

**OCW SUCCESSOR GROUP CONCEPT AND DRAFT FRAMEWORK  
PARTNERS FOR A RESILIENT EASTERN BAY  
DRAFT PURPOSE, MISSION, GOAL, COMPOSITION, AND  
ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK  
(FOR MEETING #4 DISCUSSION – JULY 31, 2024)**

**PARTNERS FOR A RESILIENT EASTERN BAY – DRAFT ROLE AND PURPOSE**

To provide a forum for agencies and stakeholders to work collaboratively to ensure there is a reliable mechanism and process for the funding, implementation, monitoring, and adaptive management of the OCW’s Recommendations for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration\* and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland; and as needed, to develop additional recommendations informed by the best available science, data, and stakeholders’ experiences to enhance the oyster resource and health of the Eastern Bay System.

*\*“Restoration” as used in this document is defined as including sanctuaries, harvest areas, and aquaculture.*

**PARTNERS FOR A RESILIENT EASTERN BAY – DRAFT MISSION STATEMENT**

To engage state agencies responsible for restoration and management of the Eastern Bay System to ensure long-term effective management and restoration strategies are implemented, monitored, and adaptively managed toward restoring and enhancing oyster reefs, fisheries and aquaculture management, and the health of the Bay. The Partnership is the group that will bring together management, the community and science to ensure the long-term health of Eastern Bay.

**PARTNERS FOR A RESILIENT EASTERN BAY – DRAFT GOAL STATEMENT**

The vitality of Eastern Bay is key to the socio-economic prosperity of Talbot and Queen Anne counties and the surrounding area. Without effective monitoring, adaptive management, and restoration, the Bay’s health and once-booming oyster industry are likely to decline. This could potentially result in widespread job loss and increased economic insecurity for many Talbot County and Queen Anne County residents whose livelihoods are tied to the Bay.

The overarching goal of the Partners for a Resilient Eastern Bay is to ensure there is a reliable mechanism and process for the funding, implementation, monitoring, and adaptive management of the OCW’s Recommendations for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland.

The PREB will continue exploring and evaluating restoration policies, oyster fishery practices, and management options to improve the overall health and rich biological diversity of the Eastern Bay System, including that of other ecologically and economically important species. The PREB’s consensus recommendations will be directed to natural resource managers, environmental regulators, and other agencies and entities as appropriate.

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## **PARTNERS FOR A RESILIENT EASTERN BAY – COMPOSITION**

The composition of the Partners for a Resilient Eastern Bay is critical to its success and effectiveness as they work to carry out their Mission. Membership in the PREB will include local government, natural resource management and economic development agencies, and stakeholders representing a variety of perspectives, including local businesses, conservation organizations, and individuals supporting the seafood industry including fishing and aquaculture activities.

## **PARTNERS FOR A RESILIENT EASTERN BAY – DRAFT ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK**

- *Partners for a Resilient Eastern Bay* (OCW Successor Group) will be ready to formally convene when the Oyster Coalition Workgroup (OCW) completes their recommendations for the *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland Plan* on December 5, 2024.
- The *Partners for a Resilient Eastern Bay* (PREB) will be comprised of representatives from key stakeholder groups committed to ensuring there is a reliable mechanism and process for the monitoring, funding, and implementation of the OCW’s Recommendations for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland Plan. The founding members of the PREB shall approve additional members after nomination by a current member and a consensus vote of a quorum of the members.
- The PREB will form as an independent 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.
- The PREB will be physically located within a neutral non-profit organization such as the ORP to conserve resources and protect their independent status.
- The PREB will secure funding to hire a project coordinator to handle PREB logistics and administration, including but not limited to organizing meetings and maintaining a workplan approved by the PREB and updated annually.
- The PREB will adopt a position job description outlining the coordinator’s duties and responsibilities.
- The PREB will adopt Operational and Procedural Policies and Guidelines to ensure the group operates transparently and equitably, and makes consensus-based decisions and recommendations.
- The PREB will adopt an Agreement in Principle providing the organizational structure including the mission, purpose, guiding principles, organization, and decision making and consensus building procedures for the PREB.
- The PREB will form a Steering Committee (SC) consisting of leadership level representatives selected from the PREB members. The Steering Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that the PREB has the organizational and governance structure, the funding and resources, and the leadership and clarity of purpose and vision required to implement a comprehensive action strategy consistent with the Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan of the Partners. The Steering Committee will function as an executive committee and work in close coordination with the PREB’s coordinator.
- The PREB will agree on and approve a Workplan and update it annually as needed.

- The PREB will require at least a 75% favorable vote of all members present and voting for approving decisions and recommendations.
- A quorum at any PREB meeting is defined as greater than 50% of the current roster of voting members present. A quorum shall be required for all PREB decisions and recommendations.
- Stakeholder representatives will be voting members.
- Local government, state agency, and federal agency representatives will be non-voting advisory members.

### **PARTNERS FOR A RESILIENT EASTERN BAY – DRAFT GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The PREB will adopt the following guiding principles for achieving the mission:

- 1) Maximize the efficient coordination of agency resources and programs, including consolidated and coordinated funding of projects.
- 2) Use a watershed management approach to encourage comprehensive problem solving.
- 3) Seek research-based solutions that can be embraced by leaders and stakeholders at all levels of government and the community.
- 4) Focus on management approaches which are technically feasible, economically implementable, and protective of the environment and public health.
- 5) Achieve results that satisfy regulatory requirements.
- 6) Focus on the Eastern Bay System.
- 7) Identify and support top research priorities for achieving oyster reef restoration, fisheries and aquaculture management, and health of the Bay goals in the Eastern Bay System.
- 8) Recommend and support education and outreach programs that enhance oyster reef restoration, fisheries and aquaculture management, and health of the Bay goals in the Eastern Bay System.
- 9) Advocate for the implementation of effective solutions, including incentive-based approaches to achieve oyster reef restoration, fisheries and aquaculture management, and health of the Bay goals in the Eastern Bay System.

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### **PARTNERS FOR A RESILIENT EASTERN BAY – STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPANTS**

**Current Stakeholder Groups Agreeing to Participate on the *Partners for a Resilient Eastern Bay***

- Oyster Recovery Partnership – Ward Slacum
- TBD – TBD

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## ORIGINATION OF THE OCW SUCCESSOR GROUP CONCEPT

The Oyster Coalition Workgroup Successor Group concept was initiated and developed by the Workgroup's facilitator, Jeff Blair, Facilitated Solutions LLC, based on his experiences and analysis of similar projects relative to improving the likelihood that recommendations will be seriously considered and implemented by management agencies. The concept is provided for discussion purposes, and ultimately it will be incumbent on the members of the Oyster Coalition Workgroup regarding whether they choose to support and convene a Successor Group.

