

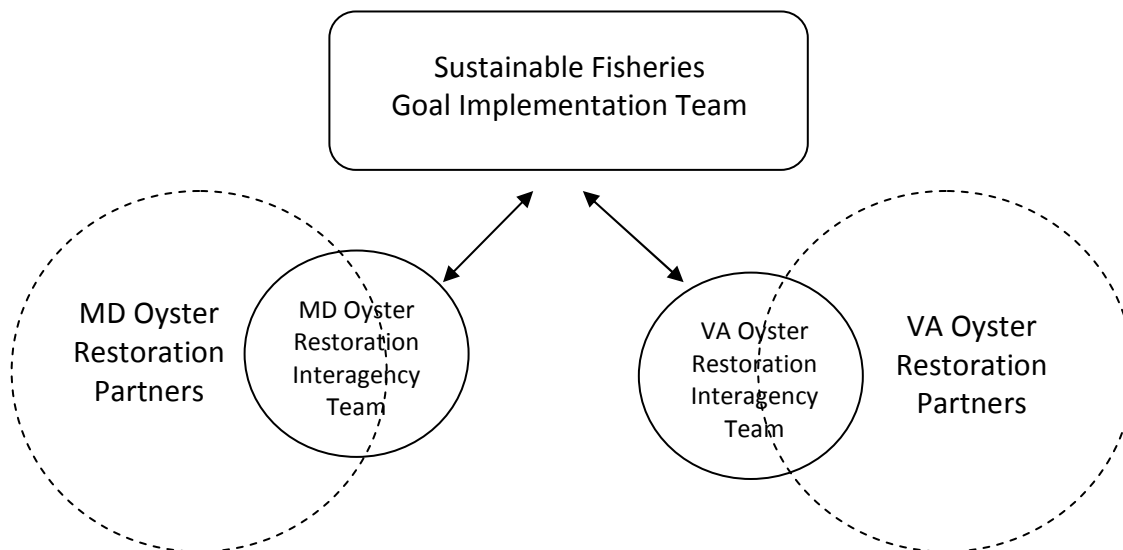
DRAFT
Concept Paper for
Interagency Oyster Restoration Workgroups
under the Sustainable Fisheries Goal Implementation Team

Following the successful completion of the Oyster Metrics, the next step toward advancing the EO oyster goal is to create a structure that will

- 1) facilitate priority tributary selection using science-based criteria,
- 2) develop restoration blueprints for selected tributaries, and
- 3) coordinate on-the-ground restoration work.

The diagram below is a suggested framework for achieving these three objectives. Here the GIT would convene ‘Oyster Restoration Interagency Workgroups’ in each state, comprised of the federal agencies involved in oyster restoration (NOAA, Army Corps) and the resource management agency in each state. This will create a bay-wide process to achieve the common restoration goal through the GIT, while allowing each Workgroup the flexibility to incorporate biological and policy differences unique to each state.

The structure recognizes that oyster restoration partners beyond the agencies, , are critical to successful oyster restoration. Thus the Interagency Workgroups will be charged with engaging other oyster restoration partners and the public as each Workgroup sees fit (noted as the dashed-line circle in the diagram, to reflect the fact that these entities may differ based on state, the focus trib at hand, time, restoration method, etc.). NOAA will serve as chair on both teams to ensure consistency, facilitate communication to the GIT, ensure process continuity, and to the extent desirable, a Bay-wide perspective.



MD Oyster Restoration Interagency Workgroup: NOAA, Army Corps Baltimore, DNR
VA Oyster Restoration Interagency Workgroup: NOAA, Army Corps Norfolk, VMRC

Examples of possible Oyster Restoration Partners: Chesapeake Bay Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, various riverkeepers (ex: Choptank Riverkeeper for Harris Creek in MD), community watershed groups (ex: Lynnhaven Now, Elizabeth River Partnership), Oyster Recovery Partnership, academics, scientists.

- The focus of the Interagency Workgroups is to accomplish the E.O. 13508 goals. The Interagency Workgroups will not be directing any specific Federal, state or non-profit funding; however, it is hoped that general goals for each year can be agreed to and resources (funds, spat, substrate, etc.) directed accordingly.
- The GIT recognizes that individual entities on each Workgroup will likely be engaged in oyster restoration projects outside the scope of the EO Goal. This Workgroup process is in no way meant to interfere with these other restoration projects. Rather, it is meant to ensure collaboration on projects related to large-scale, tributary-based restoration.
- The first priority for each Workgroup is to identify the first 3-5 tributaries in each state that will be targeted for large-scale restoration under the E.O. Each Workgroup should be able to describe the criteria used to select the tributaries, using the Army Corps Master Plan as an initial framework. Workgroups should also coordinate an analysis of prior restoration projects to determine if they constitute a fully restored tributary per the Oyster Metrics.
- Once tributaries are selected for large-scale restoration, Workgroups will develop Restoration Blueprints for each tributary. These should include, : an analysis of the amount of restorable bottom, the restoration goal per the Oyster Metrics, and a description of where within the tributary restoration will occur and the technique/s to be used (ex: addition of shell, alternative substrate, seed).
- Workgroups will coordinate and execute on-the-ground oyster restoration work per the blueprints.
- Particulars of meeting intervals, etc, will be left to each Workgroup.

Each Workgroup will be responsible for engaging other local oyster restoration partners as deemed appropriate by the Workgroup