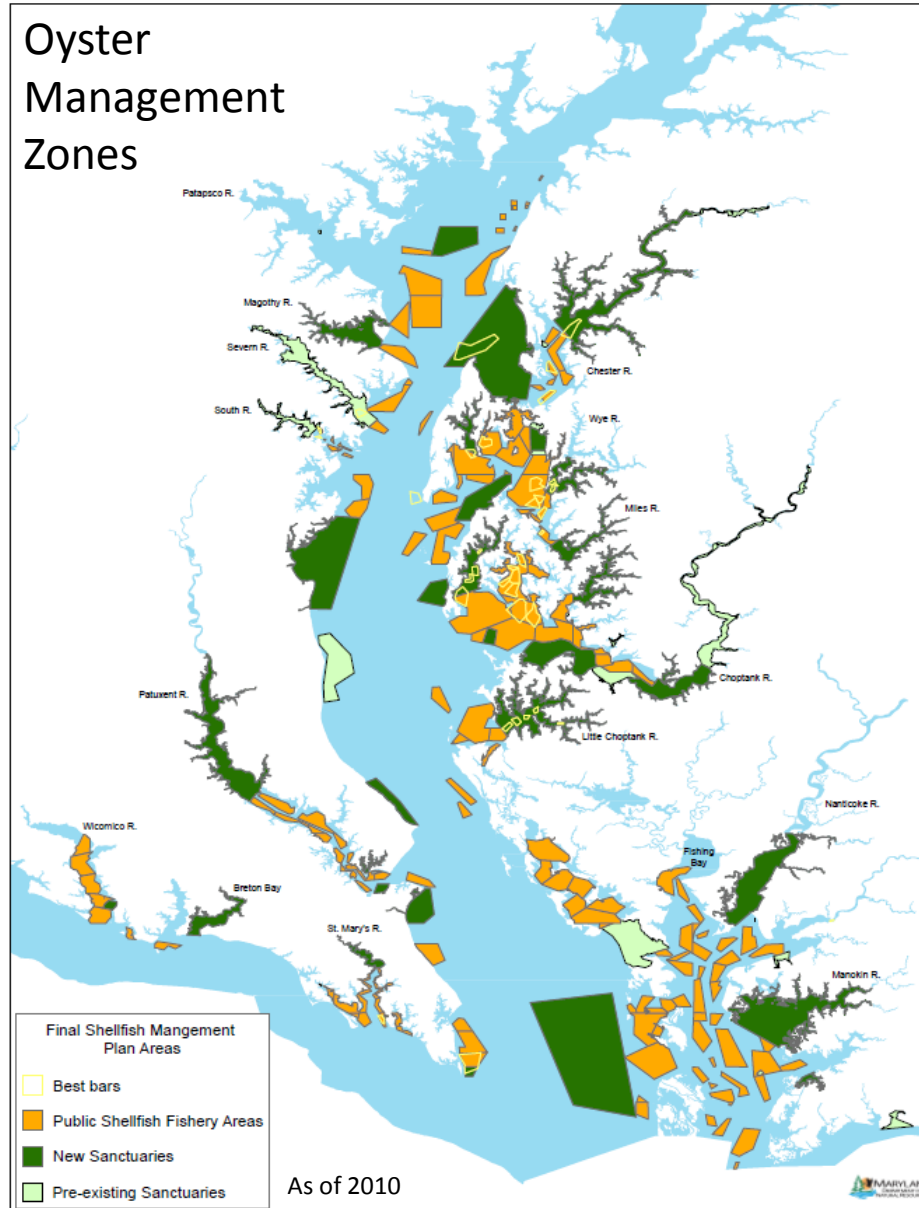


Diving for oysters



Hand tongs

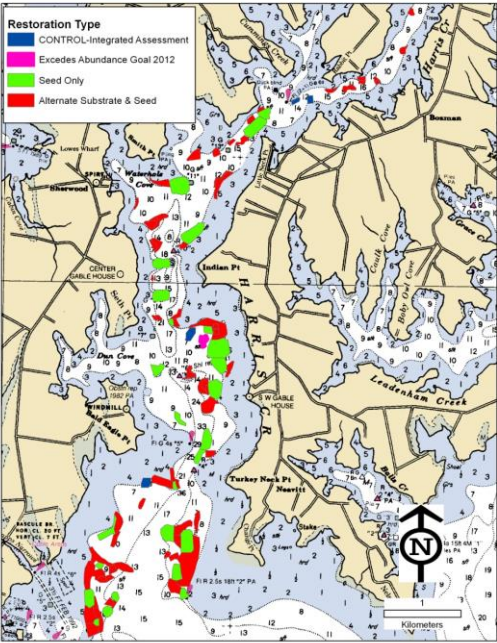
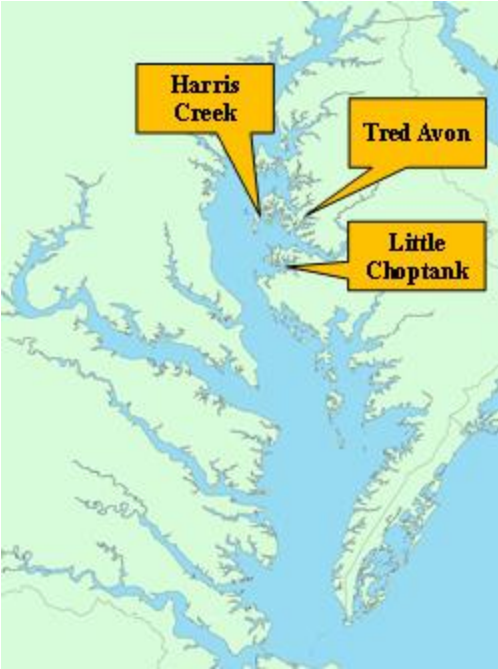
Oyster Management Zones



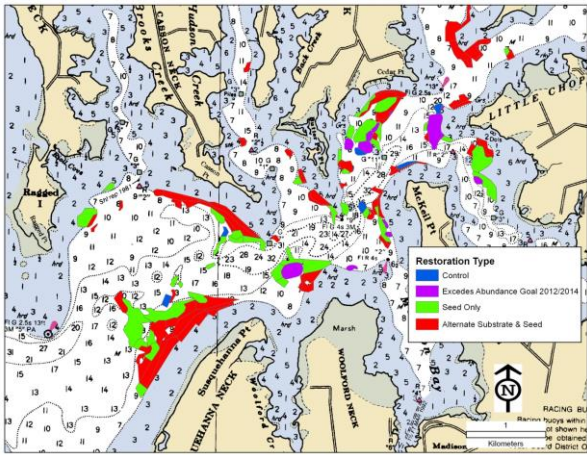
- 29 sanctuaries prior to 2010
 - Smaller and isolated
 - 9% of oyster bottom
- 30 new sanctuaries established in 2010
 - Protected 50% of the “best bars” – most productive areas
 - Multiple oyster bars in each sanctuary and non-oyster bottom areas in between
 - Encompasses multiple salinity zones in the Bay
- 24% of oyster bottom currently in a sanctuary
- No commercial harvest of oysters in sanctuaries (with exception of aquaculture leases)
- Currently, three sanctuaries with active restoration activities occurring; two more sanctuaries in the future

Oyster Restoration Approaches

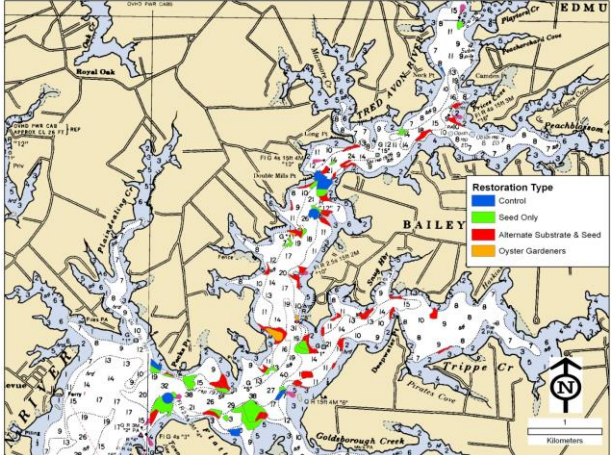
First three sanctuaries
receiving restoration
activities in Maryland



Harris Creek: Completed restoration of 372 acres of oyster bottom. Currently monitoring to determine if meets criteria to be defined as a restored area



Little Choptank: Goal of restoring 442 acres. To date, have applied restoration activities to 143 acres



Tred Avon: Goal of restoring 147 acres. To date, have applied restoration activities to 16 acres

Restoration activities
include emplacing
substrate and planting
hatchery spat-on-shell



Oyster shell



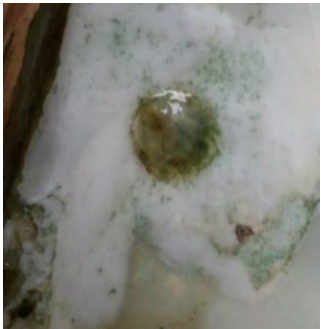
Mixed shell: clam, whelk, etc.



Fossil oyster shell



Rock



Spat-on-shell

Oyster Restoration Approaches

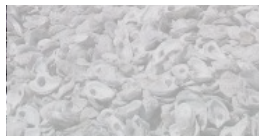
First three sanctuaries
receiving restoration
activities

Harris Creek October 2015



A combination of all restoration activities can create 3-D oyster reefs having multiple ecological benefits

substrate and planting
hatchery spat-on-shell



Oyster shell



Mixed shell: clam,
whelk, etc.



Fossil oyster shell

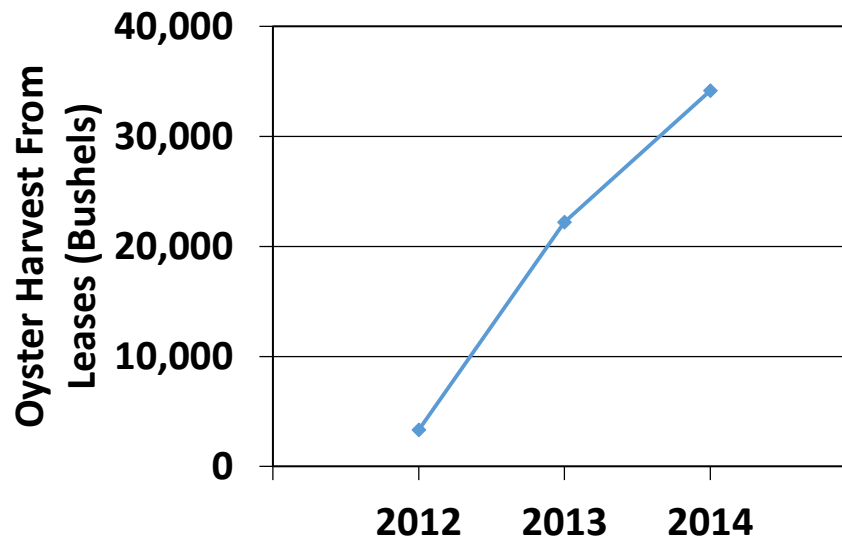
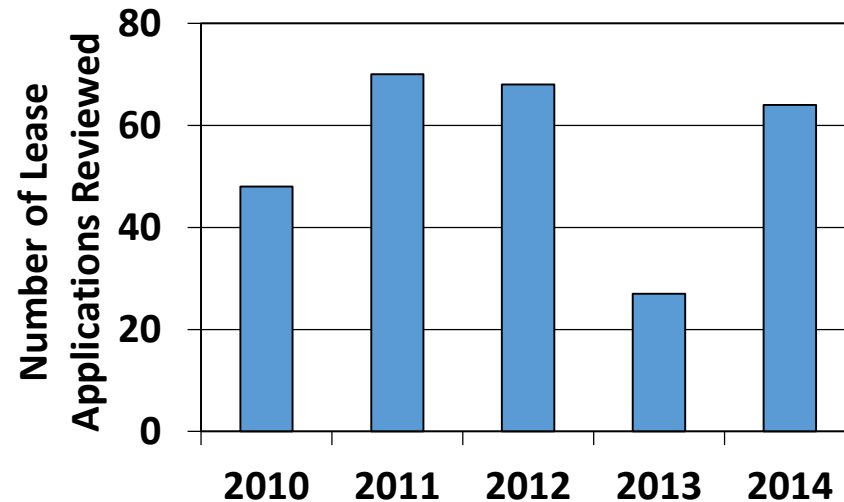


Rock



Spat-on-shell

Understanding the Basics of Aquaculture



*Started reporting harvest from leases in 2012

Total Number of Leases and Acres Leased	Number of Leases	Acres
	334	4,182

- Currently, 237 of the 334 leaseholders have a commercial fishing license
- In 2013, 498 individuals were permitted to work on leases
- The average wholesale price per bushel for farm-raised oysters in 2014 was \$56
- The average wholesale price per oyster sold by count in 2014 was \$0.41 and \$0.60 for retail
- Estimated dockside value in 2014 was \$3 million