



Maryland Oyster Restoration Workgroup Meeting Notes

November 18 2024, 9:30am-12:30pm

Video call link: <https://meet.google.com/nom-mebz-scp>

Or dial: (US) +1 402-588-0258 PIN: 876 171 300#

Agenda

- Welcome, and note that this is a public meeting.
- 2025 MD Oyster Workgroup meeting housekeeping
- Fish GIT ex comm update: how to count VA area open to harvest; input on wording of updated Bay Program oyster outcome
 - MD workgroup in favor of removing acres that are considered for harvest from the restoration totals and management
 - ORRA- oyster reef restoration areas might work as trib alternative
 - Focus area might be confusing
- 2024 annual update:
 - 2024 year-end seed/ acreage numbers needed; 340.32 seed into Big Five; about 74 acres- new + second seedings. Sarah should have it to us by the end of next week. Low salinity year meant lower production, but still did well.
 - Manokin: 240.87M SOS; 48.41 initial acres completed, 14.78 acres started
 - Little Choptank: 67.69M SOS; 17.59 acres reseeds completed
 - Tred Avon: 31.76M SOS total (6.81M SOS on CONTROL_SO_02); 7.15 reseed acres completed, 0.84 initial acres completed
 - We have updated Manokin construction info in the geodatabase
 - What are our highlights and challenges for 2024? (See below for results of previous discussion- anything we should add?)
 - Anything we want to change from last year, besides numbers?
 - What to say about Manokin?
 - Please email pictures to Stephanie of oyster work for 2024 documents

- Little Choptank monitoring cohorts: might need to check that these are correct in GDB. None in 2025; there will be some in 2026; once the final LC site is seeded, we should go through and make sure all the monitoring cohorts make sense and are efficient.
- Fall 2024 monitoring update: ORP is monitoring now; Tred diving is done; some Tred sites looked a little patchy; will start Tred and LC patent tonging next month; RAP video sampling- LC is done, Tred almost done; good variety to different sites being monitored with RAP.
- How does the DNR fall survey look?
- Harris Retrospective: contacted editors follow up discussion with them?
 - Write a compelling cover letter- this is the byproduct of a bigger effort that has global restoration implications- include scale, etc; send into the portal; but also email the letter to the editors, so they are expecting it.
 - Hook to talk further w/ editors: ask them if a summary type paper is aligned w/ Restoration Ecology's purpose.
 - Authorship/ acknowledgement discussion.
 - Target journals is Restoration Ecology

Notes on Annual Update content, from previous discussions:

- Challenge: Significant rainfall in the Chesapeake Bay watershed over the winter and spring prolonged low salinity conditions in the Bay. This impeded hatchery production across the entire Chesapeake region, which reduced seeding capacity in areas requiring spat-on-shell; also reduced natural recruitment relative to 2023.
-
- Manokin: DNR constructed 10.7 additional acreage in the Manokin bringing the total area restored to 455 acres; on track to be able to seed all remaining reefs in 2025; exceptionally strong 2023 spat set meant that many stone reefs in Manokin didn't require seed- restoring habitat alone was sufficient to enhance the oyster population (support nature did our work work us when we boosted with stone!!); approx 90 acres (MN72 +73+74 minus whatever was seeded as part of the spat study= # of acres that were planned for seed, but didn't need it.
- MD on track to meet the decade-long 10 tribes bay-wide goal
- STM reef balls in STM section- CCA and CBF placed 622 reef balls in the St Marys on the 0.17 acre substrate site
- Tred: we were able to seed one Tred control in 2024.
- Need to figure out what our next collective goal is