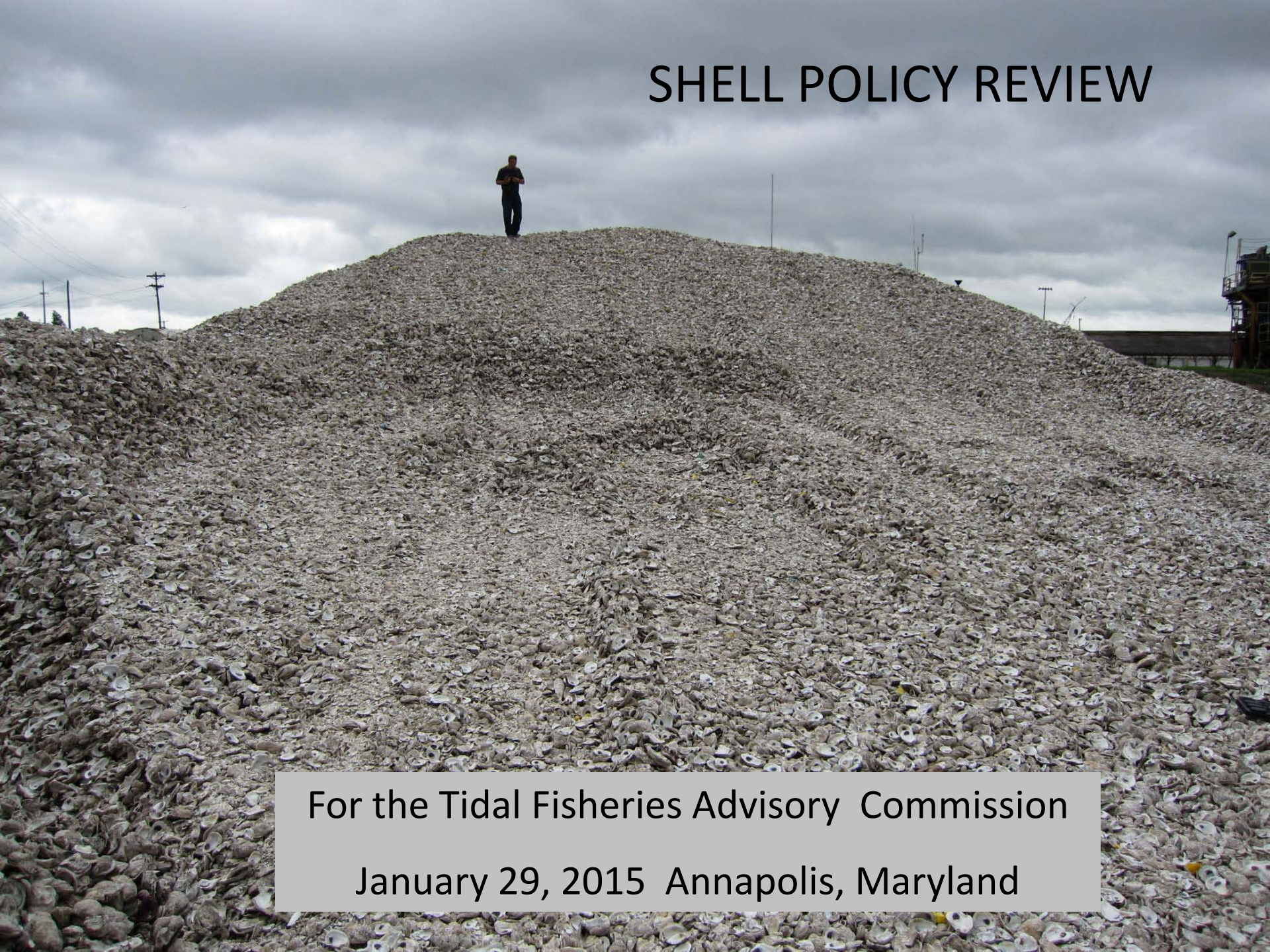


SHELL POLICY REVIEW

For the Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission

January 29, 2015 Annapolis, Maryland

The Problem: Demand for Shell Exceeds Supply

Shell is an essential component of all phases of Maryland's oyster recovery program – restoration, aquaculture and the public fishery.

Supply- in state 50,000 bushels/year ($2.00/bu),
out of state 200,000 bushels/year ($4.75/bu)

Demand- hatchery + remote setting- 200,000 bu/year
public fishery- >200,000 bu/year
private growers using private funds to purchase shell for remote setting and/or bottom hardening 100,000 bu/year.

COMPETING SHELL DEMANDS

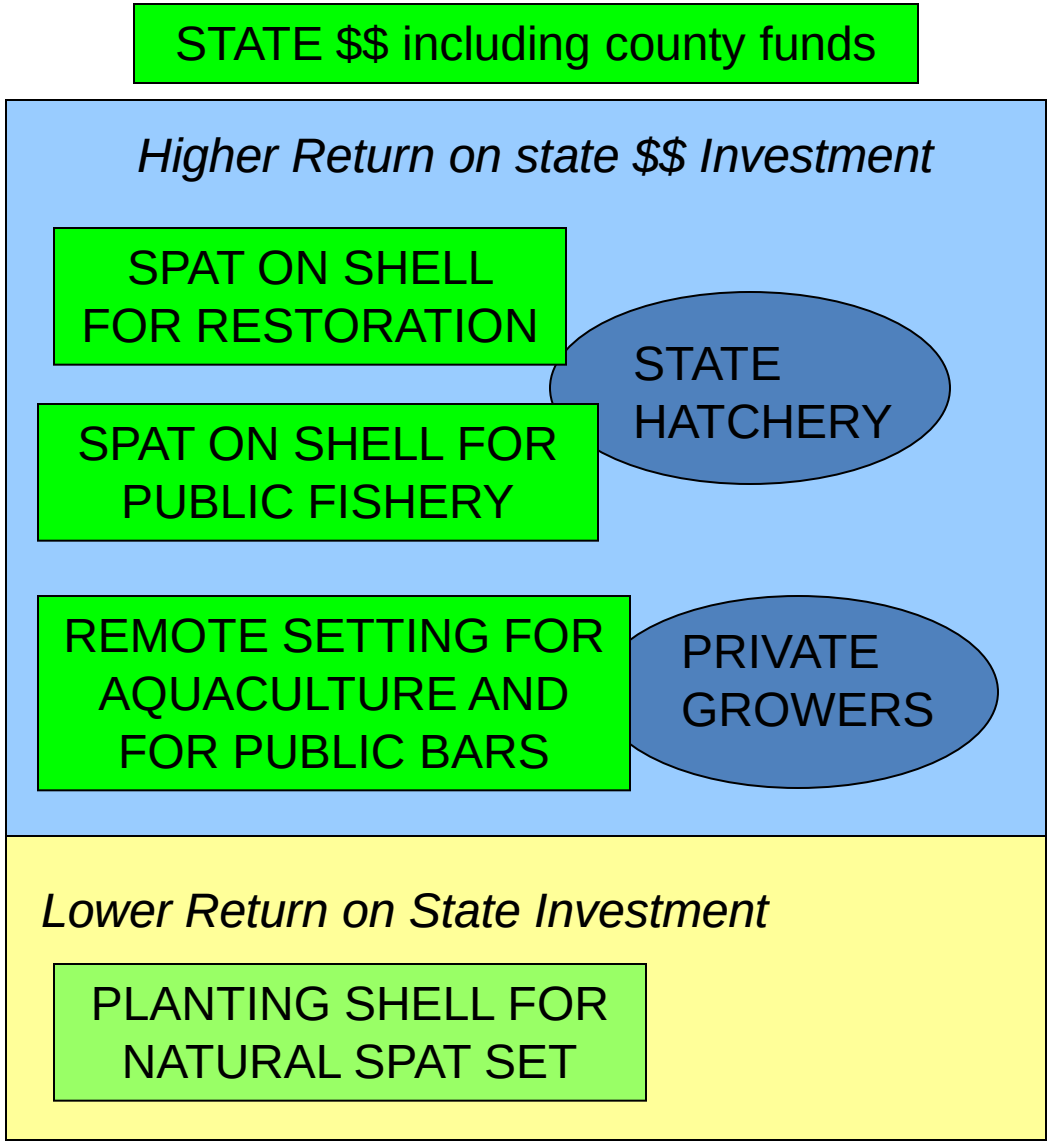
PRIVATE $$

(LEASEHOLDERS)

SPAT ON SHELL FOR RESTORATION

SHELL FOR BOTTOM HARDENING

In 2014, inadequate shell was available to meet all competing demands. Therefore, the state restricted use of shell purchased with State $$ to those projects with a higher return on investment.



Where we've Been:

In 2014, DNR made the decision not use State funds (including county $$) to plant bare shell on the bottom at the risk of having insufficient shell for remote setting for the purposes of restoration, the public fishery and aquaculture.

Where we're Going:

In 2015 the funding and shell availability landscape has changed providing this opportunity to review best practices for shell use.

Future direction of policy – DNR Objectives:

Ensure the most cost effective use of shell purchased with State funds.

Ensure shell demand for remote setting for restoration, public fishery and private growers is met. This includes the maintenance of a two year (400,000 bushel) stock pile

Studies (Meritt and Webster) show that using shell for remote setting and planting spat on shell provides a greater return on investment than planting bare shell for natural spat set.

How do we handle the desire to plant bare shell for collection of natural set in the face of a limited shell resource?

Possible policy lay out:

1) If state funds (excluding county $$) are fully expended, then county funds could be used to purchase available shell for planting.
2) if demands for producing spat on shell for restoration, the public fishery and aquaculture are met (including a 2 year stock pile), then county funds could be used to purchase available shell for planting.
3) Should there be criteria (e.g. salinity zones, fall survey spat data) on where shell can be placed because in some areas, like the Upper Bay, spat set is sparse and planting bare shell will likely have a very low return on investment?