



Chesapeake Bay Oyster Recovery, MD and VA

U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS

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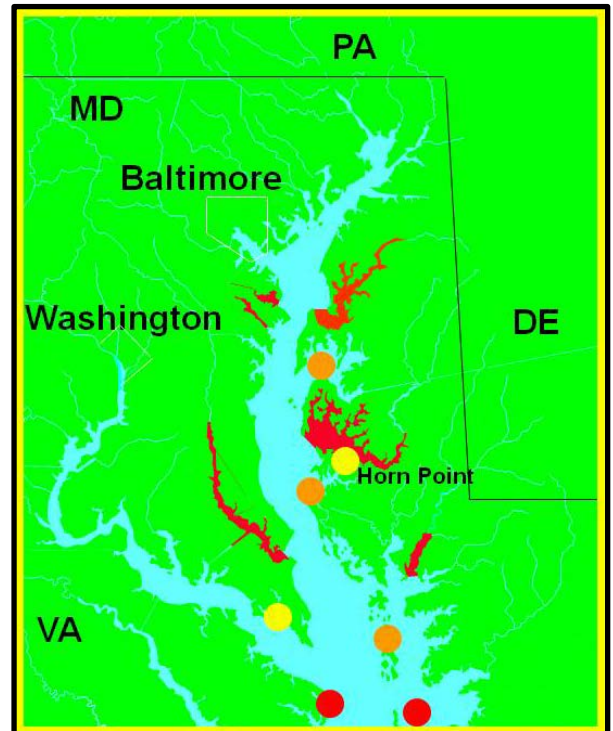
FACT SHEET as of February 1, 2015

AUTHORIZATION: Section 704(b) of Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) of 1986 (PL 99-662), as amended by Section 505 of WRDA 1996 (PL 104-303); Section 342 of WRDA 2000 (PL 106-541); Section 113 of the Energy and Water Development Appropriation Act, 2002; Section 126 of the Energy and Water Development Appropriations Act, 2006; Section 5021 WRDA 2007 (PL 110-114) and, Section 4010 (a)(2) WRRDA 2014 (PL 113-449).

TYPE OF PROJECT: Ecosystem Restoration

CONTRIBUTION TO CHESAPEAKE BAY: Directly contributes to achieving protection and restoration goals established by the 2009 Executive Order 13508 and the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Program Agreement goals to restore clean water, recover habitat, and sustain fish and wildlife.

PROJECT PHASE: Construction



CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST: Senators **Mikulski** and **Cardin (MD)**, **Warner** and **Kaine (VA)**; Representatives **Harris (MD-01)**, **Sarbanes (MD-03)**, **Hoyer (MD-05)**, **Wittman (VA-01)**, **Rigell (VA-02)**, and **Scott (VA-03)**.

NON-FEDERAL SPONSOR: Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Virginia Marine Resources Commission

BACKGROUND: Maryland oyster populations have declined dramatically since the turn of the 20th century, largely due to parasitic diseases. Oyster restoration is critical to the economic and environmental survival of the Chesapeake Bay and is a high priority for the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Chesapeake Bay Program.

Project elements include: (1) disease-free spat from State-owned hatcheries; (2) creation of new oyster habitat; (3) rehabilitation of existing non-productive oyster habitat; (4) construction of seed bars for production and collection of spat; (5) planting spat on the new and rehabilitated bars; and (6) monitoring of project performance. The non-federal sponsor for the Maryland portion is the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDNR); the sponsor for the Virginia portion is the Virginia Marine Resources Commission. The Maryland project cooperation agreement was executed February 27, 1997, with an amendment in July 2002. The Virginia project cooperation agreement was executed September 17, 2001, with two amendments in July 2004 and June 2007.

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To date, placement locations in Maryland have been in Kedges Strait, Eastern Bay, and the Chester, Choptank, Magothy, Patuxent, and Severn Rivers. Some of these oyster bars were left for natural recruitment; others received hatchery-raised spat (nearly 1.8B to date). Starting in 2001, the program was opened up to the Commonwealth of Virginia. The FY 2001-2014 funds have been split between the Norfolk and Baltimore Districts to support activities in Virginia and Maryland, respectively. In Virginia to date, activities have been focused on oyster bar creation in Tangier Sound, Pocomoke Sound, the Great Wicomico River, and the Lynnhaven River, creating a total of 393 acres. Through fall 2014, Baltimore District has constructed approximately 538 acres of new Maryland oyster bars in the Magothy, Severn, Choptank, Patuxent, and Chester Rivers, as well as Kedges Strait and Eastern Bay. Construction of 13 acres of substrate in the Severn River was completed in fall 2009. Construction of 8.5 acres of substrate sites in Cook Point was completed in February 2011. Construction of substrate sites in Harris Creek began in 2011 and continues with a total of 79 acres completed through April 2014. The long-term native oyster restoration master plan covering the entire Chesapeake Bay was completed in December 2012.

STATUS: The fiscal 2014 Maryland contract was awarded in August 2014. For this contract, mixed shell and rock will be placed as substrate on 57 acres in Harris Creek and 24 acres in Tred Avon River, tributaries of the Choptank River. The work will be accomplished from December 2014 through March 2015. With completion of construction and seeding in Harris Creek, the restoration goals will be met in fiscal 2015. Monitoring will continue in Harris Creek to determine restoration success per the oyster metric goals. Monitoring of the Virginia sites has shown that many of the Great Wicomico and Lynnhaven River sanctuary oyster reefs are exceeding the accepted target for successful oyster restoration. Rehabilitation of the Great Wicomico Reefs is scheduled for award in Spring 2015. The PED phase for construction of 30 acres in the Piankatank River is scheduled for completion in fiscal 2015 followed by execution of a PPA amendment and construction in the Piankatank utilizing alternate substrate.

BUDGET (\$):

	<u>CONSTRUCTION</u>
<u>Total Estimated Cost (MD+VA)</u>	\$ 80,000,000 ¹
Federal Cost Estimate	60,000,000
Non-Federal Cost Estimate	20,000,000
 <u>Federal Funds Data</u>	
Allocation thru FY 2013	39,078,000
Allocation for FY 2014	5,000,000
President Budget FY 2015 ²	5,000,000
Allocation for FY 2015 ²	TBD
Balance to Complete	10,922,000

NOTES:

¹ Estimate based on the current federal authorization for this program. The long-term master plan has identified a need of \$2-6 billion.

² The President typically sends the budget to Congress in February each year. Upon release, budget amounts for the USACE Civil Works programs and specified projects are posted online at the HQUSACE website in a program budget press book at <http://www.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorks/Budget.aspx>.

³ The final FY 2015 allocation amounts will be made available upon final approval pursuant to the Energy and Water Appropriations Act's continuing funding requirements. The FY 2015 funds will be split between Baltimore District and Norfolk District.

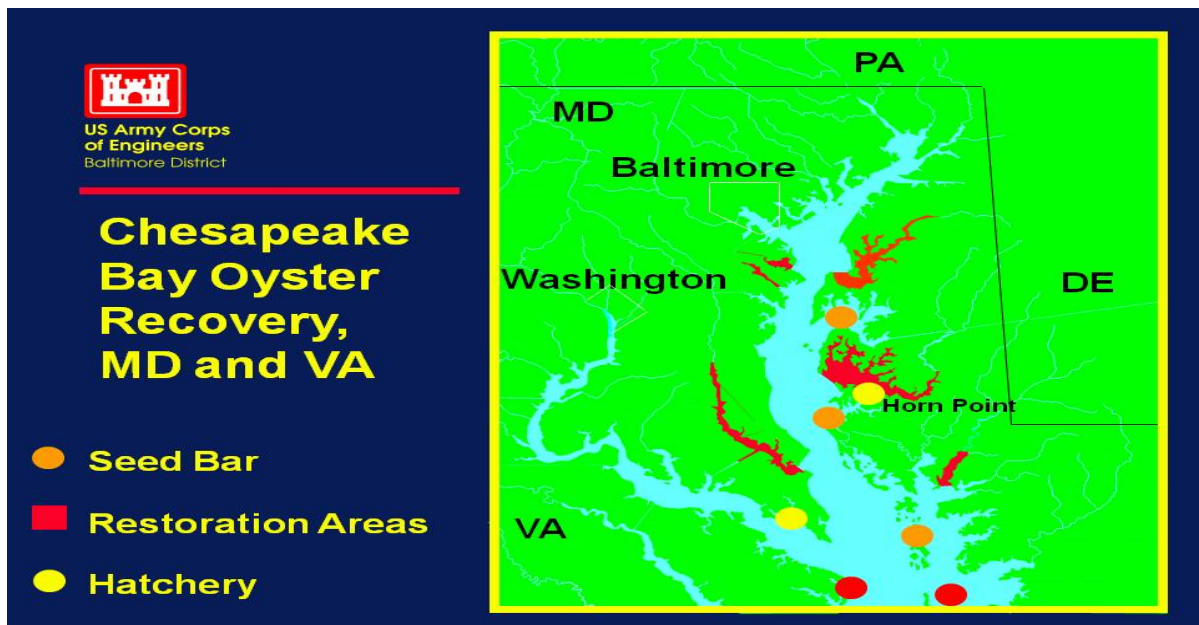
SCHEDULE:

FY 2014 Completed Work: With the funding received: In Baltimore District, substrate construction was completed for 23 acres in Harris Creek. A supplemental EA for shallow reef sites (6-9 feet) in Harris Creek was completed. Development of the Tred Avon River tributary plan continued. A substrate construction contract was awarded in August 2014 to Argo Systems, LLC, for Harris Creek (57 acres) and Tred Avon River (24 acres). In Norfolk District, design was completed for rehabilitation of existing reefs in the Great Wicomico. A decision document amendment was completed for work in the Piankatank River and NEPA was initiated. Development of a tributary plan for the Lafayette River continued.

FY 2015 Scheduled Work: Previous year carry-in funds in the amount of \$2.4M (\$500K in Baltimore District and \$1.9M in Norfolk District) along with the anticipated fiscal 2015 allocations based on the President’s budget (\$2M Baltimore District, \$3M Norfolk District) are being used to: In Baltimore District, complete the Tred Avon River tributary plan, planning for design and construction of the next Tred Avon River substrate contract, complete a supplementary EA for shallow water sites (6-9 feet) in the Tred Avon River, and continue program coordination and monitoring. In Norfolk District, adaptive management of reefs constructed in the Great Wicomico River, development of a tributary plan for the Lafayette River, completion of Preconstruction Engineering and Design (PED) for the first phase of construction in the Piankatank River and award for construction of approximately 30 acres in the Piankatank River.

COMPLETION: TBD. With optimal funding and an increase in WRDA cost authority, oyster restoration activities would continue towards achieving the oyster restoration outcome established by the Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration Executive Order (E.O. 13508) as laid out in the May 2010 *Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed* that called for restored oyster populations in 20 Chesapeake Bay tributaries by 2025. The 2014 Chesapeake Bay Agreement later adapted this goal to 10 tributaries by 2025. Without these, it is estimated that by fiscal 2018 funds would be used for orderly suspension of the program.

For more information regarding the Chesapeake Bay Oysters project, please contact Kimberly Gross, CENAB-PP-C, (41) 962-3457, or e-mail kimberly.u.gross@usace.army.mil.



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