



# Update: Moving the Dial on the Executive Order Oyster Goal

Sustainable Fisheries  
Goal Implementation Team  
Full Meeting, Dec 8, 2012  
Presented By: Stephanie Westby, NOAA  
On behalf of the  
MD and VA Interagency Workgroups  
under the GIT



## Executive Order Goal:

- Restore oyster populations in 20 tributary by 2025

## Oyster Metrics:

- NOAA, USACE, DNR, VMRC, Army Corps, UMD, VIMS + 17 consulting scientists;
- Developed Bay-wide, consensus definition of ‘restored reef’ and ‘restored tributary’

## Established:

- MD & VA Oyster Restoration Interagency Workgroups

Sustainable Fisheries  
Goal Implementation Team



MD Oyster  
Restoration  
Partners

MD Interagency  
Oyster  
Restoration  
Workgroup  
(NOAA; USACE-  
Baltimore; DNR)

VA Interagency  
Oyster  
Restoration  
Workgroup  
(NOAA; USACE-  
Norfolk; VMRC)

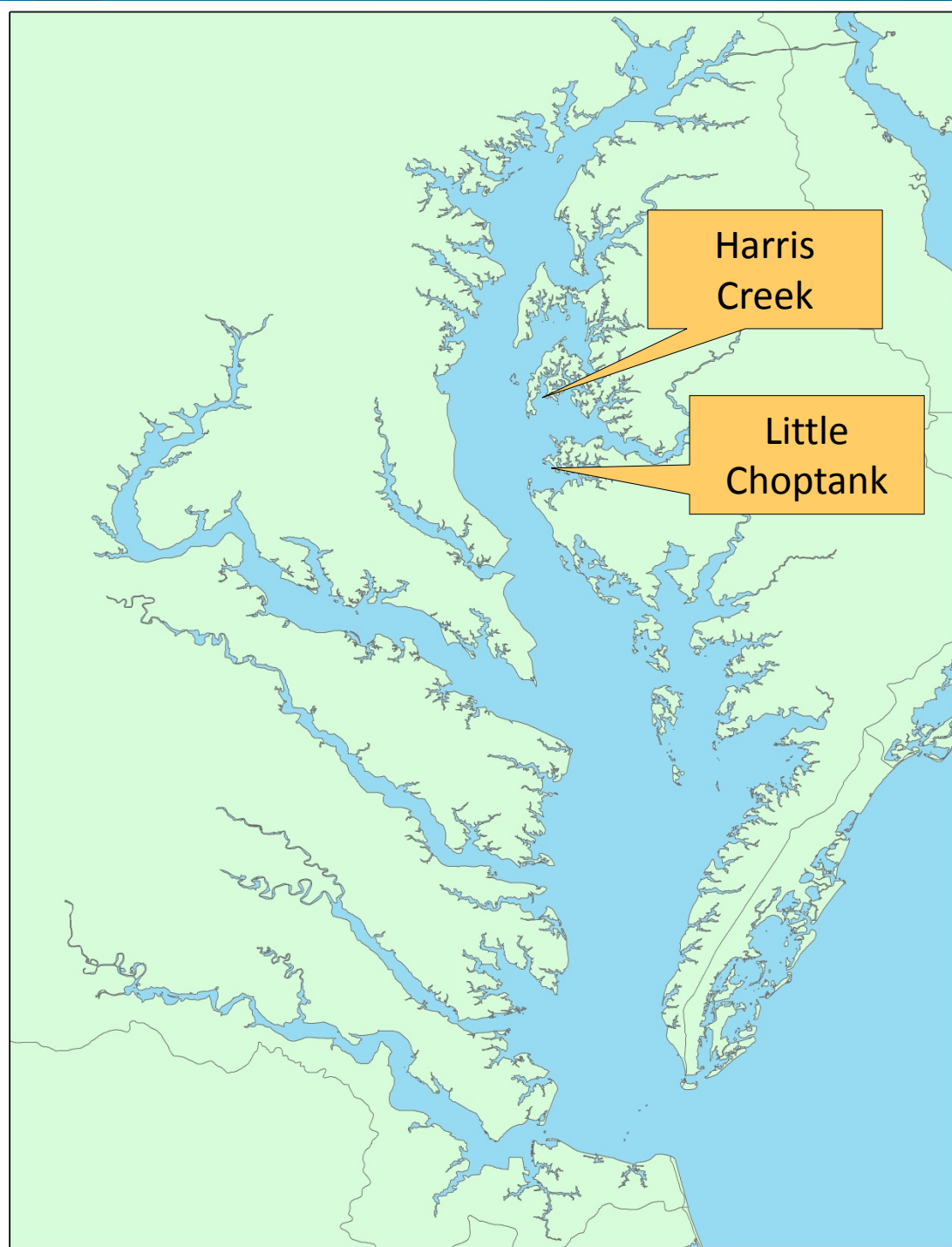
VA Oyster  
Restoration  
Partners



## Maryland

Tributary Selection:

- Harris Creek
- Little Choptank River



## Harris Creek: Tributary Plan Process

- ➡ Define restoration goal: target acreage = 300-600 acres
- ➡ Conduct pre-restoration oyster population surveys
- ➡ Develop a draft map summarizing major datasets
  - Conduct public open house
  - Revise blueprint map; develop draft tributary plan
  - Send draft blueprint map to the Coast Guard
  - Send draft blueprint map and tributary plan to consulting scientists for review
  - Finalize blueprint map and tributary plan (next draft: mid-Jan)
  - Obtain permit/ NEPA clearance, as needed
  - Implement seeding and substrate activities
  - Monitor project performance and adaptively manage

**Harris Creek Oyster Sanctuary 2011  
Broad Scale Acoustic Bottom Classification  
MD Geological Survey  
NOAA Chesapeake Bay Office  
Depths 1.50-6.09m**

**Restorable Bottom**

- Artificial oyster reef
- Aggregate patch reef
- Fringe reef
- Patch reef
- Sand and scattered oyster shell
- Sand
- Muddy\_sand

**Non-restorable Bottom**

- Mud and scattered oyster shell
- Mud
- Sandy mud
- Unclassified
- Sanctuary Boundary

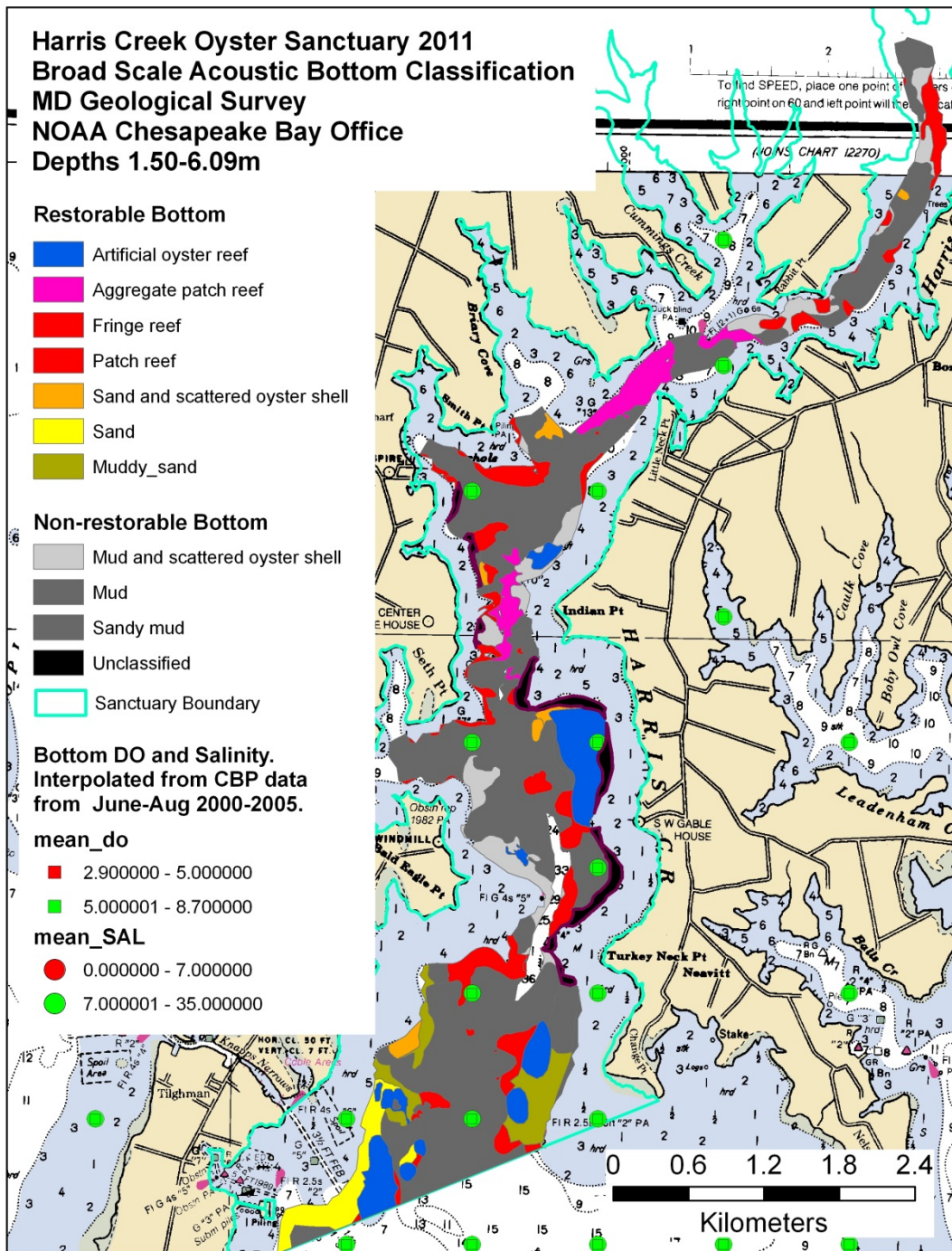
**Bottom DO and Salinity.  
Interpolated from CBP data  
from June-Aug 2000-2005.**

**mean\_do**

- 2.900000 - 5.000000
- 5.000001 - 8.700000

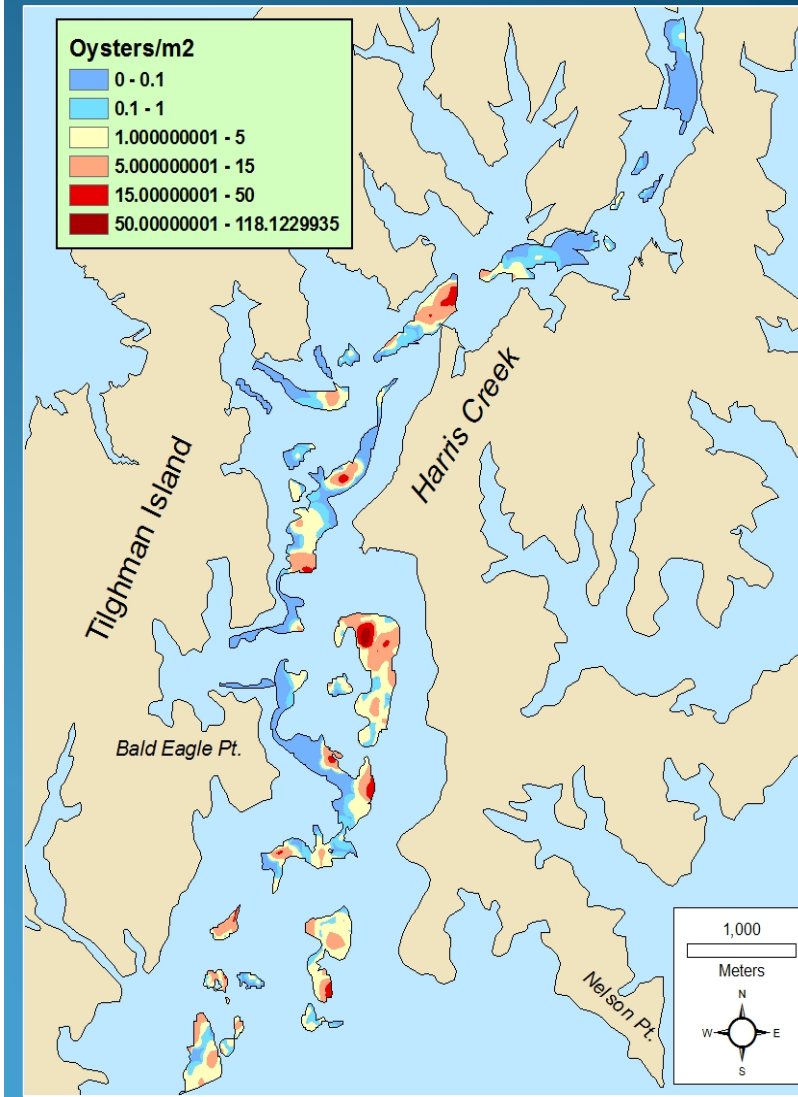
**mean\_SAL**

- 0.000000 - 7.000000
- 7.000001 - 35.000000



# Restorable Bottom Analysis

## Population Survey





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## Harris Creek: Draft Tributary Plan

- Acres: 377
- Substrate: 350,000 cubic yards
- Seed: 2 billion
- Estimated cost: \$31 million
- Permit issues:
  - MD DNR: needs permit modification to construct reefs that will allow 5 ft clearance (current permit specifies 8 ft); modification under review
  - Army Corps: needs NEPA modification to construct reefs that will allow 5 ft clearance (current NEPA is 8 ft clearance); under review



# Harris Creek: Restoration Progress

## 2012:

- 22 acres new reef constructed (Army Corps)
- 97 acres seeded (Oyster Recovery Partnership, with funding from NOAA and DNR)

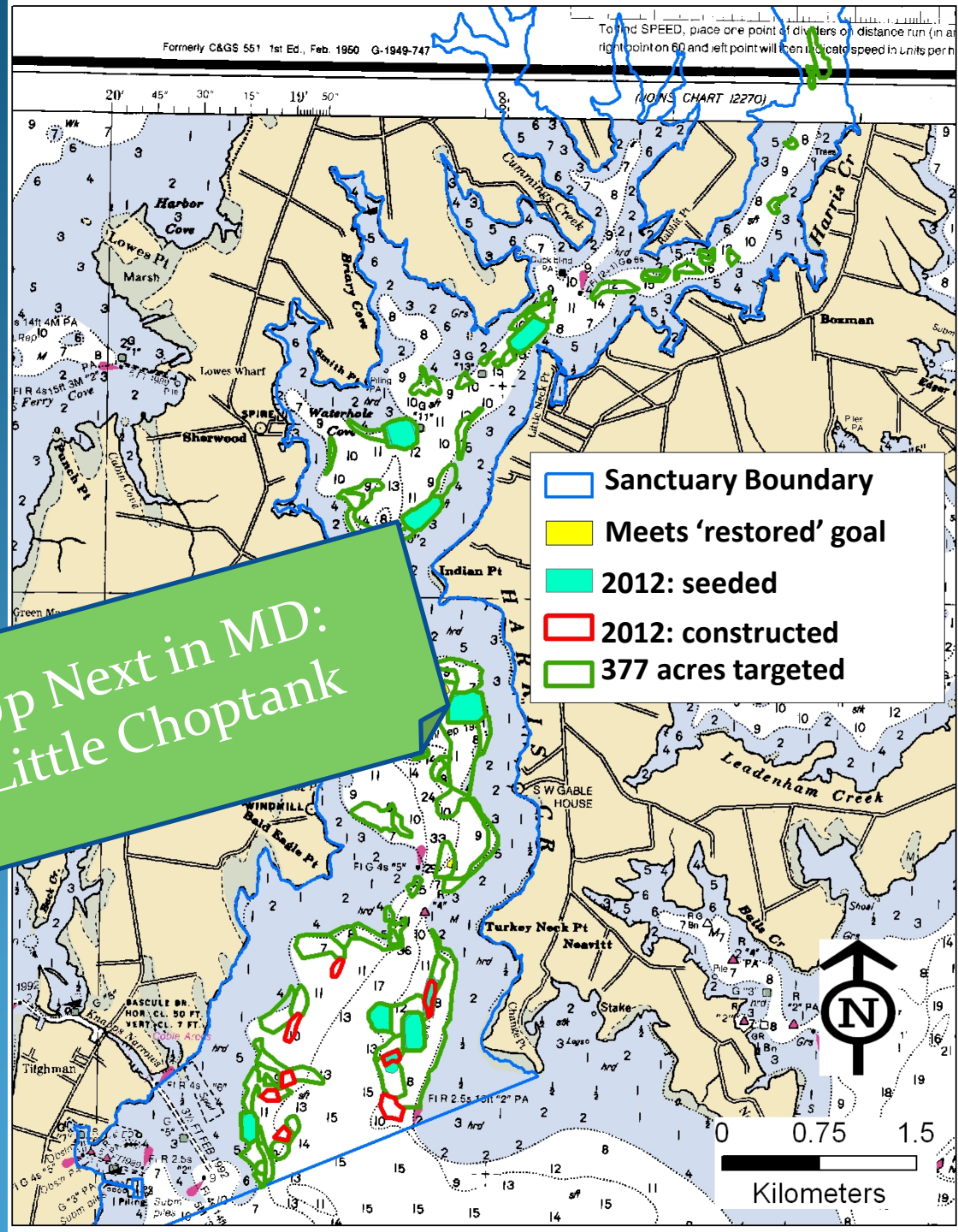
## 2013 (planned):

- 30 acres to be constructed (Army Corps)
- 97 acres to be planted (Oyster Recovery Partnership, with funding from NOAA and DNR)
- DNR: \$7 m to spend on substrate; in water in 2013

## Summary:

- Approx 1/3 of the way toward the 300 acre minimum goal
- End of 2013: may be 2/3 or more of the way there

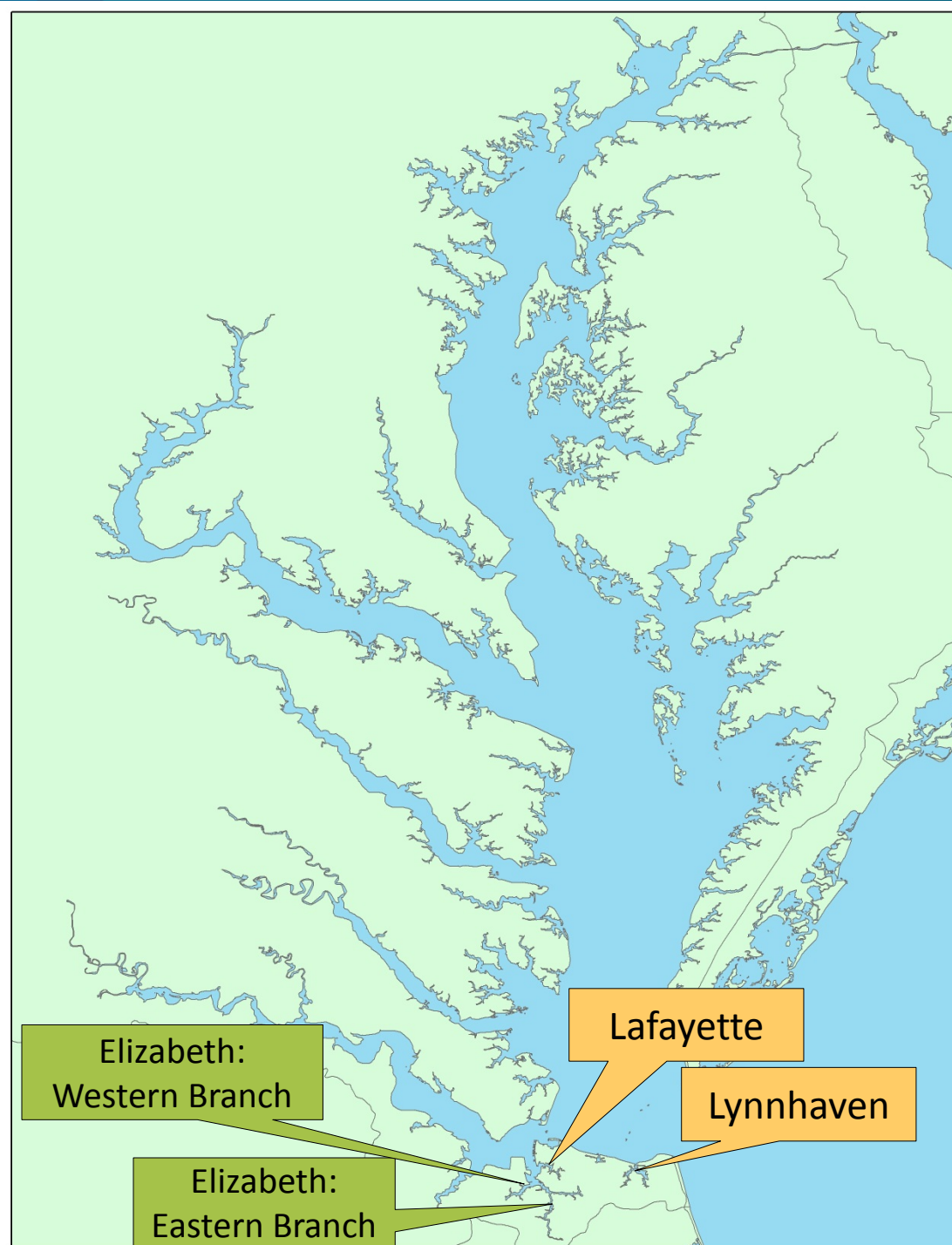
Up Next in MD:  
Little Choptank



## Virginia

### Tributary Selection:

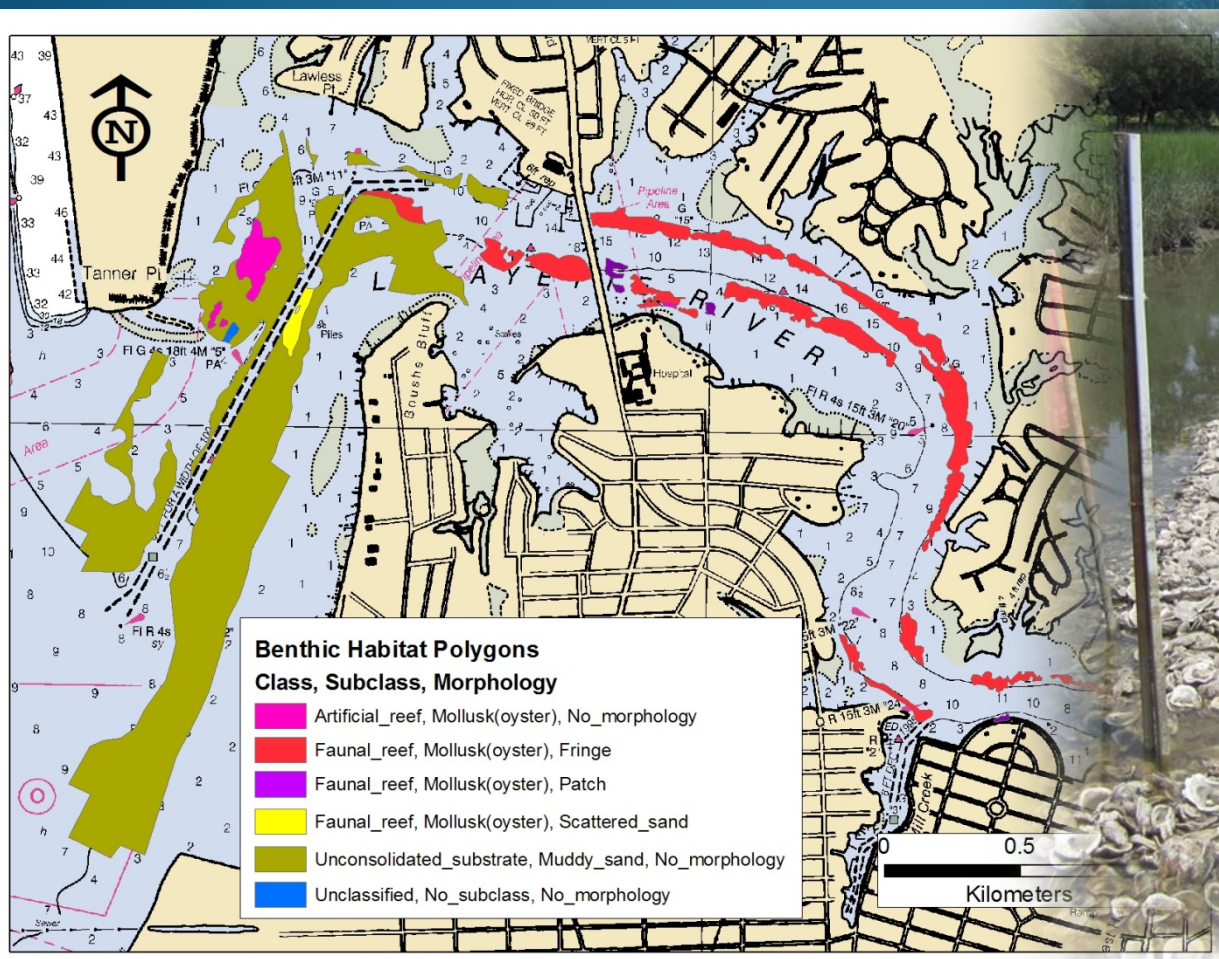
- Lynnhaven River
- Lafayette River
- Elizabeth: Western Branch
- Elizabeth: Eastern Branch





## Lafayette River:

- NOAA conducted acoustic mapping and ground-truthing surveys of the benthic habitat of the lower 1/3 of the river to inform future restoration work.
- NOAA funded CBF (reef balls and oyster seed) and Elizabeth River Project (reef construction) to do restoration work in 2012 and 2013
- Plan to continue doing so as funding allows







### Lynnhaven River:

- NOAA plans to complete pre-restoration bottom survey in 2013 to inform future restoration

### Army Corps Norfolk District:

- Looking for a cost-share partner in either the Lynnhaven or Lafayette to allow them to expend their funds

## Virginia

Analysis of prior restoration  
(Army Corps)

- Great Wicomico
- Piankatank

