



**SUSTAINABLE OYSTER RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR EASTERN BAY, MARYLAND**

OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP

MEETING #4 – WEDNESDAY – THURSDAY, JULY 31 – AUGUST 1, 2024

**CHESAPEAKE BAY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
600 DISCOVERY LANE, GRASONVILLE, MARYLAND 21638**

MEETING #4 OBJECTIVES

- To Approve Regular Procedural Topics (Meeting Agenda, Summary Report, and Workplan Update).
- To Hear Results from ORP’s Eastern Bay Habitat Survey, and Discuss How Results Will Inform Recommendations in the Plan.
- To Discuss OCW Stakeholders Resources Available to Support the Eastern Bay Plan.
- To Discuss and Consider Whether to Form an OCW Successor Group and Associated Draft Framework.
- To Evaluate and Rank the Revised List of Options and Performance Measures Relative to Project Goals.
- To Identify Any Additional Options for Workgroup Consideration.
- To Discuss and Approve the Draft Outline for the OCW Report and Recommendations for the Plan.
- Next Steps and Agenda Items for Meeting #5 – September 25-26, 2024.

AGENDA DAY 1 – WEDNESDAY, JULY 31, 2024

All Agenda Times – Including Adjournment – Are Approximate and Subject to Change

12:00 PM		LUNCH – PROVIDED BY OYSTER RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP
1)	12:30 PM	WELCOME AND ROLL CALL
2)	12:35	REGULAR ORGANIZATIONAL PROCEDURAL ISSUES REVIEW AND APPROVAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agenda Review and Meeting Objectives (July 31 – August 1, 2024) • Approval of Facilitator’s Summary Report (May 29-30, 2024) • Approval of Updated Project Meeting Schedule and Workplan (July 31, 2024)
3)	12:45	ORP’S EASTERN BAY SURVEY RESULTS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eastern Bay Habitat Survey Results.
4)	1:15	ORP’S EASTERN BAY SURVEY RESULTS DISCUSSION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Regarding How Results Will Inform the Recommendations in the Plan.
~2:15 PM		BREAK
5)	2:30	OCW STAKEHOLDER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT THE EASTERN BAY PLAN DISCUSSION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of OCW Stakeholders’ Resources Available to Support Implementation of OCW’s Recommendations for the Plan.
6)	3:00	OCW SUCCESSOR GROUP FORMATION DISCUSSION <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion Regarding Whether to Form an OCW Successor Group. • Consideration of Proposed Draft Framework for an OCW Successor Group.



7)	3:30	DISCUSSION, EVALUATION, AND ACCEPTABILITY RANKING OF REVISED LIST OF OPTIONS RELATIVE TO PROJECT GOALS AND DESIRED OUTCOMES BY GOAL AREA IN TURN – USING THE OPTIONS EVALUATION WORKSHEET
8)	4:55	SUMMARY OF DAY ONE AND REVIEW OF DAY TWO AGENDA
~5:00 PM		RECESS

AGENDA DAY 2 – THURSDAY, AUGUST 1, 2024		
<i>All Agenda Times – Including Adjournment – Are Approximate and Subject to Change</i>		
12:00 PM		LUNCH – PROVIDED BY OYSTER RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP
1)	12:30 PM	WELCOME AND AGENDA REVIEW
2)	12:35	ACCEPTABILITY RANKING OF REVISED OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES, ACTIONS, AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES (OPTIONS) – CONTINUED
~2:15 PM		BREAK
3)	2:30	ACCEPTABILITY RANKING OF REVISED OPTIONS AND IDENTIFICATION OF ANY HYBRID OR NEW OPTIONS – CONTINUED
4)	4:40	DRAFT OUTLINE FOR THE OCW REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE SUSTAINABLE OYSTER RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR EASTERN BAY DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL
5)	4:55	NEXT STEPS AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Action Items and Assignments. • Review of Agenda Items for the 5th OCW Meeting (Sept. 25-26, 2024). • Complete Meeting Evaluation.
~5:00 PM		ADJOURN

PROJECT RESOURCES AND CONTACTS

PROJECT WEBPAGE: <https://www.oysterrecovery.org/our-work/oyster-restoration/easternbaycoalition>

WORKGROUP’S ADOPTED ORGANIZATIONAL AND PROCEDURAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES:
<https://www.oysterrecovery.org/our-work/oyster-restoration/easternbaycoalition>

PROJECT CONTACT: Olivia Caretti, ORP: ocaretti@oysterrecovery.org; Cell: 1.443.617.7254



PROJECT FACILITATION AND PROCESS DESIGN: Jeff A. Blair, Facilitated Solutions, LLC. **INFORMATION:**
<http://facilitatedsolutions.org>.





OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP GOAL STATEMENT

The goal of the Eastern Bay Oyster Coalition Workgroup (Workgroup) is to develop consensus recommendations for oyster policies, management, and restoration/replenishment activities that improve oyster production and the ecological and ecosystem services from oyster habitat restoration, and meet the needs of industry, citizen, NGOs, and government stakeholders in Eastern Bay and its tributaries. This includes (1) defining annual and long-term goals for each individual stakeholder group and collectively across all groups, (2) identifying resources required to meet these goals, and (3) defining performance metrics to track progress.

The Workgroup process will be informed by the best available science and shared stakeholder values, resulting in the economically and ecologically sustainable long-term maintenance and growth of oyster restoration and production in Eastern Bay and its tributaries.

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ATTACHMENT 1	
OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION	
MEMBERS (#17)	AFFILIATION
NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (NGO): ENVIRONMENTAL AND CITIZEN GROUPS	
1) Ben Ford	ShoreRivers (Miles-Wye Riverkeeper)
2) Vicki Paulas	Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center
3) Ward Slacum	Oyster Recovery Partnership
4) Dan Sweeney	The Nature Conservancy
RECREATIONAL FISHING	
5) Mark Galasso	Tuna the Tide Charter Service
SEAFOOD INDUSTRY	
6) Scott Budden	Orchard Point Oyster Company, Aquaculture
7) Moochie Gilmer	Queen Anne County Waterman, Clam Harvester
8) Nick Hargrove	Wittman Wharf Seafood, Talbot County Waterman and Aquaculture
9) Jeff Harrison	Talbot County Waterman
10) Richard Jones	Queen Anne County Waterman
11) Matt Latham	Queen Anne County Waterman
12) Jason Ruth	Harris Seafood Company, Queen Anne County Waterman and Aquaculture
13) Troy Wilkins	Queen Anne County Waterman
LOCAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT	
14) Kathy Brohawn	Maryland Department of Environment
15) Brian Callam	Maryland DNR – Aquaculture & Industry Enhancement Division
16) Chris Judy	Maryland DNR – Shellfish Division (Designated Alternate: Jodi Baxter)
17) Jim Moran	Queen Anne County
OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP LEADERSHIP TEAM	
OYSTER RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP	
Olivia Caretti	Coastal Restoration Program Manager
Beth Franks	Senior Manager
Ward Slacum	Executive Director
FACILITATED SOLUTIONS, LLC	
Jeff Blair	Workgroup Facilitator, Consensus Building, and Process Design

ATTACHMENT 2
OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP PROJECT MEETING SCHEDULE AND WORKPLAN
OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP MEETINGS SCHEDULE AND WORKPLAN – 2024
UPDATED JULY 31, 2024

MEETING	DATES	OBJECTIVES
Meeting #1	Feb. 2-3, 2024	Organizational Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption of Oyster Coalition Workgroup’s Operational and Procedural Policies and Guidelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Assumptions, Principles, and Participation Guidelines; ○ Consensus Building Procedures; ○ Consensus Solutions Process Procedures; ○ Options Acceptability Ranking Process; and ○ Guiding Principles, and Goal Statement. • Presentations on the Eastern Bay Region of Maryland. • Review of Questionnaire responses. • Discussion and adoption of draft Framework for the Plan: Vision Themes, Goals, Outcomes, and Objectives. • Identification of initial list of strategies for evaluation.
Meeting #2	March 29-30, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations on decision support tools: spatial tools for oyster siting, and OysterFutures simulation model. Overview of DNR regulatory processes related to oysters. • Discussion of the application of spatial tools for oyster production in Eastern Bay. • Discussion of ORP’s Eastern Bay Habitat Survey Plan. • Mapping Exercise on Oyster Habitat: Current harvest locations, and proposed locations for expanding wild-harvest and aquaculture. • Identification, discussion, and acceptability ranking of options (strategies and actions), and resource needs to achieve Project Goals and Objectives. • Identification of revised, hybrid, and new options for evaluation. • Discussion and acceptability ranking of performance measures to track progress towards Objectives and Goals.
Meeting #3	May 29-30, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations and discussions about oyster substrate. • Update and preliminary results from ORP’s Eastern Bay Habitat Survey. • Overview of local stakeholders and resources in Eastern Bay. • Identification, discussion, and acceptability ranking of revised options (strategies and actions), and resource needs to achieve Project Goals and Objectives. • Identification of revised, hybrid, and new options for evaluation. • Discussion and acceptability ranking of revised performance measures to track progress towards Objectives and Goals.

Meeting #4	July 31-Aug. 1, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on results of ORP’s Eastern Bay habitat survey. • Discussion regarding how results of Eastern Bay Habitat Surveys will inform recommendations and inclusion in the Plan. • Discussion of OCW stakeholders resources available to support the goals of the OCW Project. • Discussion regarding formation of an OCW Successor Group, and consideration of an associated Draft Framework for ensuring implementation of OCW recommendations. • Acceptability ranking of proposed revisions to consensus ranked objectives, strategies, actions, and performance measures (options) for inclusion in the <i>Draft Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland</i> using the Strategies Evaluation Worksheet Process. • Discussion and approval of Draft Outline for the OCW <i>Report and Recommendations for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland</i>.
Meeting #5	Sept. 25-26, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on CBEC education plan. • Refinement of draft recommendations for the Plan. • Refinement and approval of the OCW <i>Draft Report and Recommendations for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland. (Day 2)</i>. • Planning for December 4, 2024 Community Open House Workshop.
Community Open House Workshop	Dec. 4, 2024 6:00pm – 8:00pm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community education on the OCW goals and process. • Community input on the OCW outcomes and recommendations for a <i>Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland</i>.
Meeting #6	Dec. 4-5, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of Community Open House input. • Revisions and Finalization of Plan. • Adoption of the Oyster Coalition Workgroup’s <i>Report and Recommendations for a Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland</i>, and submittal to the Oyster Recovery Partnership. • The Oyster Recovery Partnership will finalize the Report and distribute to relevant agencies, entities, and organizations as appropriate. • Workgroup Appreciation.



ATTACHMENT 3
KEY TO COMMON PROJECT ABBREVIATIONS

ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
CBEC	Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center
CBF	Chesapeake Bay Foundation
EB	Eastern Bay of Maryland
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
HPL	UMCES Horn Point Lab
MDE	Maryland Department of the Environment
MDNR	Maryland Department of Natural Resources
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NRCS	Natural Resource Conservation Service
OCW	Eastern Bay Oyster Coalition Workgroup
ORP	Oyster Recovery Partnership
OAC	Oyster Advisory Commission
Plan	<i>Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland</i>
QAC	Queen Anne County
SAV	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation
SR	ShoreRivers
TC	Talbot County
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UMD	University of Maryland
UMCES	University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service



ATTACHMENT 4
GLOSSARY OF OCW PROJECT TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

ACTION: The specific steps and activities taken to implement a strategy.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT: A process that includes making decisions, evaluating the results, comparing the results to predetermined performance measures, and modifying future decisions to incorporate lessons learned.

EASTERN BAY SYSTEM: Eastern Bay is a tributary of the Chesapeake Bay located between Queen Anne and Talbot Counties on Maryland’s Eastern Shore. Its main tributaries include the Miles and Wye Rivers. Eastern Bay is connected to the Chester River to the north via Kent Narrows, a working waterfront that supports a thriving commercial and recreational fishing community and includes seafood processing facilities, restaurants, and tourism. The estuary is a mesohaline system with expansive oyster, SAV, and sandy bottom habitats. The project will focus on existing oyster habitats and those areas suitable for oyster aquaculture and oyster restoration activities in Eastern Bay.

ECOSYSTEM HEALTH:
 A “healthy” ecosystem is one that conserves diversity, supports fully functional ecological processes, and sustains a range of ecological and ecosystem services.

ECOSYSTEM SERVICES: The contributions of ecosystems to human wellbeing. These include provisioning services (food, raw materials, fresh water, medicinal resources), regulating services (climate, air and water quality, moderation of extreme events, and erosion prevention), habitat services (habitat for species that support ecosystem services), and cultural services (recreation for mental & physical health; tourism; aesthetic appreciation spiritual experience).

GOAL: A goal is a statement of the project’s purpose to move towards the vision expressed in fairly broad language.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES: The Oyster Coalition Workgroup’s Guiding Principles reflect the broad values and philosophy that guides the operation of the Workgroup and the behavior of its members throughout its process.

OBJECTIVE: Objectives describe in concrete terms how to accomplish the goal to achieve the vision within a specific timeframe and with available resources. (E.g., by 2033, the State of Maryland will have approved a stakeholder developed Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan for the Eastern Bay System.)

OUTCOME: Outcomes describe the expected result at the end of the project period – what is hoped to be achieved when the goal is accomplished. (E.g., *an ecologically, and economically viable, healthy and sustainable Eastern Bay System oyster fishery and ecosystem*)

OYSTER REPLETION PROGRAM: A state-managed program to replenish oyster populations and bottom substrate on natural oyster bars that are regularly harvested by the commercial industry. The program is funded by the Maryland Department of Transportation Port Authority, revenue from commercial oyster license renewal surcharges, and bushel tax revenue from commercial harvest. The Oyster Recovery Partnership (ORP) implements the coordination and oversight of the production



and deployment of wild seed, shell, alternate substrate, and spat-on-shell (SOS) to achieve bottom enhancement per requests from the county oyster committees.

OYSTER RESOURCES: Sources of oysters that provide natural and cultural benefits to humans. These sources can come from the wild or from aquaculture. The responsible management of oyster resources requires integrated approaches that incorporate the social, economic, and environmental considerations of sustainability.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES: The regular measurement of outcomes and results, which generates reliable data on the effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of a project’s objectives.




RESTORATION: The process of repairing, through human intervention, sites whose biological communities and ecosystems have been degraded or destroyed. Restoration goals are site-specific, and would include restoration of the health and ecological functions that are self-sustaining over time.

STAKEHOLDERS: All groups whether public, private or non-governmental organizations who have an interest or concern in the success of a project and can affect or be affected by the outcome of decisions or activities of the project. The Eastern Bay System Initiative stakeholders include but are not limited to agriculture, silviculture, business, economic development, tourism, environmental, citizen groups, recreational fishing, commercial seafood industry, regional groups, local, state, and federal government, universities, and research interests.

STRATEGY: A method, action, plan of action, or policy that can be tested to determine whether it solves a problem and helps to achieve objectives and goals in the context of bringing about a desired future for the Eastern Bay System.

VISION: An idealized view of where or what the stakeholders would like the oyster resource and ecosystem to be in the future.

VISION THEMES: The key issues that characterize the desirable future for the oyster resource and ecosystem. The Vision Themes establish a framework for goals and objectives. They are not ordered by priority.

STOPLIGHT INDICATORS		
LEGEND FOR STATUS OF RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT TARGETS, TRENDS, AND GOALS		
	Red	Substantial deviations from restoration or management targets, creating severe negative condition that merits action.
	Yellow	Current situation does not meet restoration or management targets and merits attention, or indicate improvement in trend.
	Green	Situation is good and restoration or management goals or trends have been reached. Continuation of management and monitoring effort is essential to maintain and assess “green” status.

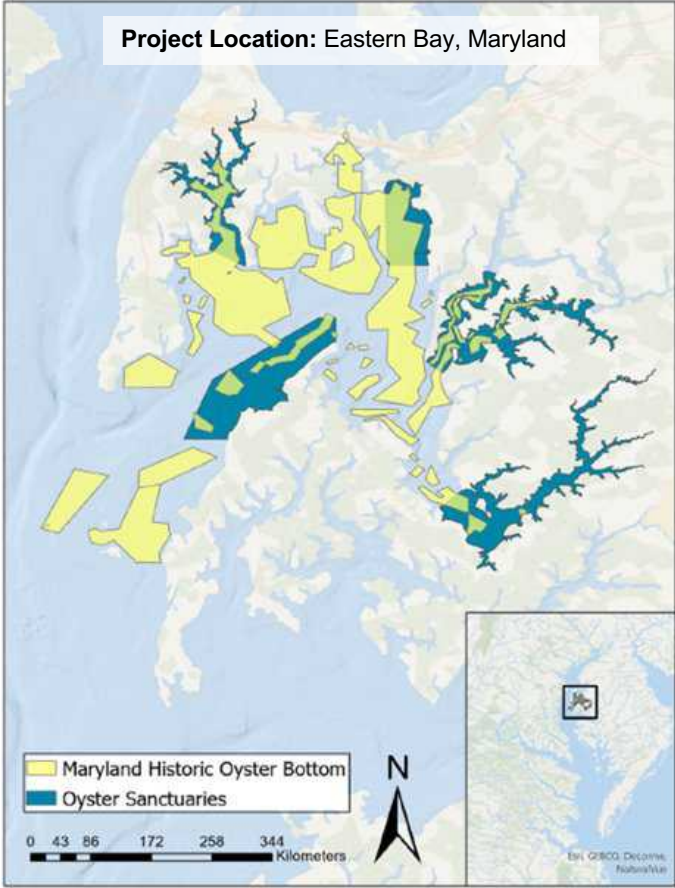
ATTACHMENT 5

PROJECT SUMMARY

The Oyster Coalition Workgroup is being convened by the Oyster Recovery Partnership (ORP), with support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). Workgroup members represent Maryland’s three major oyster stakeholder groups – wild harvest, restoration, and aquaculture – as well as NGOs, citizen, and governmental interests that affect and are affected by the oyster fishery and oyster habitat restoration activities in Eastern Bay, Maryland and its tributaries.

The goal of the Eastern Bay Oyster Coalition Workgroup (Workgroup) is to develop consensus recommendations for oyster policies, management, and restoration/replenishment activities that improve oyster production and the ecological and ecosystem services from oyster habitat restoration, and meet the needs of industry, citizen, NGOs, and government stakeholders in Eastern Bay and its tributaries. This includes (1) defining annual and long-term goals for each individual stakeholder group and collectively across all groups, (2) identifying resources required to meet these goals, and (3) defining performance metrics to track progress. The Workgroup process will be informed by the best available science and shared stakeholder values, resulting in the economically and ecologically sustainable long-term maintenance and growth of oyster production and oyster habitat restoration in Eastern Bay and its tributaries.

The recommendations will be developed by the Workgroup through a facilitated, consensus-driven process and compiled into a *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland*. The plan will be shared with Maryland DNR and the Oyster Advisory Commission for implementation.





ATTACHMENT 6

ABOUT THE FACILITATOR AND RELEVANT PROJECT EXAMPLES

Jeff A. Blair has over 30 years of experience in assessing and analyzing complex issues and facilitating meetings designed to build consensus between stakeholder interests, and is the principle and owner of **Facilitated Solutions, LLC**. In addition, Jeff is retired research faculty at Florida State University (FSU) and served as Associate Director for the FCRC Consensus Center at FSU for twenty-one years. He specializes in facilitation and process design and in addition his work includes situation assessment, strategic planning and implementation, and consensus building among diverse stakeholder interests with divergent perspectives on complex issues. He has worked with federal, state, local government, non-governmental organizations, and private sector representatives to design and implement collaborative approaches to consensus-building, planning, rulemaking, and dispute resolution with an emphasis on stakeholder participation in the planning, design, implementation, and monitoring of policy actions in more than 190 projects and over 2500 meetings. In addition, he conducts custom tailored trainings in various dispute resolution and meeting management topics.

Ongoing projects include serving as process designer, lead facilitator, and conflict resolution consultant for stakeholder groups including: The Oyster Recovery Partnership’s Oyster Coalition Workgroup tasked with developing recommendations for a *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland* (Chesapeake Bay); and the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation’s Florida Building Commission’s ongoing process of building consensus on all aspects of the Florida Building Code System including facilitating over 1,500 individual meetings for the Commission since 1999 including 70 special issue stakeholder workgroup projects.

Relevant project examples include designing the process and successfully facilitating unanimous consensus agreement between diverse stakeholder interests for the following projects:

- Apalachicola Bay System Initiative. Community Advisory Board. (2019 – 2023). Florida State University Coastal Marine Lab. Recommendations for the *Apalachicola Bay System Ecosystem-Based Adaptive Management and Restoration Plan*. **Adopted Unanimously 29 November 2023.**
- Greater Pensacola Bay Oyster Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management Plan. Pensacola Bay System Stakeholder Working Group. (2019 - 2021). The Nature Conservancy. Recommendations for an Oyster Fisheries and Habitat Management Plan for the Pensacola Bay System. **Adopted Unanimously 17 March 2021.**
- OysterFutures. OysterFutures Stakeholder Workgroup. (2015 – 2018). University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and Florida State University FCRC Consensus Center. National Science Foundation. Coastal SEES. Recommendations for Oyster Management and Restoration in the Choptank and Little Choptank Rivers. **Adopted Unanimously 24 March 2018.**
- Gulf Angler Focus Group Initiative (2015 - 2016). Gulf Angler Focus Group. American Sportfishing Association, Coastal Conservation Association, Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation, and Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership. Recommendations for Private Recreational Management Options for Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper. **Adopted Unanimously 30 November 2016.**
- Project FishSmart. (2008). Atlantic King Mackerel Fishery Stakeholder Workgroup. University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science and Florida State University FCRC Consensus Center. Recommendations for an Atlantic King Mackerel Fishery Management Plan. **Adopted Unanimously 7 November 2008.**
- Lobster Advisory Board. (2005 - 2006). Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Florida Lobster Fishery Management Plan. **Adopted Unanimously 16 May 2007.**
- Blue Crab Advisory Board. (2003 - 2005). Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Florida Blue Crab Fishery Management Plan. **Adopted Unanimously 5 January 2005.**