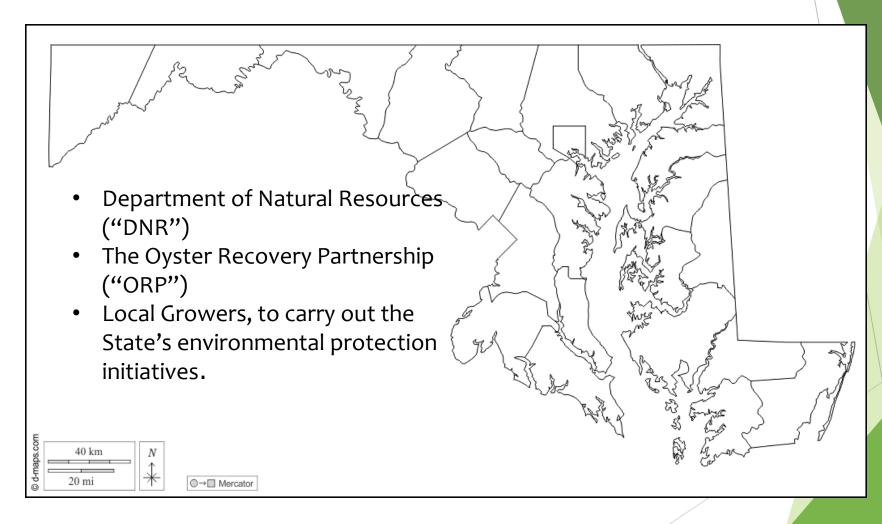
THE CHESAPEAKE BAY OYSTER REEF RECOVERY - THE GRASS ROOTS PERSPECTIVE

CHERIE SANTOS-WUEST

Chesapeake Bay Oyster Recovery - A Public/Private Partnership



ORP's Mission is to restore and protect the Bay's native oyster population

- Building sanctuary reefs, rebuilding public fishery reefs;
- Supporting the aquaculture (oyster farming) industry;
- Recycling oyster shells;
- Involving the public through hands-on volunteering and events.





Oysters are the Bay's Past and Future





Over 300 or more volunteer waterfront homeowners in Talbot Count "foster" trays of oyster spats on their docks between September through June of the following year.



Why?

- In 1884, the harvest for oysters was 15 million bushels.
- ► In 2010, the annual harvest was 185,245 bushels.
- The Chesapeake Bay has lost 99% of its historic oyster population.
- A single mature oyster can filter up to 55 gallons of water per day. Oysters remove silt, sediment, and nitrates and provide a key habitat to other marine species.
- At one point in time, oysters were so plentiful they could filter the entire bay in 3.3 days (83 billion oysters). Now it takes over 700 days to filter the entire bay, and the oysters can't filter fast enough to balance the ecosystem.

A Call to Action







Volunteerism in action







The trays are picked up the following June, when they are placed on existing oyster reefs nearby, in an effort to rebuild/restore these reefs. The cycle continues again in the Fall.

New growers received cages with spat, while existing "growers" who already had their cages were taken their spat by way of bucket. After staging is complete everyone then heads out to begin deliveries.





Community Building = Oyster Socials



