

VMRC: A small state agency that does big things



Virginia Marine Resources Commission

2600 Washington Avenue, Third Floor
Newport News, Virginia 23607

www.mrc.virginia.gov

Virginia Marine Resources Commission

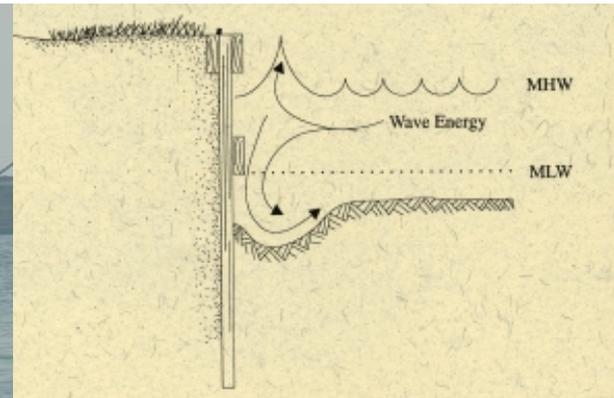
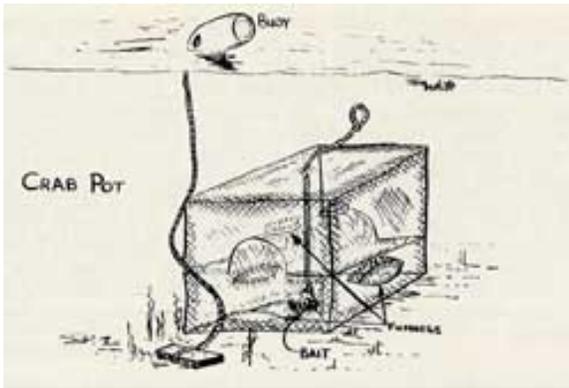
- State Agency with 159.5 Employees
- Headquartered in Newport News, Virginia
- Established in 1875
- Mission: “We are stewards of Virginia’s marine and aquatic resources, and protectors of its tidal waters and homelands, for present and future generations.”



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MARINE FISHERIES

21,792 jobs created

\$108,250,000 commercial landings.

MARINE POLICE

Patrol tidal waters, shorelines.

Enforce fishery, habitat, health laws.

Enforce navigation, boating, waterway laws.

Provide search & rescue, waterborne safety.

Terrorist acts on waterways/installations (7-02)

MARINE HABITAT

5,000 miles tidal shoreland.

1,472,000 acres bottomlands.

RESPONSIBILITIES



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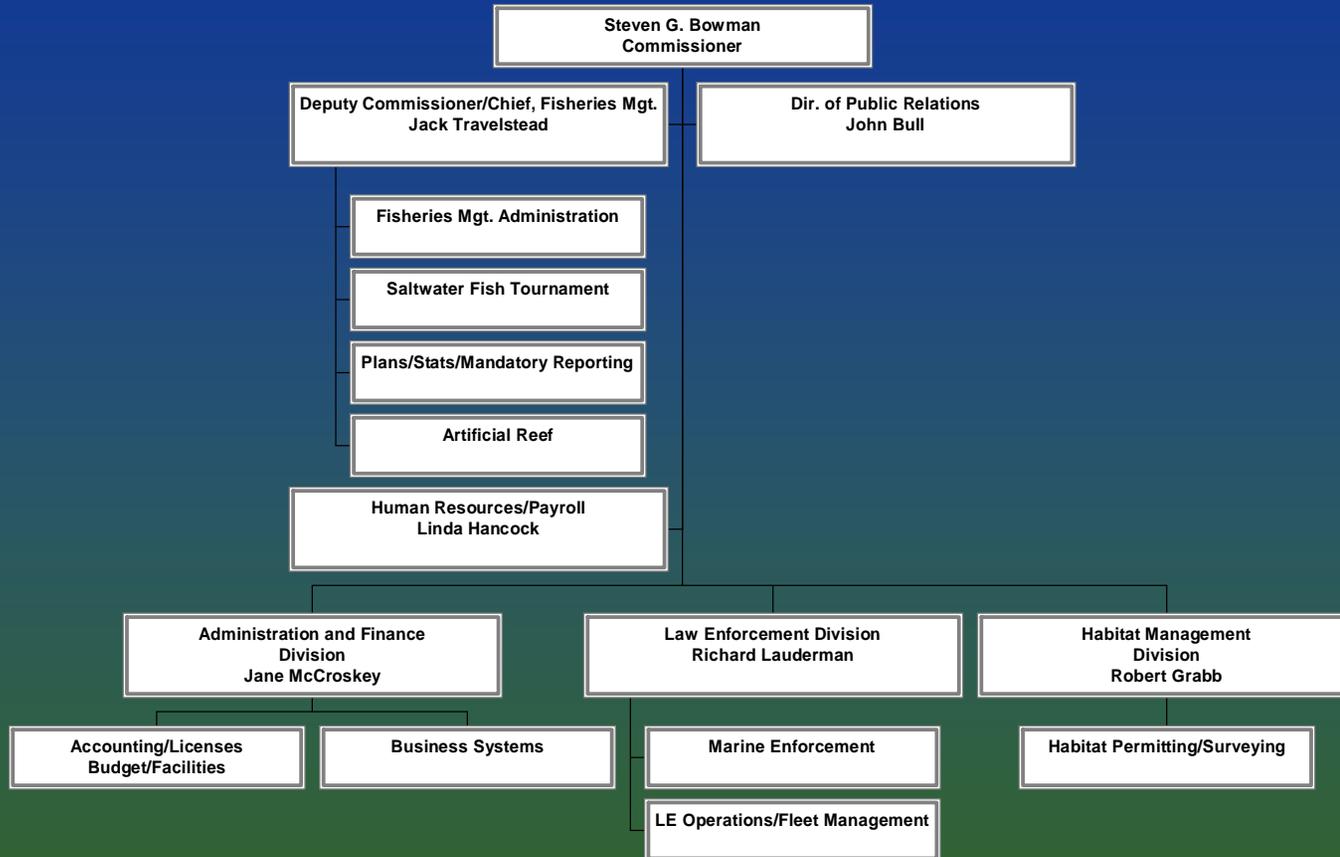
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MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION

Organization Chart



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Marine Resources Commission

	Positions
Commissioner's Office	3
Fisheries	31
Habitat Permitting	18
Habitat Surveying/Leasing/Mapping	7
Law Enforcement	86.5
Human Resources/Payroll	2
Business Systems	3
Accounting/Licensing	5
Grants	1
Administration	3
TOTAL	159.5



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Constituencies

- Roughly 500,000-600,000 recreational saltwater anglers, as estimated by the National Marine Fisheries Service.
- 3,000 licensed commercial watermen.
- Waterfront property owners and marine commercial projects. We handle roughly 2,500 such applications a year.



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Good News for the Blue Crab

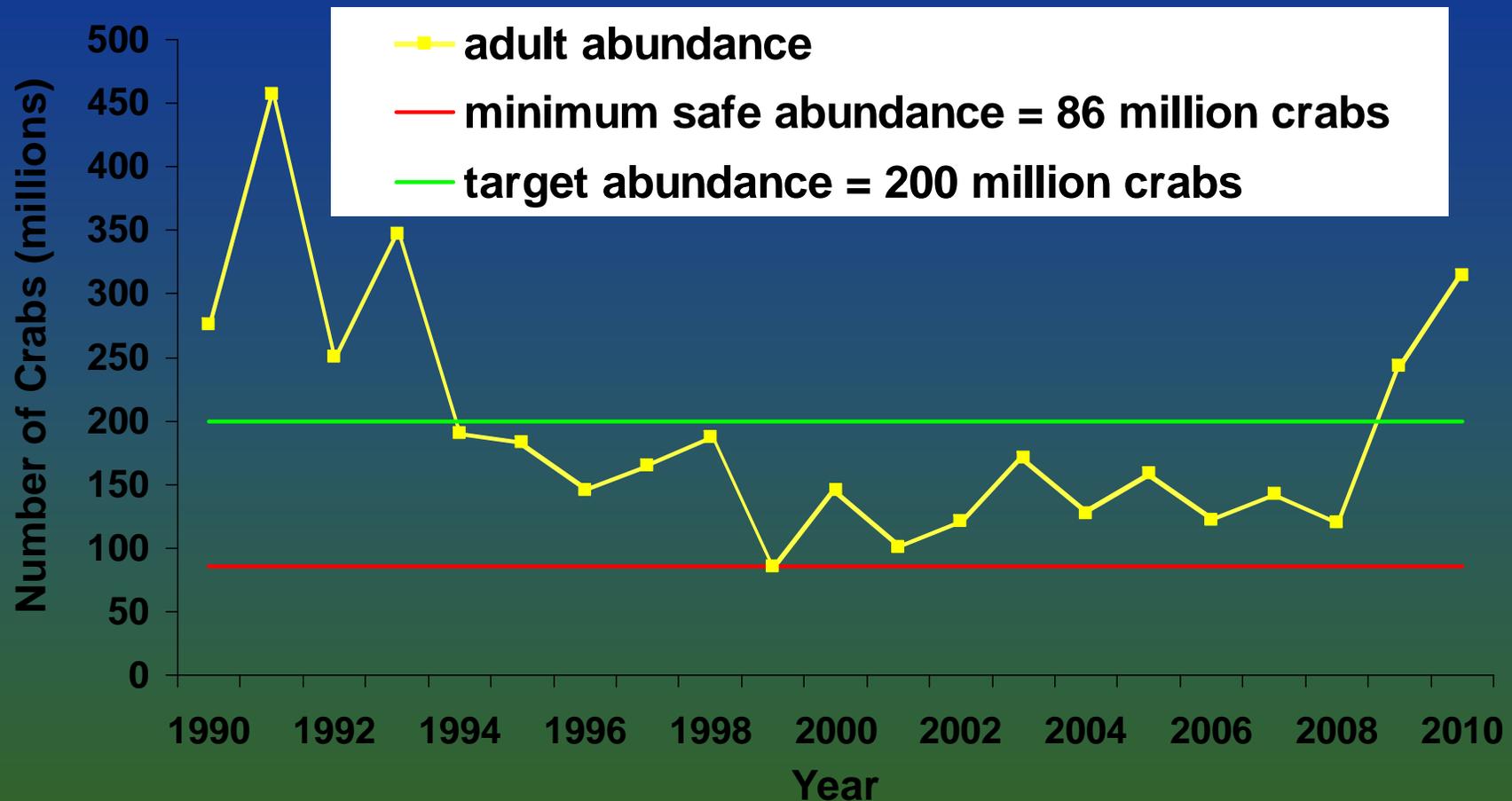


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The Number of Spawning-Age Crabs in Chesapeake Bay between 1990-2010.

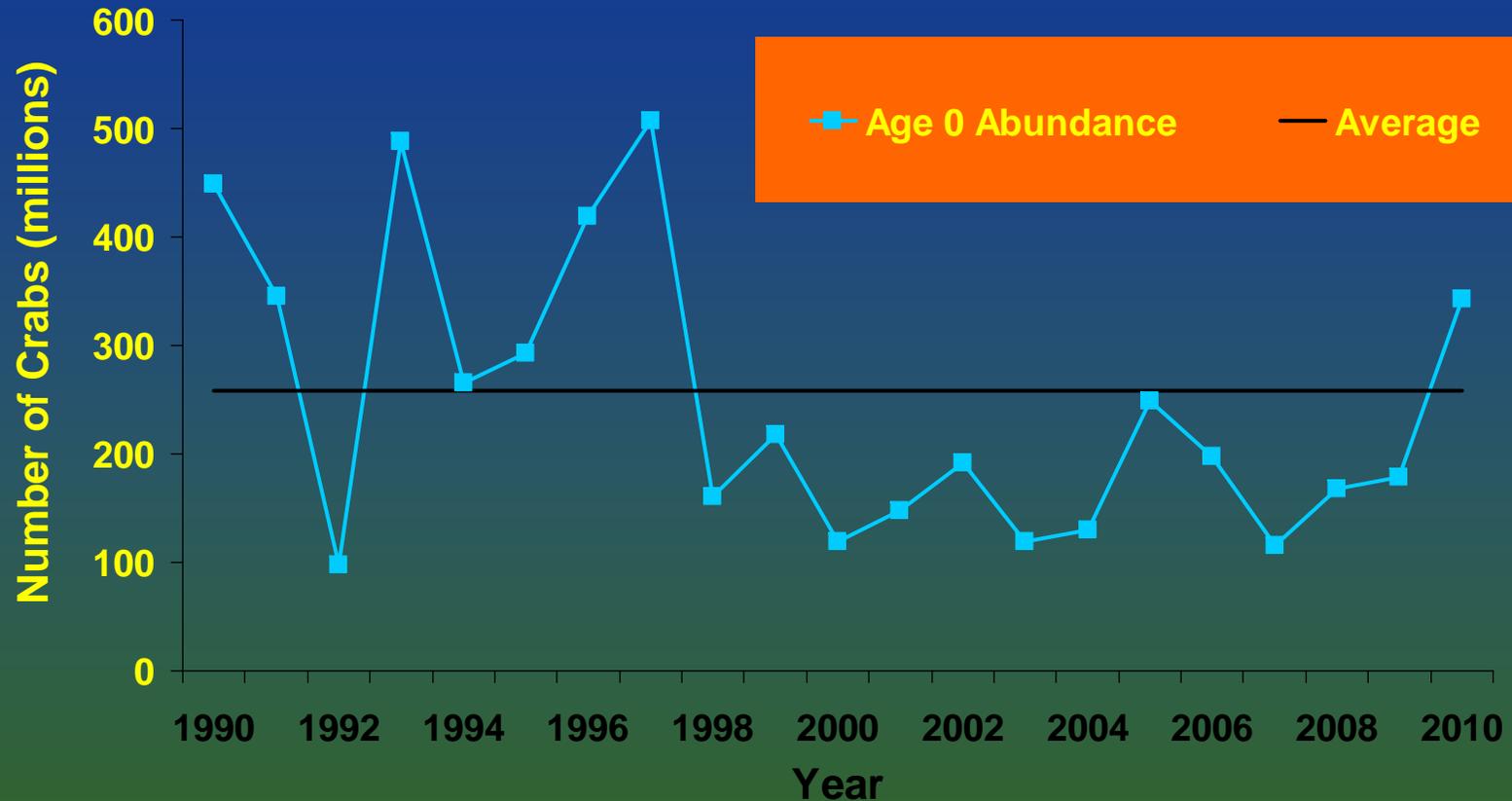


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The Number of Young-of-the-year (Age 0 or Recruits) Crabs in Chesapeake Bay between 1990-2010. Recruits remain in low abundance.



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Blue Crab Regulation Changes (2008 – 2009)

- Closed Virginia's 2008/09 and 2009/10 winter crab dredge seasons, by separate annual actions, for the 53 eligible commercial harvesters.
- Close the season for the taking of female crabs on Oct. 27, five weeks early (only 2008).
- Reduce the number of crab pots per license by 15 percent this year and 30 percent for peeler pots.
- Require two additional, wider crab pot cull rings as of July 1, except on the seaside of the Eastern Shore.

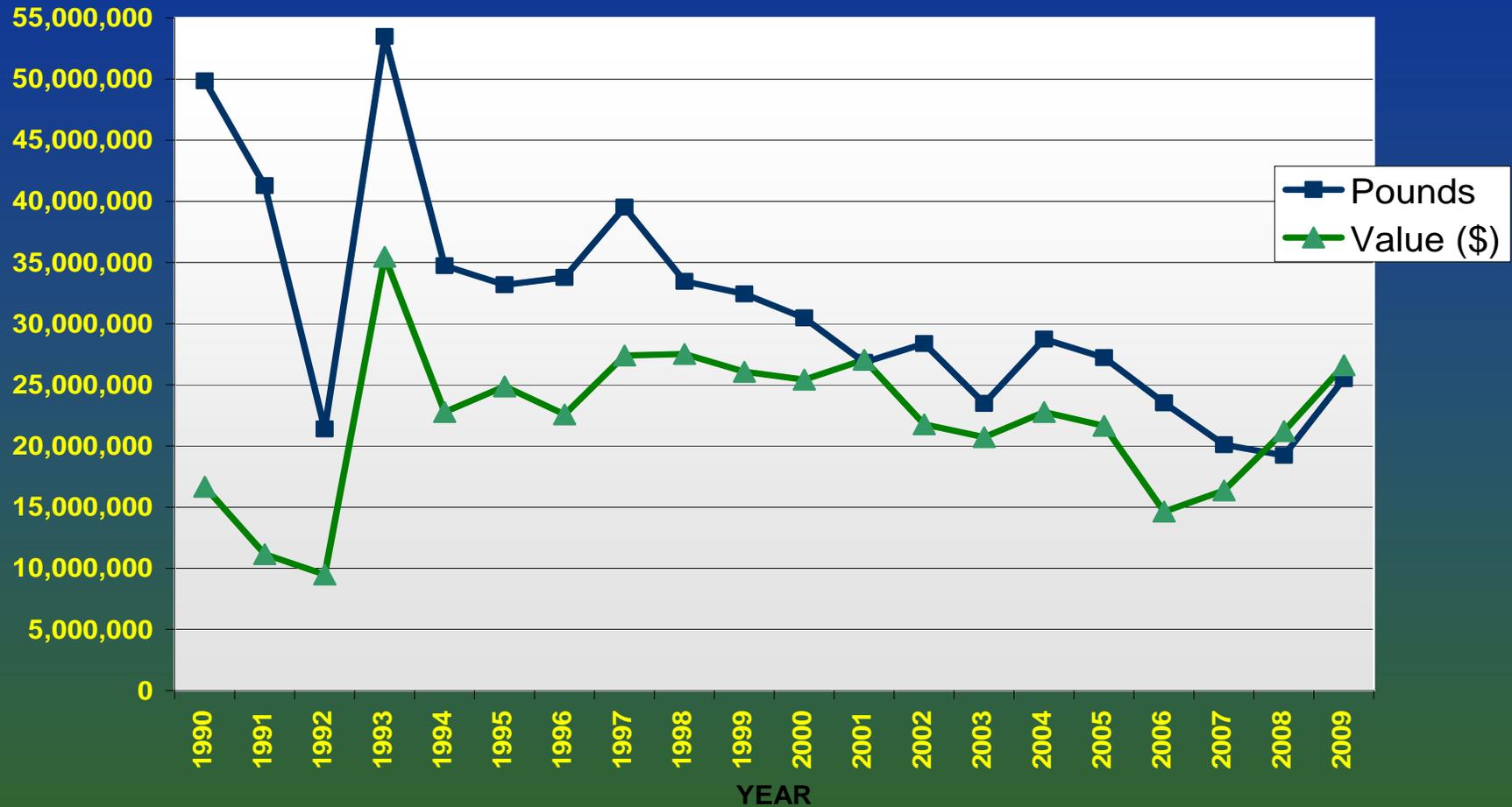


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Virginia harvests (pounds) and dockside (first-sale) value (\$), of blue crab



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Oysters in a Changing Bay

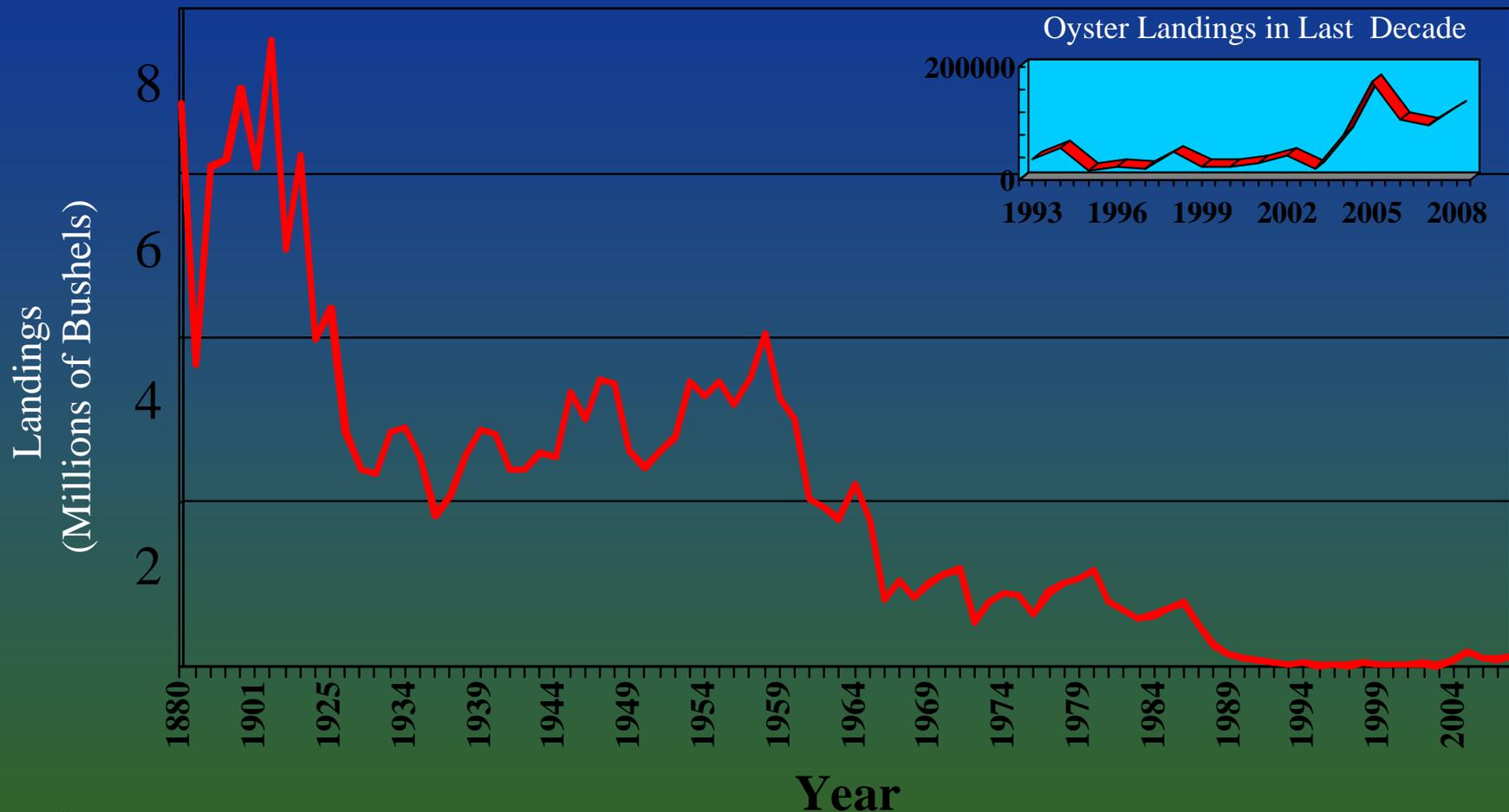


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Oyster Landings (1880 - 2009)



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2008 - 2010 Oyster Restoration Funding

➤ 2008

- **General Funds** **\$ 383K**
- **Federal Funds** **\$ 330K**

➤ 2009

- **General Funds** **\$ 0**
- **Federal Funds** **\$ 700K**

➤ 2010

- **General Funds** **\$ 600K**
- **Federal Funds** **\$ 2.81M**



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2010 Federal Funding

- NOAA-CBO York, Piankatank, and Rappahannock Rivers - mostly sanctuary areas
\$1.61M
- ARRA Stimulus Seaside Eastern Shore - mostly sanctuary areas \$1.00M
- NOAA Blue Crab Disaster-Aquaculture Training for crab industry \$900K



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DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A NEW MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR OYSTER HARVEST AND RESTORATION ACTIVITIES:

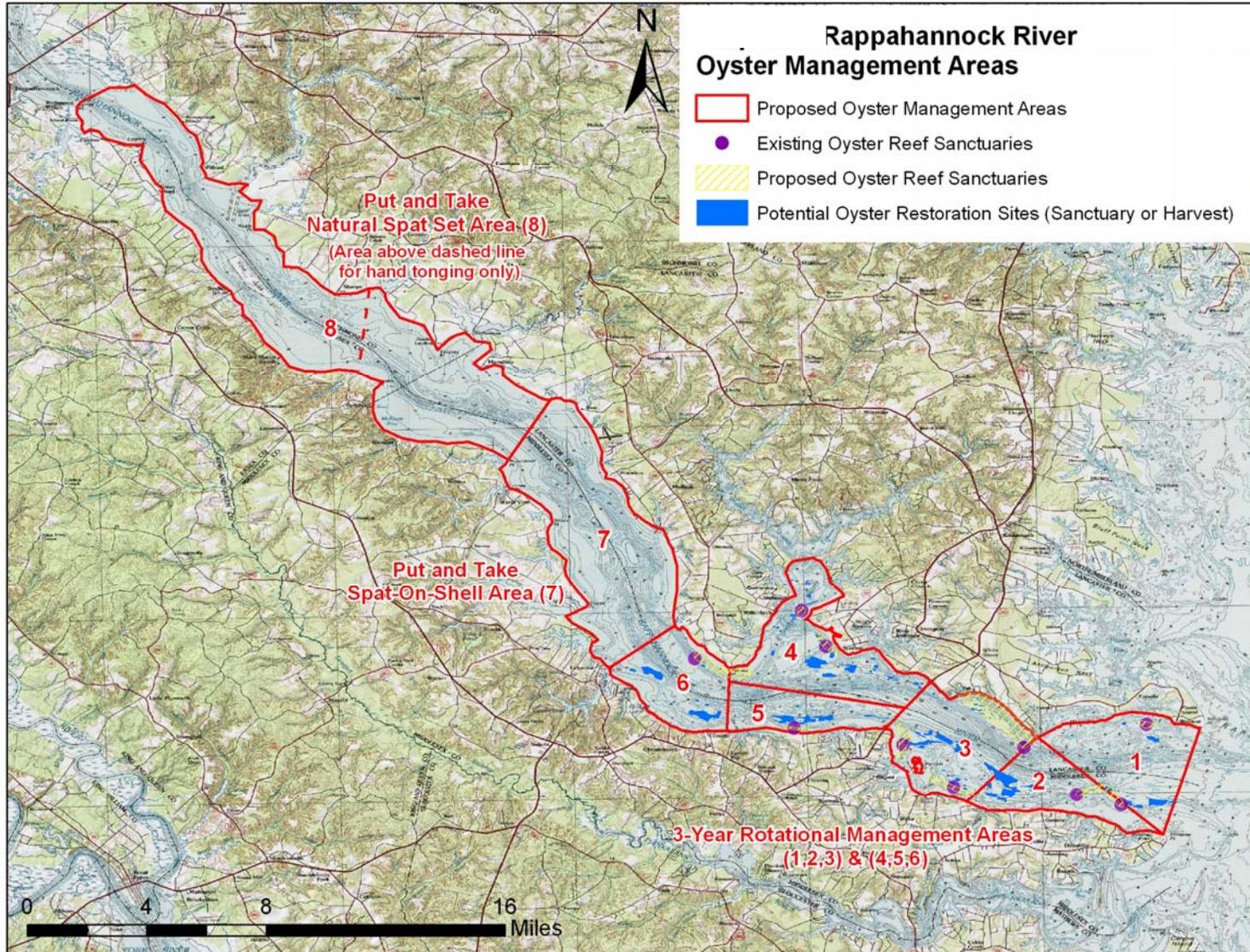
- 1) Implement a strategy to rotate harvest areas.**
- 2) Using the best available models for larval dispersal, designate large sanctuaries within each rotational harvest area.**
- 3) Implement a maximum size limit on oysters within the rotational areas.**
- 4) Simultaneously, open all harvest seasons in the Commonwealth.**
- 5) Establish harvest season dates, once per year.**
- 6) Low salinity areas, like the upper Rappahannock River, should be designated for a put-and-take fishery.**



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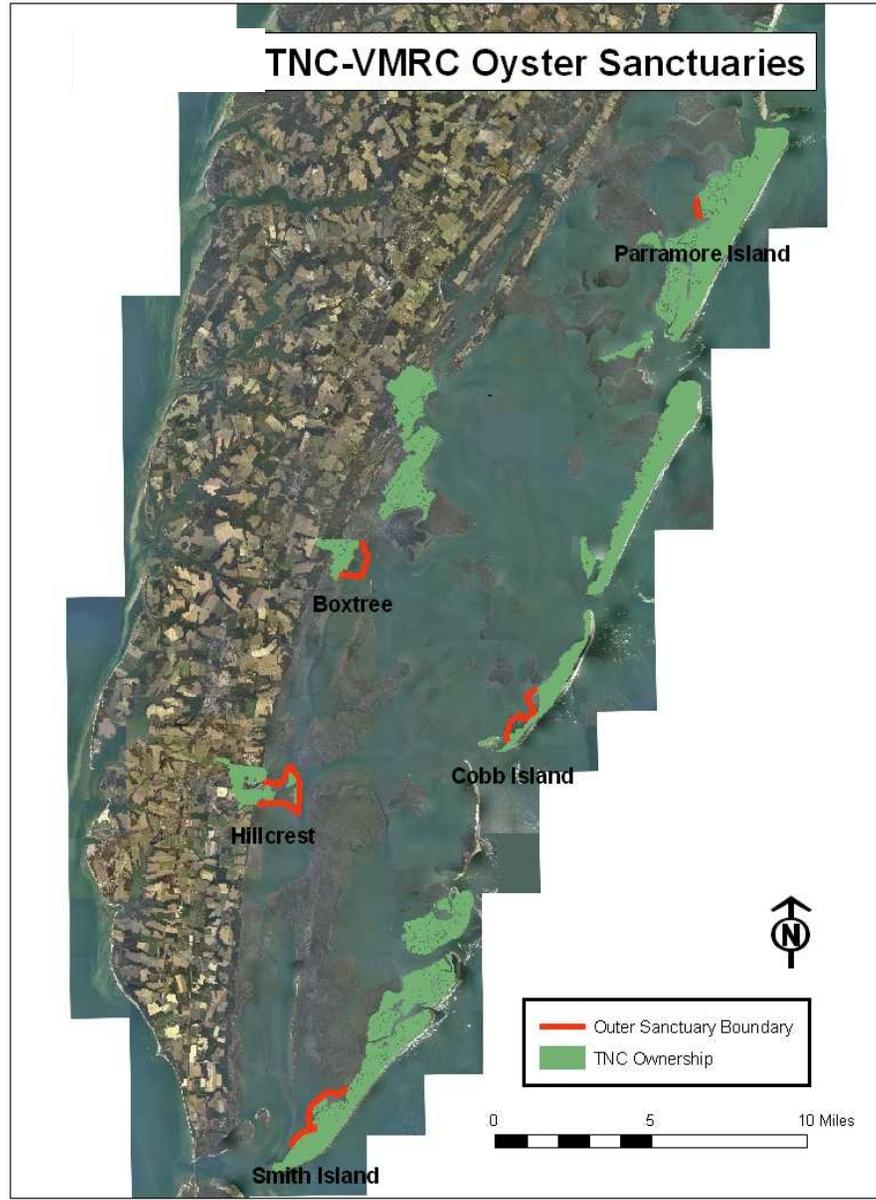


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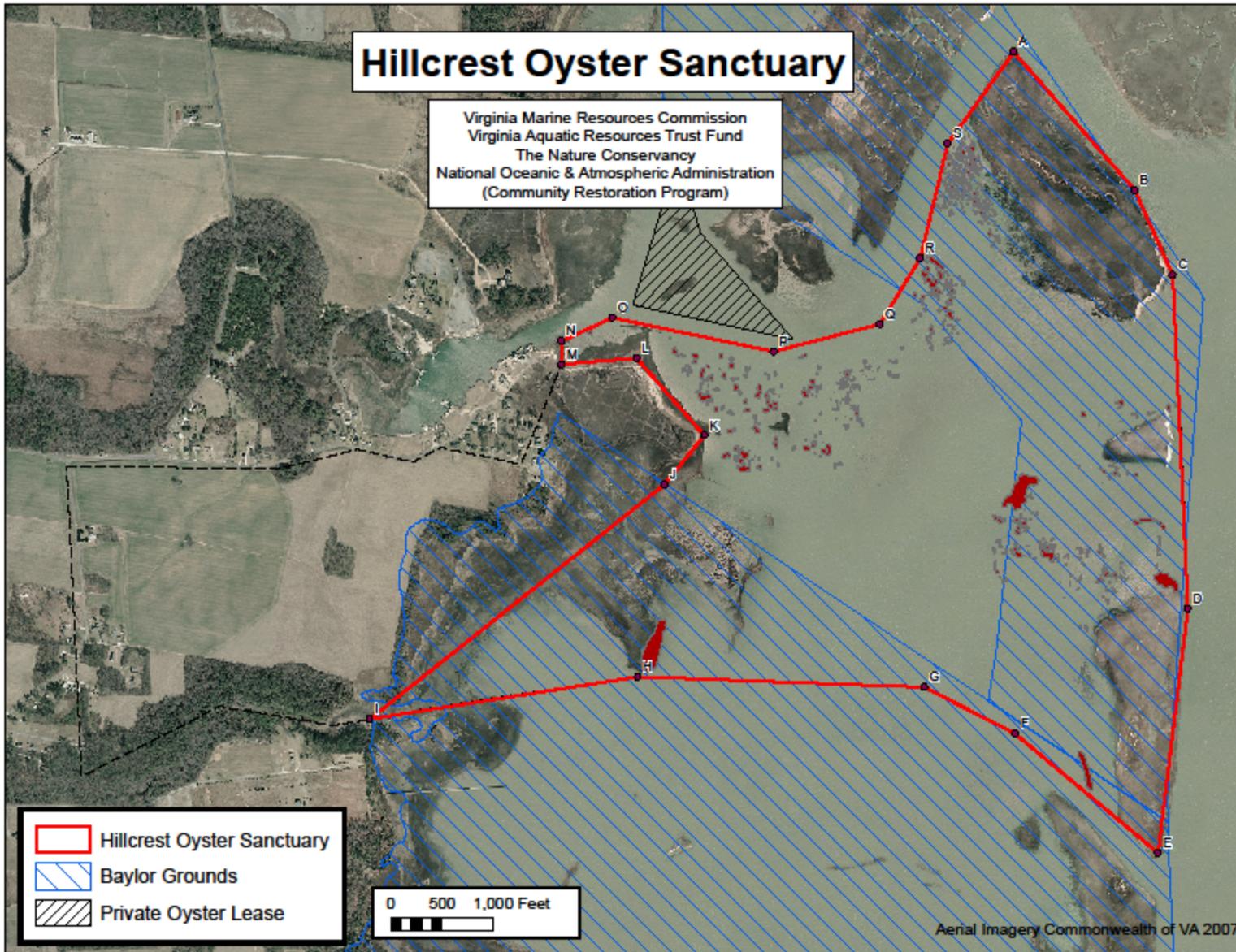
TNC-VMRC Oyster Sanctuaries



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Return on Investment

- Benefit/Cost-Seed Oyster Planting
 - \$1.37 for each \$1.00 spent (dockside value)
- Benefit/Cost-Shell Planting
 - Harvest areas only
 - \$5.21 for each \$1.00 spent (dockside value)
 - Sanctuary areas - economic benefit not quantified



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Army Corp of Engineers

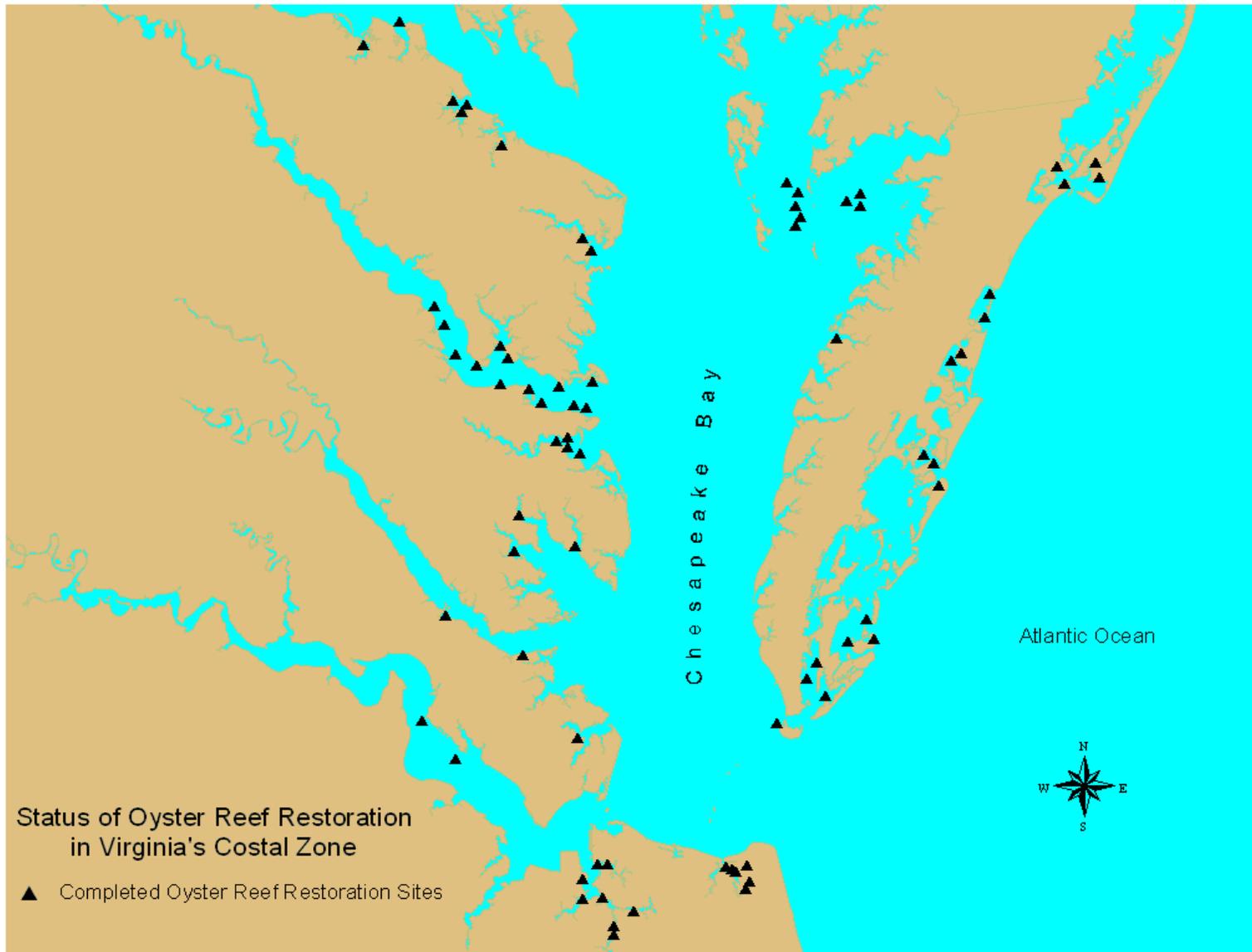
- Oyster Restoration Efforts only on Permanent Sanctuaries
- Efforts in 2008 and 2009 in the Lynnhaven River
- Planned Efforts for 2011 in the Great Wicomico River
- Require 25% state matching funds



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Blue Crab Disaster Funding Oyster Aquaculture

Two programs for crab industry participants

Program 1

- Training in cage oyster aquaculture which is geared to a part time participant
- 150 crabbers receive growout equipment and 50,000 cultchless triploid oysters
- Most crabbers can do this with gear on their boats



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Blue Crab Disaster Funding Oyster Aquaculture

Program 2

- Spat on Shell production for private ground
- This program is geared more towards crabbers that want to significantly change to something different from crabbing
- Much more commitment of time, labor, and “mindset”
- Providing tanks, equipment, shells, and eyed larvae to produce market oysters on the bottom



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Gulf Coast Oil Spill

- Potential Disaster for Oyster Resources on the Gulf Coast
- 70% or more of Virginia shucked product comes from the Gulf
- Disaster Relief Funds will probably be made available to the Oyster Industry in the Gulf
- Job losses at oyster houses in Virginia could be worse than the Gulf, but there may be no relief funds for our area



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National Angler Registry

- A new federal mandate to improve fishery data collection
- Requires unlicensed anglers to provide name, address, date of birth, and telephone number
- 126,000 licensed anglers and 400-600,000 unlicensed anglers in Virginia
- Estimated cost to register unlicensed angler is \$.70 - \$1.10 each (internet / phone registration option)
- SB 668 authorized increase in recreational license fees to meet costs
- Maryland DNR has an offer we cannot refuse: free registration for Virginia anglers



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