



Continually increase finfish and shellfish habitat and water quality benefits from restored oyster populations. Restore native oyster habitat and populations in 10 tributaries by 2025 and ensure their protection.

Why is this outcome important?

Restored oyster populations and habitats would provide the Chesapeake Bay with improved water quality and additional habitat for fish species, and reestablish an iconic species to the region.

Current Conditions:

- Six tributaries have been selected for restoration by the Maryland and Virginia Oyster Restoration Interagency Workgroups: the Tred Avon and Little Choptank Rivers and Harris Creek in Maryland; and the Lynnhaven, Lafayette and Piankatank Rivers in Virginia.
- Oyster restoration plans have been developed in three of these tributaries. In-water restoration work under these plans has started in two.

How was the outcome derived?

Who came up with it?

This outcome focuses on restoring oyster reefs for their ecological benefits and contribution to a healthy Chesapeake Bay ecosystem. Bay Program partners recognize the importance of oyster reefs in providing water quality benefits and habitat for many fish species. Although data has shown that several Bay tributaries have successful, living oyster reef habitat, none of the assessed rivers have fully restored oyster populations that meet the [Oyster Restoration Success Metrics](#).

Based on experience with current restoration implementation and resource availability, stakeholders, including NOAA, USACE, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and Virginia Marine Resources Commission, determined that an outcome of restoring native oyster habitat and populations in 10 tributaries by 2025 is an appropriate target for the next 10 years. [USACE's Native Oyster Restoration Master Plan](#) and [MD DNR's Oyster Restoration and Aquaculture Development Plan](#) also provided the foundation of this outcome.

What was the basis or baseline?

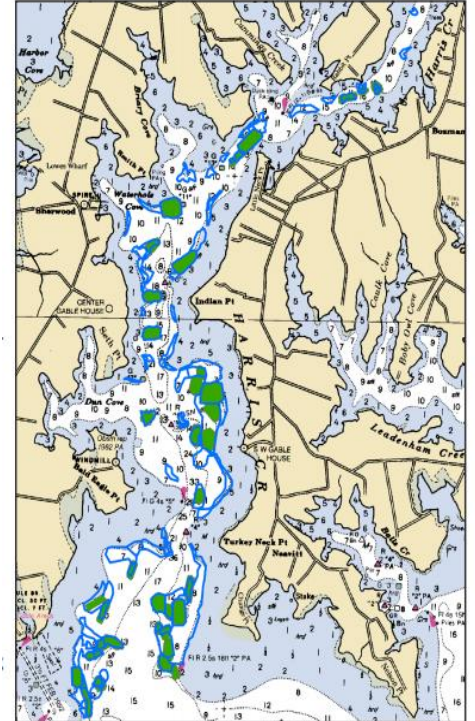
[Executive Order 13508 Strategy for Protecting and Restoring the Chesapeake Bay Watershed](#) established a goal of restoring oyster populations in 20 tributaries of Chesapeake Bay by 2025. Per this goal, a team of academics and state and federal agency staff developed [Bay-wide oyster restoration success criteria](#).

For More:

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/indicators/indicator/native_oyster_abundance

<http://www.chesapeakebay.net/issues/issue/oysters>

http://www.chesapeakebay.net/fieldguide/critter/eastern_oyster



Restoration Progress in Harris Creek. Areas in green indicate where restoration has occurred; blue outlines show target restoration areas.