

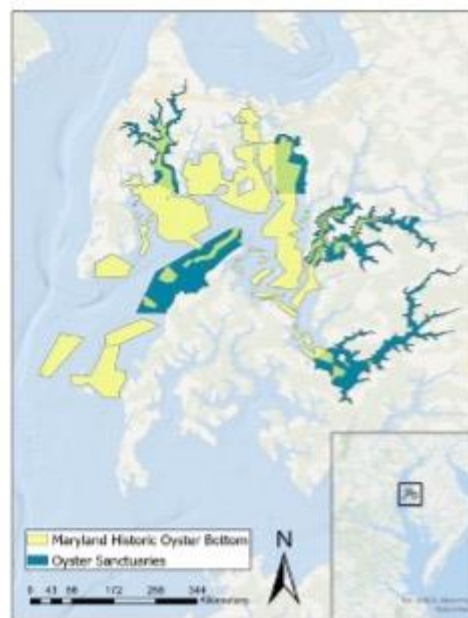
**EASTERN BAY
OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP**



**OYSTER RECOVERY
PARTNERSHIP®**
— ORP —

**MEETING #4 – JULY 31 – AUGUST 1, 2024
FACILITATOR’S SUMMARY REPORT**

**CHESAPEAKE BAY ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER
GRASONVILLE, MARYLAND**



**PROCESS DESIGN, MEETING FACILITATION, AND REPORTING
BY JEFF A. BLAIR**

**EASTERN BAY OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP
JULY 31 – AUGUST 1, 2024 FACILITATOR’S MEETING SUMMARY REPORT**

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EASTERN BAY OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP
JULY 31 – AUGUST 1, 2024 FACILITATOR’S MEETING SUMMARY REPORT

OVERVIEW OF THE EASTERN BAY OYSTER COALITION’S JULY 31 – AUGUST 1, 2024 ACTIONS

I. MEETING SUMMARY AND OVERVIEW

The fourth Oyster Coalition Workgroup meeting was held at the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center (CBEC) in Grasonville, Maryland. The Oyster Coalition Workgroup (OCW): received an overview of the updated Project Workplan-Schedule; received and discussed the results from ORP’s Eastern Bay Habitat Survey; discussed how the results of the Eastern Bay Habitat Survey will inform the recommendations in the Plan; discussed OCW stakeholders’ resources available to assist with implementation of OCW’s restoration and management recommendations; participated in an interactive habitat survey results group GIS mapping exercise; and discussed agenda items and information needs for the September 25, 2024 OCW meeting #5. Specific actions included: **1)** Discussing a draft OCW successor group concept and associated organizational framework and deciding not to convene a successor group; **2)** Discussing, evaluating, and acceptability ranking the revised list of strategies and actions relative to Project goals and desired outcomes by goal area using the Consensus Solutions Options Evaluation Worksheet Process [A total of 13 strategies and 42 actions across the 3 Goals for the Plan achieved a consensus level of support at the conclusion of the acceptability ranking process]; **3)** Discussing and voting unanimously to adopt the final package of Performance Measures to track progress towards objectives and Project goals; **4)** Discussing and voting unanimously in favor of the Outline for the OCW Report and Recommendations for the *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland Plan*; and **5)** Providing feedback based on the Habitat Survey results on potential locations for priority planting, aquaculture siting, shell moving and reclamation, co-siting of plantings between management zones, and areas that could be divided or removed from the fishery.

(Attachment 1 – Key to Common Project Abbreviations)

(Attachment 2 – Glossary of OCW Project Terms and Definitions)

II. OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP MEETING PARTICIPATION

The following OCW members participated in Day-1 (Wednesday) of the July 31 – August 1, 2024 meeting conducted in-person at the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center in Grasonville, Maryland:

Kathy Brohawn (Rusty McKay, alternate), Scott Budden, Brian Callam, Ben Ford, Moochie Gilmer, Nick Hargrove, Jeff Harrison, Richard Jones, Chris Judy, Matt Latham, Jim Moran, Vicki Paulas, Ward Slacum, Dan Sweeney, and Troy Wilkins (Mike Eber, alternate).

(15 of 17 members participated – 88%).

Absent OCW Members:

Mark Galasso, and Jason Ruth.

The following OCW members participated in Day-2 (Thursday) of the July 31 – August 1, 2024 meeting conducted in-person at the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center in Grasonville, Maryland:

Kathy Brohawn (Rusty McKay, alternate), Scott Budden, Brian Callam, Ben Ford, Moochie Gilmer, Jeff Harrison, Richard Jones, Chris Judy, Matt Latham, Jim Moran, Vicki Paulas, Ward Slacum, Dan Sweeney, and Troy Wilkins (Mike Eber, alternate).

(14 of 17 members participated – 82%).

Absent OCW Members:

Mark Galasso, Nick Hargrove, and Jason Ruth.

OCW LEADERSHIP TEAM AND FACILITATOR

Jeff Blair, Olivia Caretti, Beth Franks, and Ward Slacum.

(Attachment 3 – Meeting Participation)

MEETING FACILITATION

Meetings are facilitated and meeting summary reports prepared by Jeff A. Blair of Facilitated Solutions, LLC. Information at: <http://facilitatedsolutions.org>.



(Attachment 12 – About the Workgroup’s Facilitator)

ADDITIONAL MEETING ATTENDEES

Jodi Baxter (MDNR), Jennica Moffit, Jordan Salafie, and Jennifer Walters (ORP).

PROJECT WEBPAGE

Information on the Oyster Coalition Workgroup project, including agenda packets, meeting reports, draft Plan Framework, and related documents may be found at the OCW Webpage. Located at the following URL: <https://www.oysterrecovery.org/our-work/oyster-restoration/easternbaycoalition>

III. AGENDA REVIEW AND APPROVAL

The OCW voted unanimously to approve the agenda for the July 31 – August 1, 2024 meeting as presented. Following are the key agenda items approved for consideration:

- ✓ 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, 2024.

Amendments to the Posted Agenda:

There were no amendments to the Agenda.

(Attachment 3 – July 31 – August 1, 2024 OCW Agenda)

IV. APPROVAL OF THE MAY 29-30, 2024 FACILITATOR’S SUMMARY REPORT

The OCW voted unanimously to approve the May 29-30, 2024 OCW Meeting Facilitator Summary Report as presented. The approved report will be posted to the project webpage.

Amendments: None

V. REVIEW OF UPDATED PROJECT WORKPLAN AND SCHEDULE

Jeff Blair provided the OCW with a review of the Project Workplan and Schedule and answered members’ questions. The July 31 – August 1, 2024 meeting represented the Workgroup’s fourth of six meetings scheduled for the process.

Throughout the project, the OCW members representing management and restoration agencies have committed to vetting the strategies and actions under consideration with their leadership to gauge support and feasibility of implementation. The OCW is in the final stages of evaluating the relative priority and efficacy of strategies and associated actions (options) and identifying restoration and management approaches for inclusion in recommendations for a *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland Plan*.

Jeff reported as follows:

- The process consists of six Workgroup meetings and one Community Workshop Forum. The process will culminate with the Workgroup’s adoption of a Draft Report and Recommendations for the *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland* for submittal to the Oyster Recovery Partnership.
- Jeff noted that it is important to the process itself as well as the process outcomes that all Workgroup members participate in the meetings to ensure that all perspectives are included in the discussions and the rankings, and to ensure that the Workgroup’s recommendations are supported by all of the stakeholder interests represented on the Workgroup.
- The Workgroup Meeting Dates are as follows:
 - Meeting #1 – February 2-3, 2024 – Completed
 - Meeting #2 – March 29-30, 2024 – Completed
 - Meeting #3 – May 29-30, 2024 – Completed
 - Meeting #4 – July 31-August 1, 2024 – Completed
 - Meeting #5 – September 25, 2024
 - Meeting #6 – December 4-5, 2024
- The Community Workshop Forum will be held on December 4, 2024 from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.
- The Workgroup meetings will held at the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center.

(Attachment 5 – Project Workplan and Meeting Schedule)

VI. ORP'S EASTERN BAY SURVEY RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Presentations are available on the project webpage: <https://www.oysterrecovery.org/our-work/oyster-restoration/easternbaycoalition>.

A. ORP'S EASTERN BAY SURVEY RESULTS PRESENTATION

Jennica Moffat (Monitoring Coordinator, ORP), and Olivia Caretti (Coastal Restoration Program Manager, ORP), provided the OCW with the results of ORP's Eastern Bay habitat survey results.

Summary and Overview of the Presentation

See presentation on the project webpage. The notes below capture additional points relevant to the survey results:

- Conducted two surveys – (1) initial sampling identified areas containing cultch vs. sand/mud; (2) patent tong sampling identified how much cultch, if oysters present, and at what density. All data were used to generate a composite score assigned to quantify habitat quality.
- Areas ranking above 25% can likely support oyster habitat and can be enhanced to improve oyster production (total 5,800 acres, 68% area surveyed)
- Areas ranking below 25% are primarily sand and should be reclassified for other uses (e.g., aquaculture) (total 2,700 acres, 32% area surveyed)

Summary of Questions, Responses, and Comments on the Presentation:

(Note initials are only used to identify ORP Project Team members, presenters, and state agency representatives)

- Watermen would like to find locations where could bring shell from off the deep edge where no oyster production and move on top of the bar.
- Q) How was shell volume calculated?
 - A) JM: Total volume was use to generate the composite scores (includes buried and surface shell). ORP will re-evaluate using surface shell only since that would be above the sediment layer and available for spat/spat-on-shell
- JB: Were all of the polygons tested?
 - A) JM: No, not all polygons – just where the circle points are. Open circles were places where substrate was sand/mud and not appropriate for PT sampling.
- Q) East of Herring Island the signature on the side scan looks odd, what does it mean?
 - A) JM: Agree, and we don't know what it means. There was a good amount of shell here and oysters. Might need to follow up with ROV to get more info.
 - ML: It might be rocks. QA Co bar cleaned that area a few years ago. Everywhere that scored 26-50% had shell.
- Q) The results show lots of green dots in line – does that mean that there are good areas in between them?
 - A) JM: Not always, reefs are patchy so it would be a guess.
- Q) What is the sampling process with patent tongs? Is it just one grab?
 - A) JM: Generally, yes. If tongs not grabbing anything will try again.
- OC explained that next steps with this data is to send to MGS, they will incorporate it with their data to identify reef, sand, etc. areas based on the return. Hopefully through this process will be able to better quantify acreage.

B. ORP'S EASTERN BAY SURVEY RESULTS DISCUSSION

Olivia Caretti, ORP, led the Workgroup in a discussion regarding how the Eastern Bay survey results will inform the OCW's recommendations for the *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland Plan*. After the results of ORP's habitat survey were reviewed the OCW discussed how to integrate these data into the recommendations to best enhance oyster habitat and production.

The discussion focused on three main questions:

1. Where are locations that should be prioritized for enhancement in the near term vs. areas that should receive longer-term investments?
2. Are areas with no oyster habitat still valuable to manage under existing PSFA management classification?
3. 2,700 acres (32%) of the sampled PSFA areas and Yates Bars could be modified – Are these areas better suited for other uses? What uses?

Note that:

PSFA = public shellfish fishery areas

NOB = natural oyster bar

Summary and Overview of the Discussion

(Note initials are only used to identify ORP Project Team members, presenters, and state agency representatives)

Where are locations that should be prioritized for enhancements for near and longer-term investments?

- OC) The benefit of the initial sampling is we were able to identify areas where there was no habitat followed up with Patent Tong sampling to better understand how much and what type of habitat is in areas where there is some substrate/material.
- Talbot Co would like to prioritize areas that scored > 75% and > 50%. Including Sycamore, West End, Scotland, southern Tidemill (aka Claxton's Woods). Can invest in lower scoring areas if get funding beyond 3 years.
- Need to think about areas that are fishable – some areas that scored high are in hand-tong-only areas and may be too deep to harvest. 10ft is ideal for hand tong, >15ft is challenging. For example, Turtle Back and Hambleton Hill – good oysters but hard to access. Will be important to establish multiple generations of oysters in these areas so they are sustainable.
- Could consider areas <25% to support alternate substrates. Areas were primarily hard sand, channels were muddy and not suitable.
- Q) Is there any correlation with score and water depth? Why are most points scoring 25-50% in center of bars? Low DO or ease of access to harvest? ORP can evaluate for Meeting 5
- Want to prioritize enhancing areas that are protected from NW winter winds. Also need protected areas for water column aquaculture. Wind direction, and depth should be considered when selecting sites.
- Cooper's Hollow/Lows [*did not catch context, outside of EB proper*]
- Need to keep rebuilding areas where historic plantings occurred. Even if these areas buried, there is presumably shell beneath sand. Can dredge shell up the slope or remove using clam dredge (can reach 3ft below sand).
 - DNR is submitting permit application to dredge buried shell from bars in EB. Similar approach tested in Somerset County
- DNR has asked shell committees to ID areas where shell is buried to help with siting locations for clam dredging shell.
 - Lots of guess work about where shell may be buried. Technology should help ID these

- Talbot Co. interested in power dredge in Miles River and EB, but it would be difficult in some areas. These may be locations suitable for bringing shells up slope to shallower areas.
 - Suggest changing some hand tong areas to dredge
 - Some watermen against dredging – scatters shell and it gets buried. Small bars in EB that are productive can't support dredging because entire bars will be destroyed. This is a poor management practice for sustainability.
 - Also see issues with poaching in QA Co by power dredgers. Need NRP enforcement
- Have historic planting areas been sampled? Barges of shell went overboard in some areas but data suggests there is nothing there?
 - Yes, it appears to be the case. ORP can provide more information on past plantings at Meeting 5
 - QA Co did some bar cleaning on Batt's Neck, likely in areas scoring > 25%
- Highlight the area we are talking about on the Yates Bars.

Are areas with no oyster habitat from sampling still valuable to manage under the existing PSFA management classification? Are these areas better suited for other uses?

- If not suitable for PSFA, then probably not suitable for aquaculture (specifically bottom aquaculture/submerged land lease). Could be suitable for water column aquaculture
- Water column aquaculture could pose gear conflict with crabbers (trotline in EB). Have to consider conflicting uses when selecting aquaculture sites
- Is removing a portion of unproductive Yates Bar from the PSFA worth a discussion (e.g., areas where YB go all the way to shore in the Miles River but survey showed it was sand)? Would a survey like this allow us to understand the need and where to draw the line?
 - Modifying regulations on Yates Bars could increase the need for enforcement
- If SAV areas are wiped out, will change the sediment profile and bottom characteristics which will make re-establishing SAV difficult. Would DNR be open to these other uses (aquaculture or clamming)?
 - SAV protection zones regulations have to be factored in – SAV typically shallower than ~6ft depth, but SAV protection zones extend beyond existing beds and may cover historic areas where SAV was lost
 - If no SAV present and not on a Yates Bar, clamming could be allowed.
- Discussion about how 10% of the 30% of areas we found no oyster habitat is marginal/transition zone between management areas. Leases could be squeezed as habitat shifts.
 - CAN see spat catch and survive on bare sand, so possible that inside of oyster boundary can shift or recover. But is this realistic if no surrounding habitat?
- Inside of Kathy's/Coffee/Persimmon could house spat on shell
- Aquaculture siting is specific to individual business and infrastructure needs – water access, protection from wind
- IDing areas that are good for the oyster fishery are helpful and already providing more information than previously existed when thinking about leases. Identify areas that won't work out (e.g., industry resistance, etc.) and take them off the table. Discussing additional options (areas) would be useful.
- Need to work with all user groups to decide on areas to change allowable uses (including clam, crab, hand tong, divers, power dredge, patent tong, aquaculture harvesters/stakeholders)
- To evaluate declassifying Yates Bars areas we need a map showing where opportunities are with some scale. Recommendation to remove an entire Yates bar or half a bar with a zero score, instead of trying to find smaller areas. Also overlay NOB map so it's clear where current regulation needs to change for NOBs and Yates Bars.

VII. OCW STAKEHOLDER RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT THE EASTERN BAY PLAN DISCUSSION

Overview

At the May 2024 meeting the ORP Leadership Team explained that to ensure implementation, monitoring, and long-term refinements it would be important to have continued support from the OCW stakeholders. In addition, there are different categories of resources that could be useful in support of the Eastern Bay Plan including the following:

Funding; staff assistance; public outreach; connecting to established relationships and partnerships; science, data, research, and/or monitoring support; education and training; support with oyster enhancement initiatives, etc.

Olivia explained that to support the OCW outcomes beyond the last OCW meeting in December, the ORP would like to rely on the Workgroup’s local expertise and network to generate a database of resources to create an engaged and supportive stakeholder community surrounding oysters in Eastern Bay. These resources can include grant opportunities, local businesses, companies, local experts, nonprofits, and other organizations that can be called upon to build a sense of community and support around the sustainable restoration, harvest, and management of oysters in Eastern Bay. This activity will help achieve Objectives under Goal C within the framework for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay (the Plan). Goal C is: *An engaged stakeholder community that supports sustainable oyster restoration and management.*

At the May meeting the Workgroup was given a homework assignment to identify resources they may have available to support the goals of the Eastern Bay Plan, and to be prepared to discuss them during Meeting #4. In addition a worksheet to assist with the activity was provided. Following is a summary of the discussions regarding stakeholder resources to support the goals of the OCW’s Eastern Bay Plan:

Summary and Overview of the Discussion

POTENTIAL STAKEHOLDERS AND RESOURCES	
ORGANIZATION	ROLE
Wye Research and Education Center/MD Aquaculture Extension, Wye Mills, MD	Education and outreach support.
NOAA Oxford Laboratory, located in Talbot County, MD	Research and monitoring support.
Talbot County Council	\$50k to Eastern Bay oyster enhancement, ongoing for 5 years.
ShoreRivers	Marylanders Grow Oysters – 70 growers, waterfront property owners participating.
Oyster Recovery Partnership	MGO (in partnership with ShoreRivers), public engagement. Resources to engage public officials in restoration.
Queen Anne County Watermen Association	Funds raised through Christmas Tree basket sales pledged to supplement fishery enhancement (~\$30k/year).
Queen Anne County	County budgets \$10k/year for oyster restoration (in fishery). Queen Anne County has installed solar arrays generating property tax revenues for conservation purposes and matching funds up to \$12M are available. When the details are

	finalized Queen Anne County will decide how much additional money willing to invest in oyster planting.
Talbot Watermen Association (non-profit)	Building fundraising capabilities – public donations towards restoration.
The Nature Conservancy	Commitment to support aquaculture and fisheries enhancement. Commitment to participate in advisory committees and stakeholder groups.
Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum	Education, cultural history of fishery, ecosystem services of oysters. Would likely be interested in providing education and outreach about EB OCW Plan.
Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center	Enhance curriculum to integrate historic focus on fishery in EB (this is an objective of ORP’s funding from NFWF for the Coalition).
Maryland Agricultural and Resource-Based Industry Development Corporation (MARBIDCO)	Mission to serve the State's commercial farming, forestry, and seafood industries. Should be contacted to determine how they might provide resources, including the possibility of grant or loan funding for aquaculture and/or shucking houses.
Carteret County Community College Aquaculture Technology Program, Morehead City, NC	Existing and well-developed program to train individuals seeking to enter the aquaculture industry. Could be used as a model for a pilot program aimed at reducing barriers to entry in Eastern Bay/MD. (https://catalog.carteret.edu/aquaculture-technology)
USDA NRCS program	Programs that invest money in aquaculture expansion and best practices – for private lease holders.
Ratcliff Foundation	Have historically provided support for oyster industry, including funding to build and maintain facilities, training programs, and industry research.

VIII. OCW SUCCESSOR GROUP AND DRAFT ORGANIZATIONAL FRAMEWORK DISCUSSION

Overview

Jeff Blair, OCW Facilitator, introduced and presented the concept of convening an OCW Successor Group and a draft Successor Group organizational framework explaining that whether to convene the group was a decision for the Workgroup based on members’ perspectives on whether there is a need for a successor group, and whether they are willing to participate in and support the development and maintenance of a successor group to the OCW. After extensive discussion with a variety of pros and cons expressed, it was clear that there was **no consensus for a successor group to the OCW**.

Summary of Presentation

Why and Whether to Form an OCW Successor Group?

- Key stakeholders, including watermen and other seafood industry interests, have expressed frustration with having participated in numerous stakeholder initiatives culminating in recommendations that “sit on a shelf” and “are not implemented.”
- Stakeholders have indicated they don’t see the changes they have recommended implemented and/or their concerns being addressed.
- Stakeholders have reported they don’t see recommended restoration and management recommendations resulting from previous initiatives implemented.
- A successor group would be independent from regulatory agencies and other stakeholder entities and organizations.
- A successor group would be focused on the Eastern Bay Region as a whole (not on a specific county or the entire state).
- A successor group would provide continuity and the historical context and perspective that often gets lost with changing leadership and staff in governmental agencies.
- A successor group would help facilitate the evaluation and implementation of the Plan by the existing agencies and organizations responsible for restoration and management of the oyster resource, and not replace and/or compete with them for funding and resources.
- Implemented in other oyster fisheries and watersheds including the *Partners for a Resilient Apalachicola Bay* and the *Savannah River Partnership*.

Origination of the OCW Successor Group Concept:

- The Oyster Coalition Workgroup Successor Group concept was developed by the Workgroup’s facilitator, Jeff Blair, Facilitated Solutions LLC, at the request of the Workgroup, and based on his experiences and analysis of similar projects relative to enhancing the likelihood that recommendations will be seriously considered and implemented by management agencies.
- The concept was provided for discussion purposes only, and ultimately it would be incumbent on the members of the Oyster Coalition Workgroup regarding whether they were interested in supporting a successor group.

Summary of Key Points from the Discussion

(Note initials are only used to identify ORP Project Team members, presenters, and state agency representatives)

- There are existing groups that perform some of these functions and many stakeholders felt another group is not needed.
- There was concern from watermen that a successor group could dilute their ability to decide how and where funds should be spent for oyster habitat restoration. Don’t want other stakeholders to have a say in how funds are spent for the public fishery.
- Prefer that funds be spent in the water and not to support another organization.
- It might be a good idea to consider something like this in a year after the Plan is finalized to see whether it would be helpful for implementation of the Plan. Another option discussed was for the OCW to convene annually to reflect on progress, concerns, or challenges.
- Concern from DNR that the successor group’s mission is already provided by DNR and a successor group is not needed.
- Such a group could be useful so stakeholders have a consistent forum to discuss issues and work together collaboratively on issues such as considering new areas to expand the fishery.
- Could provide continuity, leverage for management and legislative decisions, and foster communication and collaboration between stakeholders.

(Attachment 10 – Draft OCW Successor Group Organizational Framework)

IX. 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

During the first OCW meeting conducted on February 2-3, 2024, Workgroup members were invited to offer an initial list of options (strategies and actions) they would like to consider for oyster restoration, management, and for engaging stakeholders to support sustainable oyster restoration and management. In addition, members offered several overarching considerations they felt should be considered in evaluating options for strategies as follows:

- Whether a strategy is viable in terms of budget and funding.
- Understanding and planning for agency timeframe requirements regarding how long approved polices and projects are likely to take for implementation.
- Consider creating a brief cheat sheet that summarizes the Workgroup’s recommended actions. For example, for restoration recommendations, how much cultch is needed, how much will it cost, and what are the expected benefits/outcomes to be achieved for the expenditure and effort?

The preliminary list of options (strategies and actions) was compiled and organized into an Options Evaluation Worksheet, distributed to Workgroup members, and posted to the project webpage in advance of OCW Meeting #2. The draft strategies and actions for each of the Goals in the Worksheet were drafted by the ORP Project Team based on the initial list of potential options to serve as a framework for discussion and were not intended to influence the Workgroup’s recommendations. The strategies and actions are intended to ensure that the full range of options for each suggested strategy are evaluated, and to inform the Workgroup’s final consensus package of recommendations for the *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland*.

During the third and fourth OCW meetings, conducted on May 29-30, 2024, and July 31- August 1, 2024, respectively, Workgroup members were asked to rank the revised list of options (strategies and actions) for acceptability using the Options Evaluation Worksheet Process. The complete ranking exercise results are provided as “Attachment 7” to this report (Options Acceptability Ranking Results).

Following is a summary of the acceptability ranking exercise process:

During the meetings, OCW members will be asked to develop and rank options (strategies and actions) using a 4-Point acceptability ranking scale. This is consistent with the Consensus Building Procedures unanimously adopted by the OCW on 2 February 2024. Once ranked for acceptability, options with a ≥ 3.0 average ranking (75%) will be considered preliminary consensus recommendations for inclusion in the package of recommendations for the *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland (Plan)*.

This is an iterative process (the options agreed to at each meeting serve as the starting point for the next, and no recommendation is final until the last meeting), and at any point during the process any option may be re-evaluated and re-ranked at the request of any OCW or ORP Project Team member. The status of a ranked option will not be final until the final OCW meeting, when a vote will be taken on the entire package of consensus ranked recommendations for submittal to the Oyster Recovery Partnership. The OCW will finalize their recommendations for the *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland* at the December 5, 2024 meeting.

OCW members should be prepared to state their minor and major reservations when asked, and to offer proposed refinements to the option to address their concerns. If an OCW member is not able to offer refinements to make the option acceptable (4) or acceptable with minor reservations (3), they should consider ranking the option with a 2 (major reservations) or a 1 (not acceptable).

The charge to the ORP Team is to frame all of the Strategies and Actions as recommendations from the OCW, and to direct them to the appropriate agency, entity, and or organization. Of note, the Workgroup was reminded that the goal of the OCW process is not to replace, rather to enhance and collaborate with the current initiatives toward a sustainable Eastern Bay Plan. Revisions to strategies and actions identified by the Workgroup from discussions and comments during Meeting #2 and Meeting #3 were refined by the ORP Team to clarify meaning and in conformance with the OCW's intent. Duplications and redundancies were eliminated, similar actions combined when possible, and clarifications made to ensure that the specific intent of the strategies and actions are clear and easily understood.

For the July 31-August 1, 2024 Meeting (Meeting #4), the ORP Team revised the Options (strategies and actions) based on the Workgroup's rankings, discussions, comments, and refinements from Meeting #3. The Revised Options Acceptability Ranking Worksheet was distributed and posted prior to the Meeting. The Workgroup finalized the process of evaluating and ranking options during Meeting #4, and will focus on refinements to the *Draft Report and Recommendations for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland* during the remaining meetings, Meetings #5 and #6. Of note, a total of 13 strategies and 42 actions across the 3 Goals for the Plan achieved a consensus level of support at the conclusion of the acceptability ranking process.

Performance Measures Review and Adoption

Jeff Blair walked the Workgroup through the Plan's Performance Measures and asked whether there were any changes or revisions. The only proposed revision was to the Oyster Biomass performance measure of Goal A, Objective A1, which the Workgroup approved as proposed. Following the review of the package of Performance Measures the Workgroup took the following action:

Oyster Coalition Workgroup Action:

MOTION – The OCW voted unanimously, 14 – 0 in favor, to adopt the final package of Performance Measures as revised to track progress towards objectives and Project goals.

(Attachment 7 – Options Acceptability Ranking Results)

(Attachment 8 – Adopted Performance Measures)

(Attachment 9 – Plan Framework)

X. DRAFT OUTLINE OF OCW REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE PLAN REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Olivia Caretti, OCW, reviewed a draft outline of the OCW's *Report and Recommendations for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland (Plan)*.

Summary and Overview of the Discussion

The Workgroup was asked whether there were any proposed revisions and/or additional topical issue categories missing from the Draft Outline that should be included. Following is a summary of the Workgroup's discussions:

- There were no additional topics suggested, and the consensus was that the outline has the correct mix of topics for inclusion in the Report and Recommendations for the Plan.

Oyster Coalition Workgroup Action:

MOTION – The OCW voted unanimously, 15 – 0 in favor, to approve the outline of the OCW's *Report and Recommendations for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland (Plan)*.

(Attachment 11 –OCW Report and Recommendations for the Plan Outline)

XI. HABITAT SURVEY RESULTS GROUP GIS MAPPING EXERCISE TO IDENTIFY POTENTIAL AREAS FOR REVISIONS TO CURRENT REGULATIONS

The OCW engaged in an interactive exercise using GIS data to identify potential areas for the following:

- Priority Planting Locations - Specific Bars or Portions of Bars That Need Additional Cultch vs. Spat;
- Sanctuary Data and Co-Siting Plantings Between Management Zones;
- Aquaculture Siting Locations;
- Areas That Could Be Candidates For Reclaiming/Moving Shell (Gray Shell);
- Evaluate locations where harvest gear types could be adjusted; and
- Draw Lines To Divide and/or Remove Bars From Fishery.

The Workgroup provided recommendations regarding each of the topical issue areas. The recommendations were captured during the meeting using ArcGIS and will serve as the basis for revised maps for discussion during the next OCW meeting. The revised maps will be distributed to the Workgroup in advance of the September 25, 2024 meeting to allow time for stakeholders to vet options with their constituent groups in preparation for offering any revisions and additional areas to consider during the September meeting. Of note, although it was put on the table by the ORP Team for discussion, the Workgroup opted not to discuss the topic of adjusting gear lines.

XII. NEXT STEPS AND ADJOURNMENT

The September 25, 2024 meeting (a single day meeting) will focus on refinement and approval of the OCW *Draft Report and Recommendations for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland*.

NEXT STEPS AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Approval of Regular Procedural Topics (Meeting Agenda and Summary Report).
- Review of Updated Workplan and Meeting Schedule.
- Presentation on CBEC Education Plan.
- Spatial Tools for Oyster Siting Update and OCW Feedback.
- Interactive Habitat Survey Results Group Mapping Exercise Continued With Revised Maps.
- Summary, discussion, refinement, and approval of the OCW *Draft Report and Recommendations for the Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland*. (Day 2).
- Planning for December 4, 2024 Community Open House Workshop.
- Next Steps and Agenda Items for Meeting #6 (Final Meeting) – December 4-5, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

The Facilitator thanked Workgroup members, ORP Project Team members, and all other meeting attendees for their participation, and adjourned the meeting at 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, August 1, 2024.

(Attachment 6 – Meeting Evaluation Results)

ATTACHMENT 1
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 2

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 & and 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.

ATTACHMENT 3
OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP MEMBERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION

MEMBER	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 and Aquaculture
7. Moochie Gilmore	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
16. Chris Judy	Maryland DNR – Shellfish Division
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 4
JULY 31 – AUGUST 1, 2024 MEETING AGENDA

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 OF 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

ATTACHMENT 5
WORKPLAN AND MEETING SCHEDULE

OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP MEETINGS SCHEDULE AND WORKPLAN – 2024
UPDATED AUGUST 1, 2024

MEETING	DATES	OBJECTIVES
Meeting #1	Feb. 2-3, 2024	<p>Organizational Meeting</p> <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. • Adoption of the final package of Performance Measures to track progress towards objectives and Project goals. • 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>. • Interactive habitat survey results group GIS mapping exercise..
Meeting #5	Sept. 25, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation on CBEC education plan. • Spatial tools for oyster siting update and OCW feedback. • Interactive habitat survey results group mapping exercise continued with revised maps. • Summary, discussion, 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>. • Discussion of objectives, approach, and content for December 4, 2024 Community Open House Forum.
Community Open House Forum	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. • Interactive Habitat Survey Results Group Mapping Exercise Continued with Revised Maps. • Summary, discussion, refinement, and 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 6 MEETING EVALUATION RESULTS

Workgroup Members used a 5-point rating scale where a 1 meant “Strongly Disagree” and a 5 meant “Strongly Agree.” The evaluation summary reflects average rating scores and comments from Workgroup members participating in the meeting.

There were 11 of 14 end of meeting Evaluations completed (78% of Participants).

1.) The meeting objectives were clearly communicated at the beginning

Average out of 5	5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Neutral	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
4.4	6	3	2	0	0

2.) The meeting objectives were met.

Average out of 5	5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Neutral	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
4.3	5	4	2	0	0

3.) The presentations were effective and informative.

Average out of 5	5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Neutral	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
4.4	6	3	2	0	0

4.) The facilitation of the meeting was effective for achieving the stated objectives

Average out of 5	5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Neutral	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
4.6	7	2	2	0	0

5.) Follow-up actions were clearly summarized at the end of the meeting

Average out of 5	5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Neutral	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
4.4	6	3	2	0	0

6.) The facilitator accurately documented OCW Member input

Average out of 5	5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Neutral	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
4.4	6	3	2	0	0

7.) The meeting was the appropriate length of time.

Average out of 5	5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Neutral	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
4.4	6	3	2	0	0

8.) OCW Members had the opportunity to participate and be heard.

Average out of 5	5. Strongly Agree	4. Agree	3. Neutral	2. Disagree	1. Strongly Disagree
4.6	7	2	2	0	0

Additional Feedback

- Question #3 I rated a 3, not a 4, because I already knew a lot of it before.

ATTACHMENT 7
OPTIONS ACCEPTABILITY RANKING RESULTS

TOTAL NUMBER OF STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ACHIEVING A CONSENSUS LEVEL OF SUPPORT: ≥75% SUPPORT

13 STRATEGIES AND 42 ACTIONS

I. GOAL A – ENHANCE THE OYSTER RESOURCE IN EASTERN BAY

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ACHIEVING A CONSENSUS LEVEL OF SUPPORT: ≥75% SUPPORT

6 STRATEGIES AND 18 ACTIONS

Strategy A-1. Improve oyster habitat and broodstock in Eastern Bay by relying on scientific and industry expertise and integrating stakeholder input into a restoration plan that covers sanctuaries, harvest areas, and aquaculture.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 1.A. Conduct regular habitat mapping to understand the extent and condition of existing oyster habitat and identify priority areas that need enhancement or could be re-delineated for other activities. Funding should not come from existing restoration funds. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Comments:

- Note that habitat mapping and monitoring cost money. Recommend in Plan that cost of this should not come from money already allocated to restoration (i.e., separate funding needs to be secured)

Action 1.B. Integrate the use of alternate substrates into Eastern Bay oyster restoration by relying on existing data on the suitability, availability, and effectiveness of different types of substrates that have been approved by DNR and seek any changes to law needed to allow and/or provide for funding.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 1.C. Identify suitable locations for deploying alternate substrates to improve existing habitat, reduce sedimentation, and improve spat recruitment. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 1.D. Evaluate restoration practices that will improve oyster broodstock, including moving adult oysters from one location in Eastern Bay to another to improve survival and reproduction.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 1.E Evaluate opportunities to involve industry in restoration siting and monitoring and outline how contributions will be integrated. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Strategy A-2. Evaluate existing practices to increase the availability of oyster shell for habitat enhancement. Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024

Action 2.A. Evaluate and implement the existing shell reclamation practices of bar cleaning and dredging from existing fishery areas in Eastern Bay to move shells from unproductive to productive locations. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 2.B. Evaluate the feasibility and sustainability of using shells produced through aquaculture as a potential new source of shell for restoration. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 2.C. Evaluate existing practices and implement programs to increase the amount of shell retained in Maryland from oyster harvest and aquaculture in Eastern Bay.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 2.D. Evaluate and acquire other sources of shell within the state of Maryland and from other locations. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Strategy A-3. Identify opportunities for aquaculture expansion in Eastern Bay that complement existing restoration and fishery practices and consider logistical limitations and habitat requirements, with a focus on areas where shells have been recently removed for bottom enhancement. Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024

Action 3.A. Connect oyster harvesters, aquaculture leaseholders, and representatives from other fisheries that depend on a healthy oyster habitat to improve cohesion among ongoing and emerging activities in Eastern Bay. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 3.B. Collectively generate a list of areas acceptable to fishery and aquaculture stakeholders for new aquaculture leases to avoid future conflict.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Comments:

- Is this something the OCW should be discussing that goes in the recommendations, or do we want the action itself to be the recommendation?
- PSFAs/regulatory boundaries will need to change before areas can be opened. Also need input from other industry members (crabbers, clambers, other fisheries). Some people in the room from these stakeholder groups so can discuss some options based on habitat maps (see Sections VI and XI).

Strategy A-4. Develop a long-term monitoring plan to demonstrate whether strategies and actions are working and to allow for adaptive management of the Eastern Bay oyster resource.

Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024

Strategy A-5. Identify specific roadblocks in the regulatory process or existing regulations at the state, county, and local levels that create challenges for oyster restoration/production. Propose options to overcome these or improve transparency in the process. Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024

Action 5.A. Recommend that DNR improve transparency in shell import and alternate substrate approval permitting process for restoration practices. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 5.B. Recommend that DNR evaluate and enhance interagency coordination groups to improve coordination and communication between agencies and stakeholders.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 5.C. DNR should review and update regulations that restrict the expansion of aquaculture on Yates Bars in sanctuaries and near SAV beds. At the very minimum, improve transparency in the existing aquaculture permitting process and regulations. **Ranked 3.9 As Revised – May 29, 2024**

Action 5.D. DNR should review and update regulations that restrict the expansion of aquaculture on Yates Bars in public fishery areas. At the very minimum, improve transparency in the existing aquaculture permitting process and regulations.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Strategy A-6. Evaluate the cost of existing and proposed enhancement practices that are recommended by the OCW and identify funding for short- and long-term efforts. Include any available resources/references as an Appendix to the OCW’s Report. Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024

Action 6.A. Allocate money from recreational oyster license purchases to replenish public fishery oyster bars.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 6.B. The OCW supports and recommends finalizing the development of a viable implementation framework or plan for nutrient credits which can be used to support oyster enhancement activities that remain within the Eastern Bay System, ~~the same watershed~~.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Comments:

- Watershed needs to be defined – what is the appropriate spatial scale/watershed classification?
- Suggestion to specify to the nearest oyster bar

- Recommend to change “in Eastern Bay” since that would provide a boundary to the region, which is the focus of this recommendation anyway

Action 6.C. Prioritize providing or increasing funding for restoration in sanctuaries that have not yet, or not recently, received restoration.

AVERAGE	<i>4= Acceptable</i>	<i>3= Minor Reservations</i>	<i>2= Major Reservations</i>	<i>1= Not Acceptable</i>
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

II. GOAL B – MANAGE THE OYSTER FISHERY AND AQUACULTURE TO INCREASE AND SUSTAIN HARVEST AND A THRIVING ECONOMY
STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ACHIEVING A CONSENSUS LEVEL OF SUPPORT: ≥75% SUPPORT
4 STRATEGIES AND 12 ACTIONS

Strategy B-1. Evaluate and enhance the current strategy for sustainable management of Eastern Bay oyster resources. Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024

Action 1.A. DNR should define and monitor progress towards targets and thresholds for sustainable harvest levels in Eastern Bay. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 1.B. DNR should implement, or enhance as needed, a process to work collaboratively with stakeholders to develop consensus recommendations for the management of oyster harvest bars based on these thresholds and should implement appropriate changes in a timely manner.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 1.C. In the event of adverse impacts from climate change and/or environmental conditions, the appropriate state agencies should adaptively make changes to oyster harvesting regulations as required to maintain public health (e.g., adjustments to season, closures, etc.).

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 1.D. Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a pilot project to test a rotational harvest framework within specified sanctuaries by allowing watermen to use their funds to restore and harvest bars in specified sanctuaries where no restoration has been done. Based on the results, consider recategorizing areas in sanctuaries that have not received restoration to serve as the locations selected for potential rotational harvest areas.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
3.4	9	2	3	0

Ranked 3.4 – August 1, 2024

Comments:

- The change is an improvement, but still concerns about doing this (1) in a sanctuary at all and (2) in sanctuaries where no restoration was done. Does not mean that those sanctuaries are not productive or that restoration will not be successful. Taking these off the table feels irresponsible. Should instead evaluate areas where there was an investment and where it is not working.
- Establishing a pilot project would hopefully make the intent more clear – suggestion to move this up in the recommendation.

Action 1.E. Consider and establish a rotational harvest framework in non-productive bottom in fishery areas, incorporating practices such as rotational investment and management of entire oyster bars. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 1.F. Evaluate existing harvest gear regulations and locations in Eastern Bay and consider changes that will promote sustainable oyster harvest (e.g., expanding patent tong or dredge areas) along with a proportional increase in enforcement to ensure compliance.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 1.G. Evaluate management practices that are implemented successfully in other areas and consider whether they would be appropriate to apply in Eastern Bay. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Strategy B-2. DNR should enhance enforcement and reporting mechanisms that ensure accurate information on oyster harvesting in Eastern Bay. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 2.A. Engage with NRP and industry stakeholders to discuss and implement effective solutions to quantify and limit poaching and illegal harvest, with a focus on available technology (e.g., GPS, drones). **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 2.B. Develop methods to account for illegal and unreported harvest when assessing the effectiveness of restoration and replenishment. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 2.C. In collaboration with seafood processors, evaluate enhancements to and/or eliminate problems with existing harvest reporting standards.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Strategy B-3. DNR should support leaseholders to develop and implement experimental aquaculture harvest practices and processes. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Strategy B-4. Forward any OCW recommendations that have state-wide oyster management impacts to the appropriate advisory groups (e.g., OAC, TFAC) for evaluation.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 4.A. The OCW recommends that OAC and/or TFAC, in collaboration with stakeholder interests, evaluate and establish a comprehensive limited entry program for full-time seafood industry workers, ensuring accessibility for full-time seafood industry workers and their family members.

AVERAGE	4= Acceptable	3= Minor Reservations	2= Major Reservations	1= Not Acceptable
4.0	14	0	0	0

Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

Action 4.B. The OCW recommends the establishment of a state law requiring that all local jurisdictions establish right-to-work laws to protect seafood industry workers and facilitate industry operations. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024 with the state agencies abstaining.**

III. GOAL C – AN ENGAGED STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE OYSTER RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS ACHIEVING A CONSENSUS LEVEL OF SUPPORT: $\geq 75\%$ SUPPORT

3 STRATEGIES AND 12 ACTIONS

Strategy C-1. Establish a coordinated public relations and marketing effort among stakeholders (including Dept of Ag./MD's Best Seafood) to enhance public perception and support for commercial fisheries and aquaculture occurring in Eastern Bay. Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024

Action 1.A. Identify strategies to monitor and respond to the spread of misinformation about Chesapeake Bay/Eastern Bay oysters. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 1.B. Market ecosystem services provided by oysters. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 1.C. Develop a process to communicate monitoring results to secure future funding for oyster production in Eastern Bay. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Strategy C-2. Establish educational opportunities to improve public awareness of Eastern Bay oyster culture. Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024

Action 2.A. Create opportunities to engage with local waterman and aquaculture leaseholders to learn about the investment and process for harvesting oysters, with the goal to ensure that industry maintains access to oyster resources and commercial infrastructure. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 2.B. Educate elected officials on challenges and opportunities for the expansion of oyster production in Eastern Bay, including zoning restrictions, right-to-work laws, access to working waterfronts, and opportunities with the oyster BMP. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024 with DNR Abstaining.**

Action 2.C. Maintain community restoration programs such as Marylander's Grow Oysters that are primarily designed to be educational for the public. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 2.D. Improve the market for local oysters by identifying opportunities to engage stakeholders in the preparation and eating of locally caught oysters. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 2.E. Establish educational programs that are hosted locally (e.g., at CBEC) that focus on watermen, aquaculture, and the history of commercial seafood activity in Eastern Bay. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 2.F. Increase recreational oyster dive charters/hand tong charters to educate the public about oyster reef ecology and the commercial oyster industry. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 2.G. (*previous Action 2.H*) Identify technologies that can be used to educate a broader audience about Eastern Bay oyster habitat and culture. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Strategy C-3. Evaluate strategies and incentives to retain people in the commercial oyster industry and remove barriers to young entrants. Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024

Action 3.A. Develop an apprentice program to train people entering the oyster fishery or aquaculture, including education on the required investment, training using various gear types, connecting them to the community, etc. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

Action 3.B. Establish education programs that introduce young people to aspects of the oyster fishery and inspire them to consider a career on the water. **Ranked 4.0 – May 29, 2024**

**RANKED OPTIONS NOT ACHIEVING A CONSENSUS LEVEL OF SUPPORT
AND OPTIONS NOT RANKED (< 75 SUPPORT)**

I. GOAL A – ENHANCE THE OYSTER RESOURCE IN EASTERN BAY

OPTIONS NOT ACHIEVING A CONSENSUS LEVEL OF SUPPORT: < 75% SUPPORT

Initial Action 2.C. Identify sources of substrate that have been approved by DNR for use in Eastern Bay over the long-term, including as a base for planting oysters.

Workgroup Action

- The Workgroup did not rank original action 2-C.
- The Workgroup asked that this be incorporated into one of other existing actions to eliminate duplication.
- Similar actions should be revised and combined as appropriate to eliminate redundancy and reduce the number of actions.
- **This action has been clarified and incorporated into the revised strategies and actions under Goal A**

Initial Action 3.D. Review and evaluate regulatory boundaries that restrict uses of shellfish management area/oyster bars for multiple oyster practices.

Workgroup Action

- The Workgroup did not rank original action 3-D.
- The Workgroup stated it needs clarification regarding what is intended (e.g., gear types, and aquaculture is not allowed in public fishery areas)
- **This action has been clarified and incorporated into the revised strategies and actions under Goal A**

Initial Action 4.E. Evaluate existing shell reclamation practices that may be suitable for enhancing habitat, including bar cleaning and shell relay.

Workgroup Action

- The Workgroup did not rank Initial Action 4-E.
- The Workgroup stated it is redundant, not needed, and part of existing BMPs.

Initial Strategy 6. Evaluate research needs to effectively enhance the oyster resource in Eastern Bay.

- **This strategy was redundant with other strategies/actions in Goal A so has been removed.**

Initial Action 6.B. Evaluate effectiveness of existing or new shell reclamation practices that can be implemented to enhance oyster habitat.

- **This action was redundant with other strategies/actions in Goal A so has been removed.**

Initial Action 6.C. Evaluate effectiveness and cost of other suggested practices/strategies proposed by the OCW.

- **This action was redundant with other strategies/actions in Goal A so has been removed.**

Meeting #3 Action 2.E. (previous Action 2.D) Evaluate and acquire shells from existing oyster sanctuaries and/or reserve areas that can be used for seed areas and/or public fishery replenishment.

Workgroup Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ranked 1.7 – Failed to achieve consensus level of support. • Habitat should remain in sanctuaries

Meeting #3 Action 6.C. (previous Goal B, Action 6.A.) Invest public funds equitably (not necessarily equally) between sanctuaries and public fishery areas.

Workgroup Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ranked 2.8 – Failed to achieve consensus level of support. • Major concern with using public funds to support private industry (i.e., fishery is a business). Multiple similar comments. • The requirements of the legislation already provide for this.

II. GOAL B – MANAGE THE OYSTER FISHERY AND AQUACULTURE TO INCREASE AND SUSTAIN HARVEST AND A THRIVING ECONOMY
OPTIONS NOT ACHIEVING A CONSENSUS LEVEL OF SUPPORT: < 75% SUPPORT

Initial Action 1-C. Consider and establish a rotational harvest framework for oyster harvest (in sanctuaries and existing harvest areas), incorporating practices such as rotational investment and management of entire oyster bars.

Workgroup Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ranked 1.3 (March 29-30, 2024) – Failed to achieve consensus level of support • Watermen don’t want to discuss rotational harvest. They are concerned that once an area is closed it won’t be reopened. • We don’t have enough bars to work as it is. If a bar(s) is closed that puts more pressure on the remaining open bars. • We could support this if was in areas in sanctuaries where no restoration has been done, watermen could use their funds to do restoration and them harvest, replant, harvest, etc. • Planting shell in mudholes (bad bottom) not worthwhile. • DNR is opposed to harvesting in sanctuaries. • Oysters need to stay in sanctuaries. • Consider a system to pay watermen to plant but not harvest oysters in sanctuaries, • This action has been broken into two more suitable actions which are listed in the rankings above.

Initial Action 1.F. Evaluate the feasibility of and establish an oyster relay program, incorporating market-sized oysters from closed areas managed by MDE.

Workgroup Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Workgroup did not rank Initial Action 1-F. • Polluted waters area are natural sanctuaries and should remain so.

- This option already exists and a recommendation from the OCW is not needed.

Initial Action 4.E. Evaluate, propose, and enforce best reporting practices (e.g., e-reporting) that should be implemented for tracking and quantifying commercial and recreational oyster harvest from Eastern Bay.

Workgroup Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Original Action 4-E is a duplicate of 4-C. Combine this as needed with Action 4-C. This was not ranked as written • This action has been incorporated into the revised strategies and actions under Goal B

Initial Action 8.A. Implement an annual review of the commercial oyster fishery season relative to water temperatures and adjust the season appropriately.

Workgroup Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Workgroup did not rank Initial Action 8-A. • The OCW drafted a revised Action 8-A. <p>Comments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health risks. • Adjust to account for early closure. • State-wide issue. • TFAC issue. • Discuss with packers. • Spawning season is an issue.

Initial Action 8.B. Establish an oyster relay program that will move oysters from temporary or expanded MDE shellfish closure areas to open harvest areas in Eastern Bay to maintain harvest levels.

Workgroup Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Workgroup did not rank Initial Action 8-B. • Not needed – in place already.

Initial Action 8.C. Expand water quality and disease monitoring to help identify potential human health risks and inform appropriate management/mitigation actions or area closures (e.g., vibrio, wastewater treatment plant spills, septic discharge, lawncare, etc.).

Workgroup Action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Workgroup did not rank Initial Action 8-C. • Action is not needed, this is already being done.

III. GOAL C – AN ENGAGED STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE OYSTER RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT

OPTIONS NOT ACHIEVING A CONSENSUS LEVEL OF SUPPORT: < 75% SUPPORT

Initial Action 1.B. Identify strategies for education surrounding sewage spills.

Workgroup Action

- The Workgroup did not rank Initial Action 1-B.
- Eliminate, this is covered in other actions.

Meeting #3 Action 2.G. Improve education and accountability of recreational harvesters by establishing and enforcing a recreational oyster license.

Workgroup Action

- This has already been implemented and is not needed.

ATTACHMENT 8
PERFORMANCE MEASURES ACCEPTABILITY RANKING RESULTS
ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY 1 AUGUST 2024

GOAL A – ENHANCE THE OYSTER RESOURCE IN EASTERN BAY	
OBJECTIVES	RECOMMENDED METRICS
A1) To achieve a healthy and sustainable oyster population in Eastern Bay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oyster density (m2) – adults, spat, sub-legal • Oyster biomass (m2) • Annual recruitment rate • Annual volume of cultch (bushels)
A2) To enhance ecosystem services through the restoration of oysters in Eastern Bay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area (acres) restored annually • Pounds of nitrogen & phosphorus removed annually from reefs • Water clarity – percent increase in light reaching 2m depth • Area (acres) of SAV in Eastern Bay, assessed annually
A3) To expand oyster aquaculture in Eastern Bay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of aquaculture leases operating in Eastern Bay annually • Acres of active oyster leases in Eastern Bay • Number and volume (bushels) of oysters planted/deployed in leases annually • Annual harvest from leases (bushels)

Goal A Performance Measures Ranked 4.0 – August 1, 2024

GOAL B – MANAGE THE OYSTER FISHERY AND AQUACULTURE TO INCREASE AND SUSTAIN HARVEST AND A THRIVING ECONOMY

OBJECTIVES	RECOMMENDED METRICS
<p>B1) To achieve an increased level of sustainable oyster harvest from Eastern Bay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual oyster harvest from Eastern Bay through wild harvest and aquaculture (bushels) • Harvest/fishing rate/CPUE • Number of commercial oyster licenses in Queen Anne and Talbot Counties • Number of oyster trips reported in Eastern Bay • Proportion of dealer buy tickets purchasing seafood from Eastern Bay, annually
<p>B2) To improve recreational and other commercial fisheries and tourism activities in Eastern Bay.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual recreational oyster harvest from Eastern Bay • Number of recreational oyster licenses in Queen Anne and Talbot Counties • Number charter trips reported in Eastern Bay annually • Number of harvest trips and harvest (bushels/lbs.) reported for other fisheries in Eastern Bay (clam, finfish, blue crab) annually • Number recreational boating trips in Eastern Bay annually (e.g., # Queen Anne & Talbot County landing permits, annual boater surveys, recreational fishing surveys or CCA data, economic benefit analysis of increased eco-tourism and recreational activities, and other new data collection approaches) • Water clarity – percent increase in light reaching 2m depth • Pounds of nitrogen & phosphorus removed annually through harvest • Pounds of nitrogen & phosphorus removed annually through aquaculture

Goal B Performance Measures Ranked 4.0 – May 30, 2024

Comments:

- Objective B2 – Caveat that some of these may not solely be driven by increases in the oyster population.
- Objective B2 – Also comment that not all of these data/ways to measure these data currently exist and will require someone (DNR?) to develop.

GOAL C – AN ENGAGED STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE OYSTER RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT	
OBJECTIVES	RECOMMENDED METRICS
C1) To achieve a broader awareness and understanding of the natural and cultural value of healthy oyster habitat in Eastern Bay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number people engaged – K-12, adults • Number of Eastern Bay oyster educational materials developed (e.g., signage at local environmental centers, lesson plans, etc.) • Number of businesses participating in outreach • Number of restaurants in Queen Anne’s and Talbot Counties serving local oysters
C2) To secure funds for oyster enhancement in Eastern Bay over the long term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds allocated by Queen Anne’s and Talbot Counties for oyster restoration, annually • Funds allocated by the state for oyster restoration in Eastern Bay, annually • Community funds raised for oyster restoration, annually (e.g., through QA & Talbot Co crab pot Christmas trees, ORP & ShoreRivers Build-A-Reef partnership, etc.)

Goal C Performance Measures **Ranked 4.0 – May 30, 2024**

**ATTACHMENT 9
PLAN FRAMEWORK**

**EASTERN BAY OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP
PLAN FRAMEWORK FOR THE SUSTAINABLE OYSTER RESTORATION AND
MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR EASTERN BAY, MARYLAND
ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY 2 FEBRUARY 2024 & REVISED UNANIMOUSLY 30 MAY 2024**

GOAL A. ENHANCE THE OYSTER RESOURCE IN EASTERN BAY

Vision Theme A:

A healthy, self-sustained Eastern Bay oyster population.

Outcome: By 2034 oyster resources that include natural habitat, public oyster grounds, and privately operated aquaculture leases will be thriving and contributing toward a sustainable population and improvements to the Eastern Bay System.

Goal A Objectives

- A1)** To achieve a healthy and sustainable oyster population in Eastern Bay.
- A2)** To enhance ecosystem services through the restoration of oysters in Eastern Bay.
- A3)** To expand oyster aquaculture in Eastern Bay.

GOAL B. MANAGE THE OYSTER FISHERY AND AQUACULTURE TO INCREASE AND SUSTAIN HARVEST AND A THRIVING ECONOMY

Vision Theme B: A productive oyster population that sustains a vibrant commercial oyster fishery, a thriving aquaculture industry, and recreational and tourism related activities.

Outcome: By 2034 both private and public oyster resources will sustain a vibrant commercial oyster fishery, a thriving aquaculture industry, and recreational and tourism related activities in Eastern Bay.

Goal B Objectives

- B1)** To achieve an increased level of sustainable oyster harvest from Eastern Bay.
- B2)** To improve recreational and other commercial fisheries and tourism activities in Eastern Bay.

GOAL C. AN ENGAGED STAKEHOLDER COMMUNITY THAT SUPPORTS SUSTAINABLE OYSTER RESTORATION AND MANAGEMENT

Vision Theme C: Stakeholders in Eastern Bay are committed to working together to advocate for a sustainably managed oyster habitat and a healthy Eastern Bay ecosystem.

Outcome: By 2034 stakeholders and the public are informed of the importance of sustaining the health of oysters in Eastern Bay, and are engaged and working actively together along with elected and appointed leaders and managers to invest in and implement the Plan.

Goal C Objectives

- C1)** To achieve a broader awareness and understanding of the natural and cultural value of healthy oyster habitat in Eastern Bay.
- C2)** To secure funds for oyster enhancement in Eastern Bay over the long term.

ATTACHMENT 10
OCW SUCCESSOR GROUP CONCEPT AND DRAFT FRAMEWORK

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 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. Specifically, without effective monitoring and adaptive management and restoration practices it is likely that the Bay’s health would decline, along with area’s once-booming oyster industry, potentially resulting 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 the process of exploring and evaluating restoration policies, and oyster fishery practices and management options to improve the overall health and the 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 and environmental regulators, and other agencies and entities as appropriate.

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 include local government, natural resource management and economic development agencies, and stakeholders representing a variety of perspectives, including local businesses and conservation organizations, and those involved in or 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.

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

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.



ATTACHMENT 11

OCW REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OUTLINE

Title Page – *Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management Plan for Eastern Bay, Maryland*

Acknowledgments

TOC

Abbreviations

Key Definitions

Introduction to Eastern Bay – Location and Current/Ongoing Management/Work

Project Goals and Objectives

- Objective 1 – OCW
- Objective 2 – Habitat delineation
- Objective 3 – Stewardship

Oyster Coalition Workgroup

- Goal in Convening OCW – Include Alignment with Relevant Management Plans, OCW Stakeholder Representation, etc.
- Consensus Building Process
- Partner Roles – ORP, FS, OCW

Goal Framework and Vision for Eastern Bay

Recommendations for Sustainable Oyster Restoration and Management

- (Summary of Recommendations)
- Goal A
- Goal B
- Goal C

Performance Metrics

- Goal A
- Goal B
- Goal C

Information Gaps and Challenges

Implementation

References

Appendices

- A. OCW Membership and Leadership Team
- B. Meeting Schedule and Materials (with link to webpage)
- C. Pre-meeting Questionnaire Summary Report
- D. Options Not Reaching Consensus
- E. Resources For Implementing Strategies and Actions
- F. Habitat Survey Methods
- G. Oyster Habitat Maps
- H. CBEC Oyster Curricula

ATTACHMENT 12

ABOUT THE OYSTER COALITION WORKGROUP'S FACILITATOR

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 15 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.**