

MDOT / DNR Oyster Recovery Agreement
FY 2017 Work Plan
October 26, 2016

Budget Amount - \$2.0 million

Work Plan

1) Public Fishery Program – Total \$1.25 million

- A. \$800,000 – County Oyster Committees. Funds allocated evenly among the tidal counties for implementing in-water oyster projects. DNR will consult with each County Oyster Committee to obtain recommendations for their annual work plan and administer the implementation of final approved projects that are biologically, ecologically and economically sustainable.
- B. \$450,000 – Oyster Fishery Management. Support public oyster fishery management and monitoring. This funding is DNR's primary source of funding supporting the public oyster fishery. Specifically, these funds support 41% of staffing time including two staff are 100% dedicated to public oyster fishery management. Major staff duties include processing, conducting quality assurance – quality control procedures, and analysis on harvest data, administering the county oyster committees, managing and monitoring planting activities, responding to public requests about oyster harvest, harvest regulations, harvest analysis, and open harvest area boundaries, and monitoring public oyster bars for population and disease assessment. Beyond industry dedicated staff, other significant costs within this category include industry program printing costs of annual oyster closure booklets that each oyster surcharge holder signs receipt of to ensure knowledge of oyster closure areas, buoy marking services to establish oyster areas according to regulations, survey boat fuel and maintenance, and field equipment.

2) Sanctuary Program – Total \$600,000

- A. \$100,000 – In-water restoration. Support the production and planting of hatchery seed in sanctuaries.
- B. \$500,000 – Sanctuary Program Administration. These funds support the management, monitoring, and citizen/stakeholder outreach activities essential to Maryland's oyster sanctuary program and fulfillment of the Chesapeake Bay Program 2014 Agreement. Specifically, these funds support 47% of staffing time on sanctuary management. Staff duties include assessment of oyster populations within sanctuaries, development and implementation of restoration plans (including determining locations for reef construction and oyster seeding), coordination with federal, academic, and non-profit partners, and responding to public requests concerning sanctuaries. Funds will also be used to conduct surveys that monitor oyster bars in sanctuaries to assess oyster population size, growth, disease, mortality, shell volume, and other environmental parameters. These surveys include the

some sites within the Annual Fall Oyster Survey and the independent patent tong surveys. Funds will be used for boat fuel and maintenance, and field equipment associated with these surveys.

3) Demonstration Projects and Monitoring – Total \$68,000

A key component of all these efforts is to demonstrate progress and ensure that Maryland's efforts at restoring the State's oyster population and industries are guided by sound science. Two projects in FY17 will meet that need. These funds will support 6% of staffing time on demonstration projects and monitoring. If funds remain after fulfilling these two efforts, consideration will be given to re-allocate remaining funds to the County Oyster Committees for in-water projects (Project 1A above).

- Provide funding to assist monitoring of power dredging and fresh shell demonstration projects that resulted from discussions in the 2014 Maryland General Assembly, monitor public oyster fishery areas to assess cost / benefit of MPA investment, and monitor sanctuaries to develop targeted restoration plans and assess performance towards achievement of the Chesapeake Bay Program's 2014 Agreement.
- Current demonstration projects include Goose Creek and Swan Point. For the Goose Creek demo project, oyster abundance is being examined on an area that have received no shell or seed planting, an area that has received shell planting, and an area that has received shell and hatchery spat-on-shell planting. The Swan Point demo project is examining future harvest on areas that have been planted with hatchery spat-on-shell and areas that have been opened to power dredging without planting hatchery spat-on-shell.

4) Other Activities – Total \$82,000

- A) \$82,000 - Oyster Advisory Commission. In 2016, the Oyster Advisory Commission (OAC) will be assembled with newly appointed members by Governor Hogan and Secretary Belton. The first objective of the OAC will be to make recommendations to the Department on the next two tributaries to be restored (Chesapeake Bay Program's 2014 Agreement). The second objective of the OAC will be to review the 5 Year Oyster Review Report and make recommendations to the Department on future management of sanctuaries and the public fishery areas. MDOT funds will be provided to conduct and facilitate OAC public meetings, transcription of these meetings, and support 6% of staffing time.

Benefit to the Public Oyster Fishery

A total of \$1.25 million will directly benefit the oyster industry Public Fishery Program. The industry will also benefit from the \$68,000 for demonstration projects and monitoring as this will help assess performance of management strategies and facilitate adaptive management, and from the \$600,000 for the Sanctuary Program recognizing these restoration efforts are designed to increase oyster abundance in both sanctuaries and harvest areas. Increased abundance of brood stock within sanctuary areas may enhance populations in nearby public oyster fishery areas through spat sets.

FY 2017 Proposed Modifications from FY 2016 Budget

1. Re-purpose the \$50k from FY16 funds for MARBIDCO towards the Oyster Advisory Commission in FY17.
2. Re-purpose the \$32k from FY16 funds for the Demonstration Projects to go towards the Oyster Advisory Commission in FY17.
3. Decrease the FY16 funds for the Demonstration Projects by \$50k to go towards the increase in funds needed for staff under Oyster Fishery Management. Over the past two years there has been an increase in Maryland State employee salaries (two step increases and one cost of living raise) as well as an increase in health insurance costs.
4. Decrease the in-water restoration funds by \$100k to go towards the sanctuary program administration. Over the past two years there has been an increase in Maryland State employee salaries (two step increases and one cost of living raise) as well as an increase in health insurance costs. The Department will be receiving \$3 million dollars towards in-water restoration from a NOAA grant over the next three years which offset the decrease in MDOT funding.

Signatures of Approval



11/16/16

David Blazer
Director, Fisheries and Boating Services
Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Date



11/17/16

Kathleen Broadwater
Deputy Executive Director, Maryland Port Administration
Maryland Department of Transportation

Date

Estimated FY2017 Budget using Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) funding by Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Shellfish Program.

Section	Section Title	Tasks	Estimated Amount
1A	Fishery Program - County Committees	Planting on public harvest areas	\$800,000
1B	Fishery Program - Oyster Management	DNR Staff	\$380,000
		Harvest Data Entry (Buy Tickets and Monthly Harvester reports)	\$14,000
		Monitoring Public Bars - Fall Survey	\$24,000
		Buoy Marking Services	\$1,000
		Annual Oyster Closure Books	\$12,000
		Operational Costs	\$19,000
2A	Sanctuary - In Water Restoration	Planting on sanctuaries	\$100,000
2B	Sanctuary Program Administration	DNR Staff	\$435,000
		Monitoring Sanctuary Bars - Fall Survey and Patent Tong Surveys	\$40,000
		Operational Costs	\$25,000
3	Demonstration Projects & Monitoring	DNR Staff	\$58,000
		Operational Costs	\$5,000
		Swan Point Demo Project - Monitoring	\$3,000
		Goose Creek Demo Project - Monitoring	\$2,000
4	Other Activities	Oyster Advisory Commission	\$82,000
Total			\$2,000,000

* Monitoring costs include boat fuel, boat maintenance, equipment, travel, and other expenditures that are not staff time

*Operational Costs include computers, software, phones, electric, propane, printing and publication, field clothing, and other similar types of expenditures.

Total Shellfish Division Budget for FY 2017

Funding Source	Amount
MDOT Funding	\$2,000,000
NOAA Grant	\$800,000
Capital Funds	\$3,300,000
General Funds	\$0
Total	\$6,100,000

*Capital Funds is used towards oyster reef restoration construction (no DNR staff time)

*NOAA Grant Funds is used towards oyster restoration for hatchery spat-on-shell plantings (no DNR staff time)