FINAL REPORT

Population Assessment of Eastern Oysters (*Crassostrea virginica*)
in the Seaside Coastal Bays

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Declines of oyster populations and commercial harvest from the Virginia seaside coastal bays have followed similar patterns, though not as severe, as those in Chesapeake Bay. High prevalence of Dermo disease (*Perkinsus marinus*) and MSX disease (*Haplosporidium nelsoni*) coupled with over harvest and habitat destruction have dramatically reduced populations. Nevertheless, there are several promising signs that significant enhancement of the population could be achieved with well conceived restoration efforts.

Oyster habitat and population distribution were examined in the coastal bay system on the seaside of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. This system is composed of barrier islands, salt marshes, broad and shallow coastal bays, intertidal mud flats, and deeper water channels. Manmade shorelines such as bulkhead and rip rap are prevalent in limited areas.

This study provides the first quantitative assessment of oyster population abundance on a region wide scale in the coastal bays on the seaside of Virginia’s Eastern Shore. Our estimate of 3.2 billion oysters in this region exceeds the most recent population estimate of 1.8 billion oysters for the entire Virginia portion of Chesapeake Bay produced by the VIMS CBOPE (http://web.vims.edu/mollusc/cbope/VAPDFfiles/VABasin2006.pdf). At the time of our sampling, Dec. 2007 – June 2008, the oyster population was comprised of a wide range of sizes representing several year classes that suggest a self-sustaining population with the potential for significant expansion.

The spatially-explicit oyster population GIS product developed through this work provides a valuable tool for guiding fisheries resource management and restoration activities for oysters in this region. The ultimate usefulness of this product lies in its integrative aspect as a GIS tool.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary .............................................................................................................. i

Acknowledgments ................................................................................................................ ii

List of Tables .......................................................................................................................... v

List of Figures ........................................................................................................................ vii

Introduction .............................................................................................................................. 1

Methods .................................................................................................................................... 2

  Study area ............................................................................................................................... 2

  Habitat mapping .................................................................................................................... 4

Habitat classification .............................................................................................................. 10

  Modified NWI categories ..................................................................................................... 12

  Reef categories .................................................................................................................... 13

  Manmade shoreline categories .......................................................................................... 14

Oyster sampling ...................................................................................................................... 14

  Patch reefs ............................................................................................................................ 15

  Other reefs ........................................................................................................................... 17

  Flats & marsh ....................................................................................................................... 17

  Manmade shoreline ............................................................................................................ 20

Habitat-specific oyster model .............................................................................................. 20

  Density ................................................................................................................................. 20

  Dry tissue biomass ............................................................................................................... 20

  Stock assessment abundance ............................................................................................ 21

GIS products .......................................................................................................................... 21
# TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

Results .......................................................................................................................... 22

Habitat ....................................................................................................................... 22

Oyster demographics .............................................................................................. 34
  Habitat-specific density and size ......................................................................... 34
  Biomass relationships ......................................................................................... 40
  Spatial distribution .............................................................................................. 42
  Overall stock assessment .................................................................................... 44

Discussion ............................................................................................................... 47

Literature cited ......................................................................................................... 50

Appendices .............................................................................................................. 52
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Oyster habitat categories (in italics) and descriptions developed for this study</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Habitat-specific oyster sampling design summary. Details for each habitat are discussed in the methodology. Habitat categories follow descriptions in Table 1 and the Methods section. “Quad” refers to quadrates</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Extent (hectares or km) and relative proportion for major oyster habitats mapped in this study</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Total area, relative proportion within the reef category grouping and polygon summary statistics (n, mean and standard error) for oyster reef categories. Note that overall, these reef categories combined total ~ 0.4% of the total habitats mapped for this project (see Table 3)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Overall linear extent, relative proportion within the Manmade Shoreline category grouping and individual feature summary statistics (n, mean and standard error) for manmade shoreline categories</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Estimated live and box oyster densities (#/m²) for all habitat categories included in this study</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Estimated live and box oyster densities (#/m²) on Patch Reefs for the six regions in this study</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Example of estimated live and box oyster densities within sub-strata in a Low Marsh area. Relative proportion (% area) of sub-strata refers to this specific defined Low Marsh area only. See Methodology and Figure 13 for more details on sub-strata</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Number of oysters sampled and mean (± SE) shell height for live and box oysters for all habitat categories included in this study</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Shell height-dry tissue biomass relationships used for this study. Equations and $R^2$ values were derived from best-fit power function regressions (where $x$=shell eight [mm] and $y$=dry tissue biomass [g])</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Mean (± SE) estimated individual oyster dry tissue biomass (g) and estimated dry tissue biomass density (g/m²) for all habitat categories included in this study</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Estimated oyster dry tissue biomass density (g/m²) on Patch Reefs for the six regions.</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Estimated total live oyster abundance (#) and relative proportion of population (%) for major oyster habitats mapped in this study</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Estimated total live oyster dry tissue abundance (kg) and relative proportion of the population (%) for major oyster habitats mapped in this study</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Total live oyster abundance (# and dry tissue biomass) and relative proportion (%) of the overall oyster population for different Reef categories</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Total live oyster abundance (# and dry tissue biomass) and relative proportion (%) of the overall oyster population for different Manmade Shoreline categories</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LIST OF FIGURES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Study area (outlined in blue) consisting of the coastal bays system</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>on the seaside of the Virginia portion of the Delmarva Peninsula</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Study area divided into six regions (different colors with black</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>numbers) based on sub-watershed hydrologic units of the National</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watershed Boundary Dataset (gray lines and labels). See Methods</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sections</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Algorithm for re-classifying National Wetlands Inventory (NWI)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>habitat categories for this study (see Table 1 for final categories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>chosen for this project)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Example of National Wetland Inventory polygons (red outlines)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>overlaid on 1-m resolution Virginia Base Mapping Program images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>An area of <em>Patch Reefs</em> (see Table 1) visible on 1-m resolution</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Virginia Base Mapping Program aerial images and digitized as polygons (red outlines)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Images of <em>Patch Reefs</em> (see Table 1) visible on 1-m resolution</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Virginia Base Mapping Program aerial images that were collected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>at (A) low tide and (B) high tide, that presented varying digitizing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>challenges (red outlines)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>An area of <em>Small Patch Reefs</em> (dark specks; see Table 1) visible on</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1-m resolution Virginia Base Mapping Program aerial images (A)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>before and (B) after being digitized as a polygon (red outline) in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GIS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Photographic examples of marsh habitats utilized in this study:</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(A) <em>High Marsh</em>, (B) <em>Low Marsh</em> and (C) <em>Flats-Marsh</em>. See Table</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1 and the Methods section for detailed descriptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Photographic examples of flats habitats utilized in this study: (A) Low Tidal Flats (light area below blue channel) and (B) High Tidal Flats. See Table 1 and the Methods section for detailed descriptions ................................................................. 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Photographic example of Patch Reefs (white patches). See Table 1 and the Methods section for detailed descriptions ..................................................... 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Example of Manmade Shoreline (bulkhead in this case). See Table 1 and the Methods section for detailed descriptions .............................................. 14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Example of sub-strata sampled within marsh habitats: (A) aerial image of a Low Marsh area, (B) the same area with sub-strata digitized in GIS and (C) a hypothetical channel cross section. See Methodology for details of how sub-strata were sampled .............. 19</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Example of a common juxtaposition of varied oyster habitats. See Table 1 and the Methods section for detailed descriptions ............................................. 22</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS for the entire study area. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories .................................................................................................................................................................................. 26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 1. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification ............................................. 27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 2. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification ............................................. 28</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Figure</td>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 3. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 4. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 5. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 6. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Size distribution (shell height, mm) of live oysters for several habitat category groupings with the number of individual oysters sampled for each noted in the upper right hand corner of each graph</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Size distribution (shell height, mm) of box oysters for several habitat category groupings with the number of individual oysters sampled for each noted in the upper right hand corner of each graph</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Habitat-based oyster density distribution near Oyster, VA and mapped in GIS to provide an example of one of the final GIS products of this study</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Estimated total oyster abundance for entire study area by shell height (mm) with standard state stock assessment size categories of “spat” (&lt;35 mm), “smalls” (35-75 mm) and “markets” (&gt;75 mm) noted by vertical gray lines</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
INTRODUCTION

Declines of oyster populations and commercial harvest from the Virginia seaside coastal bays have followed similar patterns, though not as severe, as those in Chesapeake Bay. High prevalence of Dermo disease (Perkinsus marinus) and MSX disease (Haplosporidium nelsoni) coupled with over harvest and habitat destruction have dramatically reduced populations. Nevertheless, there are several promising signs that significant enhancement of the population could be achieved with well conceived restoration efforts. Recruitment rates remain high and rapid growth allows oysters to reach reproductive size prior to disease mortality.

To plan a more comprehensive restoration effort we need an estimate not only of the current standing stock of oysters, but also of their spatial distribution in the coastal bays. This is easier said than done in the complex of habitats that make up the coastal bays. Oysters in the area are naturally found in several intertidal habitats—patch reefs, fringing reefs and isolated, small clumps on mudflats and in marshes. In addition, private lease holders create a variety of habitats for planting and rearing oysters that include both subtidal and intertidal habitats. An increasing amount of man-made structures, such as rip-rap and bulkheads provide habitat for oysters. Traditional stock assessment methods have involved only determining the density of oysters on “public” oyster reefs and restoration sanctuary reefs. Arguably, the majority of oysters in the region are not counted by this method.

Obtaining reliable estimates of the distribution and abundance of oysters on the seaside are beyond the scope of Virginia Marine Resources Commissions’ resources and until recently posed several technical challenges. Fortunately, we now possess the tools to develop reliable population and distribution estimates for oysters on the seaside. We employed aerial observations, Global Positioning Systems (GPS) and high resolution aerial images integrated with an ArcView-based Geographic Information System (GIS), to develop oyster distribution maps throughout the entire Virginia coastal bay system. Our provide spatially-
explicit estimates of oyster populations throughout the region that can be used to help guide management and restoration efforts.

Our specific objectives for this research were to:

1. Map potential oyster habitats (e.g. shell reefs/beds, marsh, mud flats, and manmade structures) in progressively finer resolution utilizing: 1-meter geo-referenced aerial images in an Arcview-based GIS; aerial surveys; and field mapping/ground-truthing (by boat and on foot);
2. Develop habitat-specific quantitative estimates of the abundance, density and size distribution, of oyster populations in coastal bays; and,
3. Incorporate both of these into an appropriate GIS dataset.

METHODS

Study Area

Oyster habitat and population distribution were examined in the coastal bay system on the seaside of the Eastern Shore of Virginia (Fig. 1). This system is composed of barrier islands, salt marsh dominated by *Spartina* spp., broad and shallow coastal bays, intertidal mud flats, and deeper water channels. Manmade shorelines such as bulkhead and rip rap are prevalent in limited areas. Overall, the study area encompasses approximately 900 km² (350 mi²) and is bounded by Fisherman’s Island in the south to mid-Chincoteague Bay in the north (bounding latitudes of N 37° 06’ to N 38° 01’).
Tidal amplitude generally ranges from 0.75-1.5 m, although the extreme northern end of the study area in Chincoteague Bay is as low as 0.3 m. Salinities approaching that of seawater (>30 psu) are encountered throughout this system, although they may be periodically lower near headlands following rain events.

The relative sizes of the coastal lagoons and the surrounding contiguous marshes vary with latitude along the peninsula. Additionally, the distance from ocean inlets to less flushed tidal creeks/bays decreases northward in the study area. Some water quality parameters such as water temperature, dissolved oxygen and, to a lesser extent, salinity are likely affected by these spatial gradients.

This geographic variation could potentially impact the spatial distribution and density of oysters and the relative importance of different habitats to the oyster population. Therefore, the study area was divided into geographic regions based on sub-watershed hydrologic units of the National Watershed Boundary Dataset (NWBD; see Federal Standards for Delineation of Hydrologic Unit Boundaries-FDGC Proposal, 2004). We combined 15 of these sub-watersheds (VAHUC5 and VAHUC6 resolution) to form six regions which represent our *a priori* expectations of geographic variations in the oyster population (Fig. 2).
Oyster habitat was delineated throughout this marine system and up to the point where tidal creeks began to interface with the mainland. Oysters are undoubtedly found further upstream in limited numbers, but are not included in this assessment.

**Habitat Mapping**

We began by extracting GIS polygons from the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) to use as the base map for potential oyster habitats (http://www.fws.gov/nwi/). The NWI habitat classification system (see Cowardin et al. 1979) suited a large portion of our mapping needs by including emergent marsh, intertidal bottom (called “flats” herein) and subtidal bottom as specific habitats (although there were multiple subdivisions of each grouping). These habitat categories represent the major types of habitats that oysters inhabit in varying densities in this study area. However, habitat classifications within the NWI were generally too detailed in their raw format (e.g. over 40 habitat codes were attached to polygons that were potential oyster habitat). Therefore, we grouped and/or re-classified them into basic habitat categories that were meaningful to oyster ecology (Fig. 3 and see Habitat Classification section). See Appendix I for details of these conversions for specific NWI codes. Additionally, NWI polygons often had tidal modifiers that helped delineate regularly inundated versus
rarely inundated areas that we know to be different in terms of oyster demographics and therefore important to map separately. Some of the habitats not represented in these data will be discussed below.

**Figure 3.** Algorithm for re-classifying National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) habitat categories for this study (see Table 1 for final categories chosen for this project).
Since NWI polygons were created from data gathered approximately eight to ten years ago, we manually compared them to digital 1-m resolution aerial images from the Virginia Base Mapping Program that were taken in 2002 (see Fig. 4 for an example). Discrepancies in the NWI polygons consisted of two types: erroneous habitat identification and inaccurate polygon boundaries. Examples of erroneous identifications include light colored bare spots on high marsh (usually hypersaline pans) that were identified as open water or “unconsolidated subtidal bottom” (i.e. a small pond) or marsh polygons identified as “irregularly flooded” that were obviously flooded on most average tides. Many polygons had inaccurate boundaries. Some of these reflected erosion or sand movement near inlets and on the west side of barrier islands and some were in areas of no predicted oyster abundance; however, most stemmed from the scale and methodology of the NWI. Boundaries were adjusted in cases of large discrepancies on the order of 10 m, while those on the order of several meters were generally left unaltered, given the scale of the study area. Additionally, the tidal regime modifier for many marsh and flats type polygons was listed as “unknown”. We therefore made tidal inundation decisions based on a combination of VBMP images (color changes in the marsh were often indicative), personal experience and site visits in these areas. Approximately 700-800 of the >6,000 (~12-14%) polygons utilized for this study required manual adjustment.

Figure 4. Example of National Wetland Inventory polygons (red outlines) overlaid on 1-m resolution Virginia Base Mapping Program.
Although marshes, flats and subtidal bottom habitats were appropriately included in NWI, the classification system does not identify reefs within the context of other habitat categories. Therefore, we undertook mapping of these habitats utilizing existing VBMP imagery (both 2002 and 2007 versions) and systematic aircraft over flights at 100 m altitude within 1.5 hrs of low tide. The entire study area was surveyed for isolated patch reefs in this manner during 30 hrs of flying time in spring 2007. This technique was also used to map fringing reefs along creek banks adjacent to marsh edges. Aerial images and in-flight observations were effective at locating fringing reefs > 30 m$^2$ along major creek banks, but were less effective in locating smaller reefs and those located on the banks of very small creeks. Oysters in some of these missed fringing reefs were later captured in our ground-based surveys of marsh habitats (see below). Additionally, when possible, we categorized state restoration reefs separately and identified privately managed reefs when intensive activities entailing either substrate or oyster manipulation were known to be present. This category includes areas utilized for commercial oyster harvest and private restoration projects.

Once reefs were identified and located on aerial image printouts, they were digitized in GIS based on their outlines on the VBMP images (Fig. 5). When images had been collected near low tide, this task was relatively easy and the boundaries of most reefs were easily visible (Fig 6a). Otherwise, determining the exact boundaries was more difficult (Fig. 6b). We expected some observer error using this technique due to immersion of portions of the reefs and the presence of macroalgae beds and dark sediments that can be difficult to distinguish from oyster reefs, even during low altitude flight. Therefore, all surveys and

Figure 5. An area of Patch Reefs (see Table 1) visible on 1-m resolution Virginia Base Mapping Program aerial images and digitized as polygons (red outlines) in GIS.
digitizing were conducted by the same technician in an effort to maintain the same bias throughout the entire study. Within these limitation, this technique allowed for a census of the entire study area within the budget and time constraints of the project.

Figure 6. Images of Patch Reefs (see Table 1) visible on 1-m resolution Virginia Base Mapping Program aerial images that were collected at (A) low tide and (B) high tide, that presented varying digitizing challenges (red outlines).

In some cases during reef mapping, we encountered extensive areas of mud flat with many interspersed small (<10 m²) patches of oysters (Fig. 7a). It was impractical to map each small patch, but it was also inappropriate to label such habitats as normal flats. We therefore created a category (Small Patch Reefs) and digitized polygons encompassing these areas (Fig. 7b) that were subsequently sampled differently than normal flats or typical patch reefs.

Following initial flights we conducted an evaluation of the patch reef mapping protocol prior to continuing. This initial groundtruthing was undertaken on 86 reefs in regions 5 and 6 during June 2007 (mapped using 2002 aerial images). Of the 86 reefs visited, 81 (94%) were patches containing at least 50% shell (most were contiguous shell) and considered correctly identified in over flights. Additionally, we searched for other potential patches that were missed in the initial mapping in the vicinity of these reefs. Ten patches were discovered that appeared to be reefs. Upon further investigation, four were algae beds or odd colored sediments that were not reefs.
However, the other six were patch reefs. Four of these six were located in the low intertidal zone and did not show up well on the aerial images. Furthermore, during oyster sampling excursions to 60 randomly selected patch reefs throughout all regions, seven (12%) were found to be inaccurately mapped based on the 2002 VBMP images. In several of these cases, loose shell was interspersed on flats and comprised <50% of the aerial footprint and, therefore, did not meet our classification criteria as a reef. Over half of these erroneously mapped polygons were easily and accurately re-mapped based on the higher resolution 2007 VBMP images. This led us to re-examine every mapped reef using the newer images once they were available (February 2008). Based on our initial groundtruthing and comparisons using the 2007 images, we have high confidence that >95% of reefs are correctly identified as such.

The presence of manmade shoreline that was potential oyster habitat was not captured by the NWI. Such shorelines were generally composed of bulkhead (vertical shoreline armoring) or rip rap (sloping
shoreline armoring with various aggregate materials) and were manually digitized as line features using VBMP aerial images. Most of these habitats were associated with harbors, marinas, boat landings, a residential development on Chincoteague Bay or the town of Chincoteague. Rip rap consisting of granite or concrete were grouped together. Another rip rap category consisting of clam/oyster shells placed on banks was separately identified and mapped.

Habitat Classification

Following the criteria above, we settled on 15 habitat categories which reflect a combination of NWI habitats, reefs, manmade shoreline, tidal inundation modifiers and our expectations for the oyster population (Table 1). Oysters on the seaside of the Eastern Shore are most prevalent in the intertidal zone (with some individuals found in the shallow subtidal). Their upper extent is determined by air exposure (desiccation or temperature extremes) and their lower extent is limited by predation and competition (e.g., Ortega 1981). We recently completed a similar oyster census in the Lynnhaven River, which is a tidal tributary in the lower Chesapeake Bay, and found that the duration of tidal inundation can be extremely important to the distribution of oysters (Ross and Luckenbach, In Prep). As a result, Subtidal Bottom habitat is generally described in Table 1. For purposes of this study, we focused on the immediate intertidal zone and assume that no significant oyster populations existed subtidally.
Table 1. Oyster habitat categories (in italics) and descriptions developed for this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat</th>
<th>Tidal Inundation</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>GIS Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emergent Marsh</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>Periodically flooded during spring high tides</td>
<td>Emergent <em>Spartina</em> marsh and associated hypersaline &quot;pans&quot;</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>Regularly flooded during average high tides</td>
<td>Emergent <em>Spartina</em> marsh</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flats-Marsh</strong></td>
<td>Regularly exposed and flooded during average tides</td>
<td>Areas were delineations between marsh and flats (see above &amp; below) are not distinct</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tidal Flats</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>Regularly exposed during average low tides</td>
<td>Unconsolidated sediment ranging from mud to sand</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>Rarely exposed to periodically exposed during spring low tides and wind-induced events</td>
<td>Unconsolidated sediment ranging from mud to sand; very shallow during average low tides</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtidal Bottom</strong></td>
<td>Never exposed</td>
<td>Unconsolidated sediment ranging from mud to sand</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reefs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>Regularly flooded and exposed during average tides</td>
<td>Consolidated hard substrate patches (typically shell) isolated from emergent marsh</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>Regularly flooded and exposed during average tides</td>
<td>Small (&lt; 5m²) consolidated hard substrate patches (typically shell) interspersed on flats</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>Regularly flooded and exposed during average tides</td>
<td>Consolidated hard substrate patches (typically shell) adjacent to emergent marsh</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Restoration Reefs</td>
<td>Regularly flooded and exposed during average tides</td>
<td><em>Patch or Fringing</em> reefs constructed or enhanced by the VA Marine Resources Commission</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>Regularly flooded and exposed during average tides</td>
<td><em>Patch or Fringing</em> reefs constructed or enhanced by private individuals or organizations</td>
<td>Polygon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manmade Shoreline</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulkhead</td>
<td>Regularly flooded and exposed during average tides</td>
<td>Vertical shoreline armoring using various materials</td>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rip Rap (non-shell)</strong></td>
<td>Regularly flooded and exposed during average tides</td>
<td>Shoreline armoring using aggregate on a sloping bank</td>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shell Rip Rap</strong></td>
<td>Regularly flooded and exposed during average tides</td>
<td>Shoreline armoring using shell (e.g. clam or oyster) on a sloping bank</td>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unknown</strong></td>
<td>Regularly flooded and exposed during average tides</td>
<td>Shoreline armoring where specific site visits were not undertaken (usually isolated instances)</td>
<td>Line</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Habitats were often encountered in complex juxtapositions. In many cases, where one ends and another begins is subject for debate, but we tried to be consistent throughout the course of the study.

**Modified NWI categories**

Emergent salt marsh (dominated by *Spartina* spp.) was divided into three categories (Table 1). *High Marsh* is only periodically flooded during spring high tides and some above average tides. These areas are dominated by the short *S. alternaflora* variant and include *S. patens* and hypersaline “pans” with *Salicornia* spp. (Fig. 8a). *Low Marsh* is regularly flooded during average high tides. Both short and tall variants of *S. alternaflora* are present and the marsh is intersected by narrow and usually winding channels, locally called “drains” or “guts” (Fig. 8b). It was impractical to map all of the small channels that permeate these. Therefore, marsh habitat polygons generally included small creeks (<10 m and more often < 3 m across).

**Figure 8.** Photographic examples of marsh habitats utilized in this study: (A) *High Marsh*, (B) *Low Marsh* and (C) *Flats-Marsh*. See Table 1 and the Methods section for detailed descriptions.

Our subsequent oyster sampling took these sub-features into account and is described below. The *Flats-Marsh* category encompasses habitats where the boundary between flats and emergent marsh are not well defined or where many small (<100 m²) marsh patches are interspersed within a portion of flat (Fig. 8c). In subsequent oyster sampling we addressed these habitats differently than either contiguous flats or marsh and therefore we mapped them as distinct habitats. By their nature, the marsh portions of the *Flats-Marsh* category were regularly flooded and the flat portions were regularly exposed during average tides.
Flats, which consist of unconsolidated sediments ranging from soft mud to hard sand that are intertidal or very high in the subtidal zone, were divided into two categories (Table 1). *High Tidal Flats* are regularly exposed during average low tides while *Low Tidal Flats* are rarely to periodically exposed during spring low tides and wind-induced events (Fig. 9).

**Reef categories**

Five reef categories were established. *Patch Reefs* consist of consolidated hard substrate patches that are intertidal and spatially isolated from emergent marsh (Table 1). Patch Reefs are variable in size and tidal inundation, but are typically composed of >50% shell (Fig 10). They are often colloquially called oyster “rocks” or “bars”.

Additionally, *Fringing Reefs* (those adjacent to or integrated into emergent marsh), *State Restoration Reefs* (state created projects) and *Privately Managed Reefs* (intensively managed for restoration purposes or commercially for harvest) were identified. Patches of fossil shell eroding from marsh or flats and wave accumulated shell piles that are in or above the high intertidal zone are not in this category. These hard substrates are not a potential oyster habitat because they are infrequently flooded.
As previously mentioned, we encountered extensive areas of mud flat with many interspersed small (<10 m²) patches of oysters (Fig. 7). Therefore, we created a category, Small Patch Reefs (Table 1), and digitized polygons encompassing these areas. Furthermore, each of these polygons was subjectively estimated to have Low, Medium or High density of clusters (5-20%, 21-35% or 36-50%, respectively). Areas with <5% clusters were considered as flats and those having >50% clusters were considered regular reefs.

Manmade shoreline categories

Manmade shoreline refers to shoreline armoring materials that are regularly flooded during average high tides (Table 1). The two most common are Bulkheads (Fig. 11) and Rip Rap of various materials (including Shell Rip Rap). Isolated manmade features, where site visits were not deemed appropriate, were grouped into an Unknown Manmade category.

Oyster Sampling

Once potential oyster habitats had been identified and mapped, we developed habitat-specific sampling protocols to quantify the oyster populations (see Table 2). Anticipating that reefs of various types would be the habitats with the most oysters, especially Patch Reefs and Small Patch Reefs, the abundance of which outweighed other reef types, we allocated the greatest number of samples to these habitat types (Table 2).
Table 2. Habitat-specific oyster sampling design summary. Details for each habitat are discussed in the methodology. Habitat categories follow descriptions in Table 1 and the Methods section. “Quad” refers to quadrates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat</th>
<th># Polygons Sampled</th>
<th>Sample Type</th>
<th># Samples per Polygon</th>
<th>Total # Sampled</th>
<th>Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>Quad</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>348</td>
<td>Varied (S, M, L)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td></td>
<td>Large</td>
<td>Quad</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Small</td>
<td>Quad</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Quad</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0.33 m x 0.33 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priv. Managed Reefs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Quad</td>
<td>Varies</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.33 m x 0.33 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Rest. Reefs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Quad</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.33 m x 0.33 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>Marsh</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10 m x 1 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Channel (edge, side &amp; channel)</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1-10 m (variable width)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broadwater interface</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1-10 m (variable width)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marsh</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10 m x 1 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>Channel (edge, side &amp; channel)</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1-10 m (variable width)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Broadwater interface</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1-10 m (variable width)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marsh</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10 m x 1 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats-Marsh</td>
<td>Flat</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10 m x 1 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interface between flat &amp; marsh</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1-10 m x 1-2 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10 m x 2 m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Tidal Flat</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Transect</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>10 m x 2 m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*quad sizes: S=small (0.33 m x 0.33 m); M=medium (0.5 m x 0.50 m); L=large (1 m x 1 m)

Patch Reefs

Patch Reefs in each region were grouped into five size categories: 0-300 m², 300-600 m², 600-1200 m², 1200-2000 m² and > 2000 m². The number of reefs sampled within each size category and region was
roughly proportional to the abundance of different sized reefs. Overall, this led to sampling 31, 12, 10, 4 and 3 reefs, respectively, in the above size categories. In regions 1 - 6, we sampled 9, 6, 6, 14, 15 and 10 randomly selected reefs, respectively. It is important to note that this regional stratification of Patch Reef samples was not used to statistically test for differences between regions, but simply to ensure that proportional samples were taken from throughout the study area and, therefore, provide a more accurate estimate of oyster abundance throughout the entire system.

Replicate quadrate samples were collected during low tide at each sample reef from randomly selected points within reef polygons. Sample points were selected in GIS using Hawth’s Tools (Beyer 2004). Replicate quadrate samples numbering 3, 6, 9, 12 and 15 were taken from reefs falling in the five size classes above, respectively. The size of quadrates were based on the density of oysters found on-site in an effort to utilize the smallest size possible while still enumerating oysters when present. For example, when oyster density was extremely low, a 1 m² quadrate was employed and centered on the randomly chosen location. If density was high, a 0.1089 m² quadrate was utilized the same way. In these cases, we often still enumerated several hundred oysters per sample. Had we used a larger quadrate in these high density sites, several thousand individuals would need enumerating, resulting in significantly higher processing times, with little practical increase in accuracy. For reefs with an intermediate density, a 0.25 m² quadrate was utilized. A total of 342 quadrate samples were collected representing 49.5 m² of reef surface.

Once a quadrate was deployed, all live and box (i.e., dead with shells still articulated) oysters were collected to a depth of 15 cm or until anoxic conditions were observed. Samples were placed in mesh bags (<5 mm mesh size) and transported back to the laboratory. All live and box oysters in a sample were counted and shell height (i.e., longest hinge to lip distance) was measured to the nearest mm.
Other Reefs

Small Patch Reefs, Privately Managed Reefs and State Restoration Reefs were generally sampled in the same manner as described for Patch Reefs above. The major difference was that sample reefs were not chosen from every region and selections were not random, but subjectively chosen to be representative of the habitat category.

Three Small Patch Reefs were chosen (one from the area encompassed by regions 1 and 2 combined; one from 3 and 4; and one from 5 and 6) and 0.1089 m² quadrate samples were haphazardly collected from individual patches of oysters (Table 2). Oyster samples were then processed as described above.

Two Privately Managed Reefs and two State Restoration Reefs were sampled, processed as described above and compared to Patch Reefs. Again, we selected representative reefs and quadrate (0.1089 m²) sampling locations. Since oyster densities on these habitats were generally consistent with Patch Reefs (see Results), which were sampled much more intensively, we limited sampling effort in order to concentrate on other habitats. Oyster samples were then processed as described above.

Fringing Reefs were divided into two size categories: large and small. One representative polygon in each region was selected for each size category. On large reefs, four quadrate samples of variable size were collected, while two were taken on small reefs (Table 2). All live and box oysters were enumerated in situ and the first 50 of each were measured to the nearest mm.

Flats & Marsh

Based on observations during mapping and sampling other habitats, it was apparent that both High and Low Tidal Flats contained very few, if any, oysters. However, instead of defaulting to a density estimate of zero, we decided to sample two representative areas of each via two replicate 10 m x 2 m
transects (Table 2). Transects were haphazardly chosen and inventoried at low tide. All live and box oysters collected were counted and measured to the nearest mm.

Quantifying oyster abundances in marsh habitats posed a more complex challenge. Small channels that are located within these habitat polygons were not separately digitized, although they have the capacity to harbor oysters. We initially considered completely manually mapping this sub-habitat throughout the study area, but it quickly became obvious that it would be beyond the scope and logistics of the current project. Therefore, we chose to include this sub-habitat (along with several others) in a stratified sampling protocol. We selected two and three representative habitat polygons to sample for High Marsh and Low Marsh, respectively. Within each we sampled three strata: marsh proper, channel and broad water interface (areas where marsh was adjacent to large channels or bays mapped as Subtidal Bottom or adjacent to flats mapped as such; see Fig. 12 for an example). We further stratified channel sampling into (1) a 2-m marsh buffer adjacent to the channel, (2) the exposed mud bank and, (3) the shallow subtidal channel itself. We also further stratified the broad water interface into a 2-m marsh buffer adjacent to the broad water and the exposed mud bank. Transects of various dimensions (based on the oyster density encountered in the field) were then used the sample the various strata (Table 2). Details on how this sub-sampling was interpreted can be found below. All live and box oysters collected were counted and measured to the nearest mm.

Slight adjustments to this protocol were required for the Flats-Marsh habitat category. Three representative polygons were sampled in four strata: marsh proper, flat proper and the marsh-flat interface. Various sized transects were employed (Table 2) and all live and box oysters were counted and measured.
Figure 12. Example of sub-strata sampled within marsh habitats: (A) aerial image of a Low Marsh area, (B) the same area with sub-strata digitized in GIS and (C) a hypothetical channel cross section. See Methodology for details of how sub-strata were sampled.
Manmade Shoreline

Very little Manmade Shoreline was mapped relative to other potential oyster habitats. However, much of this shoreline has the potential to support high oyster densities. Rip Rap (both shell and non-shell) and Bulkhead shorelines were sampled using quadrates haphazardly allocated across the entire study area. Overall, thirty quadrates ranging in area from 0.1089-10.24 m² were sampled (size based on the actual band height of oysters; see Luckenbach and Ross 2007 for more details). All live and box oysters within quadrates were counted in situ and the first 50 encountered were measured to the nearest mm.

Habitat-specific Oyster Model

Oyster habitat maps and habitat-specific oyster demographics were combined into a simple, spatially-explicit model. This allowed a comparison of the relative importance of various habitats, an overall stock assessment for the study area, and a spatially-explicit GIS product showing how oysters were distributed throughout the study area. Oyster density and then size-specific data were used to model both numbers and dry tissue biomass (i.e., ash-free dry tissue weight) of oysters.

Density

Mean oyster density was calculated for Patch Reefs by region. This is the only habitat that has region-specific densities. For all other habitats, data were pooled for the entire study area to develop mean densities. For habitats divided into sub-strata (e.g. marsh categories), overall density was calculated using strata-specific density and the relative proportion of sub-strata within the habitat.

Dry Tissue Biomass

A sub-sample of oysters, covering the entire size range of those encountered in the field, collected in various habitats was used to develop size-biomass relationships. Shell height was measured to the nearest 0.1 mm. Oyster meats were completely shucked into individually labeled, pre-weighed aluminum
pans and dried at 90 °C for at least 48 hrs or until a constant weight was achieved. Tissues were then weighed to the nearest 0.001 g. Finally, the tissue samples were placed in a ~538º C muffle furnace for at least 5 hrs. They were then allowed to cool and were re-weighed to the nearest 0.001 g.

We developed separate shell height to biomass (ash-free dry tissue weight) relationships for each of the following habitat groupings: Flats (includes High Intertidal Flats, Low Intertidal Flats and Flats-Marsh habitats); Marsh (includes both High and Low Marsh); Patch Reefs (includes Patch Reefs, Small Patch Reefs, and State Restoration Reefs); Privately Managed Reefs; and Fringing Reefs. Best-fit power functions were applied to the data and the resulting equations were used to estimate biomass of individual oysters based on shell height. W then used size distributions and abundances to estimate dry tissue biomass within and across several habitats and region groupings, and for the entire oyster population throughout the region. Equations developed for Patch Reefs and Fringing Reefs were applied to non-shell Rip Rap and shell Rip Rap categories, respectively. Also, an equation developed from intertidal bulkheads in the Lynnhaven River during a previous study was applied to Bulkheads in our model.

Stock Assessment Abundance

Oyster abundance in terms of both the number of individuals and dry tissue biomass were calculated in GIS by multiplying the area (or length in the case of Manmade Shorelines) by oyster density estimates on a polygon-by-polygon basis. Overall study area abundance was estimated as:

$$\sum_{i=1}^{15} (\text{Habitat Category Area}) \times (\text{Habitat-specific Oyster Density})$$

GIS Product

Regional stratification, habitat polygons and manmade shoreline (line features) were incorporated into ArcGIS (v. 9.2) as shape files projected in US State Plane Feet (Virginia South 4502, NAD83). Polygons from NWI data were extracted into GIS and modified according to the techniques described
above. This includes a substantial modification of the attribute tables. In fact, these data are no longer recognizable as NWI data. Reef polygons identified from aerial over flights were manually “heads up” digitized in the most labor intensive part of the project. The GIS product accompanying this report includes extensive metadata (Appendix IV), but we recommend that this report be included along with the metadata in any distribution of the GIS product.

RESULTS

Habitat

Overall, 9,319 habitat polygons were delineated in this project along with 37.9 km of manmade shoreline features. The polygons cover 87,719 hectares (877 km$^2$ or 339 mi$^2$) of the seaside of Virginia’s Eastern Shore. Approximately 18,000 hectares (~21%) of this total was classified as Subtidal Bottom which we did not consider as suitable oyster habitat within the scope of this study.

Terminology used to identify specific habitat categories was covered in the methodology section (including tidal inundation modifiers) and will follow names in Table 1. As mentioned previously, habitats were often encountered in complex juxtapositions (e.g. see Fig. 13).

Figure 13. Example of a common juxtaposition of varied oyster habitats. See Table 1 and the Methods section for detailed descriptions.
In terms of aerial extent, *Low Tidal Flats* dominated the study area (39.9%) while *High Marsh* (20.9%) and *Subtidal Bottom* (20.7%) were also important (Table 3). Approximately 0.4% of the study area (377 hectares) was composed of the various reef categories.

*Small Patch Reefs* and *Patch Reefs* were dominant within the broad reef grouping (>80% combined, Table 4). *Privately Managed Reefs* and *Fringing Reefs* comprised 13.3% and 4.5% of this group, respectively. While we mapped only 2 hectares of *State Restoration Reefs*, we know that this is quite low. However, it was difficult to ascertain which reefs should be included in this category because locations have not been digitized to date. Those not grouped in that category are included in the *Patch Reefs* category. Features with *High*, *Medium* and *Low* cluster densities comprised 67%, 31% and 2% of the *Small Patch Reefs* category.

Overall, 37.9 km of *Manmade Shorelines* were mapped. Bulkheads dominated these areas (73%) and mean contiguous stretches (136 m) tended to be much longer than the other *Manmade Shorelines* (Table 5). The area around the island of Chincoteague (Region 1) towards the northern end of the study area was found to have most of this type of habitat (29.7 km or 78%). Otherwise, most of the remainder was concentrated around several harbors.

### Table 3. Extent (hectares or km) and relative proportion for major oyster habitats mapped in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Total Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>High Marsh</em></td>
<td>18,294</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Low Marsh</em></td>
<td>11,862</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Flats-Marsh</em></td>
<td>1,347</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>High Tidal Flats</em></td>
<td>2,698</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Low Tidal Flats</em></td>
<td>34,961</td>
<td>39.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Subtidal Bottom</em></td>
<td>18,180</td>
<td>20.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Reefs *</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Manmade Shoreline</td>
<td>37.9 *</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Table 3 includes *Patch, Small Patch, Fringing, State Restoration* and *Privately Managed* reefs (see Table 3 for details)

* In linear units of km, not hectares (see Table 4 for details)
Table 4. Total area, relative proportion within the reef category grouping and polygon summary statistics (n, mean and standard error) for oyster reef categories. Note that overall, these reef categories combined total ~ 0.4% of the total habitats mapped for this project (see Table 3).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Total Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
<th># Polygons</th>
<th>Mean Polygon Area (m²)</th>
<th>SE Polygon Area (m²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>265</td>
<td>6,637</td>
<td>1,359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>2,939</td>
<td>448</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>1,303</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Restoration Reefs</td>
<td>2a</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>583</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Because locations of VMRC reefs have not been digitized to date, it was difficult to ascertain which reefs should be included in this category; therefore, this area may be substantially low with some grouped in the Patch Reef category above.

Table 5. Overall linear extent, relative proportion within the Manmade Shoreline category grouping and individual feature summary statistics (n, mean and standard error) for Manmade Shoreline categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Total Length (km)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
<th># Features</th>
<th>Mean Feature Length (m)</th>
<th>SE Feature Length (m)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bulkhead</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>73.6</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rip Rap (non-shell)</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Rip Rap</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extensive *Low Tidal Flats* were the predominant habitat type from Hog Island Bay south, but they diminish in total area and dominance further north in the study area (Fig. 14). The prevalence of individual oyster *Patch Reefs* follows this general trend as well. North of Burton’s Bay *High Marsh* habitat becomes more dominant (Fig. 14). Regional overviews follow with associated figures (See Appendices II & III for specific data).

In region 1 (Fig. 15), *Subtidal Bottom* that is generally fairly shallow predominates along with *High Marsh* and several extensive *Low Tidal Flat* areas. Substantial *Manmade Shoreline* was found associated with Chincoteague Island (including the causeway that provides vehicular access) and a residential development on the western side of Chincoteague Bay.

Region 2 (Fig. 16) tends to have relatively small coastal bays (which increase in size in a southerly direction) that are dominated by *Low Tidal Flats* and are separated by extensive areas of salt marsh of both tidal inundation regimes. *Patch Reefs* start to increase in number towards the southern portion of this region.

Region 3 encompasses Machipongo and Parting creeks (Fig. 17) and is dominated *High Marsh*, *Low Marsh* and *Flats-Marsh* assemblages and several areas of extensive flats that contain substantial *Patch Reefs*, largely privately managed for commercial purposes. Upland areas are typically in close proximity to *Subtidal Bottom* with relatively narrow marsh buffers. An area of manmade shoreline is concentrated at the town of Willis Wharf.
Figure 14. Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS for the entire study area. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories.
Figure 15. Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 1. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification.
Figure 16. Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 2. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification.
**Figure 17.** Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 3. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification.

**Habitat Categories**
- High Marsh
- Low Marsh
- Flats-Marsh
- High Tidal Flats
- Low Tidal Flats
- All Reefs
- Subtidal Bottom
- Manmade
- Non-Oyster

---

29
Region 4 (Fig. 18) is dominated by Hog Island Bay and the Low Tidal Flats found in its vicinity. Major portions of these flats are rarely exposed (e.g. only during storm events). Scattered Patch Reefs were observed throughout the flats and marsh complexes the northern portion of the region, but concentrations shift westward towards the mainland as Hog Island Bay broadens to the southern portion.

Region 5 (Fig. 19) includes the extensive High Tidal Flats and Low Tidal Flats just north and south of the town of Oyster and Magothy Bay. Concentrations of Patch Reefs are found throughout both types of flats, although these diminish in the central and southern portions of Magothy Bay and around Fisherman’s Island. A concentration of Manmade Shoreline was observed at Oyster Harbor.

Region 6 (Fig. 20) is dominated by the Low Tidal Flats of Cobb and South bays and the abundant Low Marsh on the west side of Smith Island. A large contiguous tract of High Marsh is located on the eastern and northern sides of Mockhorn Island. Although some scattered Patch Reefs were mapped throughout, the highest concentrations were associated with areas of marsh and flats near New Marsh, Man and Boy Marsh and Elkins/Eckichy Marsh.
Figure 18. Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 4. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Marsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats-Marsh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Reefs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtidal Bottom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manmade</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Oyster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 19. Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 5. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification.
Figure 20. Potential oyster habitats mapped in GIS in the vicinity of Region 6. See Table 1 and the Methods section for descriptions of habitat categories and Figure 2 for regional stratification.
Oyster Demographics

Oyster sampling took place from November 30, 2007 to July 2, 2008. Overall, 45,994 and 11,370 live and box oysters, respectively, were counted and measured.

Habitat-specific Density and Size

Live oyster density ranged from 0.03 - 1,364 oysters/m² for non-manmade shoreline habitats and 363 - 927 oysters/linear m for Manmade Shoreline (Table 6). The highest densities were observed on the various reefs, especially Patch Reefs, Privately Managed Reefs and State Restoration Reefs. Marsh and flats habitats lower in the intertidal zone had higher oyster densities as well.

Box oyster densities ranged from 0.01-334 oyster/m² for non-manmade shoreline habitats that were sampled and 70-111 oysters/linear m for Manmade Shoreline (Table 6). Similar patterns were seen as described above for live oyster density.

Although we spread sampling throughout the study area for all habitats, we specifically stratified Patch Reef samples regionally as described previously. Live and box oyster density ranged from 477-1,364 oysters/m² and 143-334 oysters/m², respectively. The highest densities were seen in Regions 3 and 4 (Table 7).

Small Patch Reefs with a low, medium and high density of patches had live oyster densities of 210, 468 and 710 oysters/m², respectively; and box oyster densities of 49, 110 and 166 oysters/m², respectively. Developing sub-strata for marsh sampling proved very important in determining overall densities for those habitats. As expected much higher densities were observed in and adjacent to the small channels that bisect marsh, at the marsh open water interface and in areas where marsh and flats meet (e.g. see Table 8).
Table 6. Estimated live and box oyster densities (#/m²) for all habitat categories included in this study (see Table 7 for densities on *Patch Reefs* by region and the Results text for *Small Patch Reefs* by patch density categories).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat</th>
<th>Live Oyster Density (#/m²)a</th>
<th>Boxb Oyster Density (#/m²)a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marsh</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>0.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Flats-Marsh</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtidal Bottom</strong>c</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patch Reefs</strong></td>
<td>477-1,364</td>
<td>143-334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Small Patch Reefs</strong></td>
<td>210-710</td>
<td>49-166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fringing Reefs</strong></td>
<td>84</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>State Restoration Reefs</strong></td>
<td>543</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Privately Managed Reefs</strong></td>
<td>889</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manmade Shoreline</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulkhead</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rip Rap (non-shell)</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Rip Rap</td>
<td>363</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknownd</td>
<td>694</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- a Density units for all the *Manmade Shoreline* categories are #/linear m of shoreline as opposed to #/m²
- b Box oysters are dead, but with shell valves still articulated
- c Densities for this category are assumed and were not measured within the scope of this study
- d Data for *Bulkheads* used to estimate this category
Table 7. Estimated live and box oyster densities (#/m²) on Patch Reefs for the six regions in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Live Oyster Density (#/m²)</th>
<th>Box⁴ Oyster Density (#/m²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>801</td>
<td>239</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1,364</td>
<td>334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1,342</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>848</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>477</td>
<td>148</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁴ Box oysters are dead, but with shell valves still articulated

Table 8. Example of estimated live and box oyster densities (#/m²) within sub-strata in a Low Marsh area. Relative proportion (% area) of sub-strata refers to this specific Low Marsh area only. See Methodology and Figure 13 for more details on sub-strata.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-strata</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Live Oyster Density (#/m²)</th>
<th>Box⁴ Oyster Density (#/m²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Marsh Proper</td>
<td>68.8</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel Buffer (2m marsh adjacent to small channels)</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Channel (mud bank exposed at low tide and subtidal area)</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broad Water Interface (2m marsh &amp; bank exposed at low tide adjacent to Subtidal or Flats habitats)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>61.12</td>
<td>5.40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁴ Overall Weighted Estimate 100 1.03 0.06

Box oysters are dead, but with shell valves still articulated
Mean live and box oyster shell height ranged from 27-43 mm and 39-51 mm, respectively (Table 9). Size frequency distributions of live oysters tended were skewed to smaller sizes (especially those < 50 mm) for most habitats, generally reflecting a high abundance of 0 – 1 year class oysters (Fig. 21). Box oyster distribution shifted slightly towards larger sizes for each category (Fig. 22).

**Table 9.** Number of oysters sampled and mean (± SE) shell height for live and box oysters for all habitat categories included in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat</th>
<th>Live Oyster Shell Height (mm)</th>
<th>Box Oyster Shell Height (mm)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Mean (SE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marsh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>36 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>1,735</td>
<td>31 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats-Marsh</td>
<td>731</td>
<td>41 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidal Flats</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>35 (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>32 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>39,164</td>
<td>27 (0.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>1,602</td>
<td>36 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>30 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Restoration Reefs</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>42 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>618</td>
<td>38 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulkhead</td>
<td>968</td>
<td>35 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rip Rap (non-shell)</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>36 (1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Rip Rap</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>43 (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown(^b)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Box oysters are dead, but with shell valves still articulated.  
\(^b\) This category not sampled, but in subsequent models values from the Bulkhead category are used for this category.
Figure 21. Size distribution (shell height, mm) of live oysters for several habitat category groupings with the number of individual oysters sampled for each noted in the upper right hand corner of each graph.
Figure 22. Size distribution (shell height, mm) of box oysters for several habitat category groupings with the number of individual oysters sampled for each noted in the upper right hand corner of each graph.

- **Patch Reefs**
- **Small Patch Reefs**
- **Marshes (combined)**
- **Fringing Reefs**
- **Manmade Shoreline**
- **Other Reefs**

Shell Height (3 mm bins)
Biomass relationships

We estimated dry tissue biomass density (g/m²) based on individual oyster shell height and size-dry tissue biomass equations generated for habitat groupings (Table 10). Mean individual oyster biomass ranged from 0.06-0.33 g (Table 11). The lowest and highest individual oyster biomasses were measured from Low Tidal Flats and Bulkheads, respectively. Biomass density ranged from <0.01 g/m² on tidal flats to ~100 g/m² on Patch Reefs and Small Patch Reefs (Table 11).

Table 10. Shell height-dry tissue biomass relationships used for this study. Equations and R² values were derived from best-fit power function regressions (where x=shell height [mm] and y=dry tissue biomass [g]).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat</th>
<th>Size-Biomass Relationship Used</th>
<th>Equation (x=shell height, mm)</th>
<th>R²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>High &amp; Low Marsh pooled data</td>
<td>y=0.000007*x^{2.67}</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>Flats-Marsh data</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>Flats-Marsh data</td>
<td>y=0.000009*x^{2.54}</td>
<td>0.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>Patch, Small Patch and State Restoration Reef pooled data</td>
<td>y=0.000001*x^{2.45}</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>Patch, Small Patch and State Restoration Reef pooled data</td>
<td>y=0.000005*x^{2.79}</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>y=0.000009*x^{2.59}</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulkhead</td>
<td>Bulkhead (from Lynnhaven River)²</td>
<td>y=0.00004*x^{2.41}</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rip Rap (non-shell)</td>
<td>Patch, Small Patch and State Restoration Reef pooled data</td>
<td>y=0.00001*x^{2.45}</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Rip Rap</td>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>y=0.000005*x^{2.79}</td>
<td>0.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² Regressions developed using oyster on bulkheads in the Lynnhaven R. (Luckenbach and Ross, 2006)

b Data for Bulkheads used to estimate this category
Table 11. Mean (± SE) estimated individual oyster dry tissue biomass (g) and estimated dry tissue biomass density (g/m²) for all habitat categories included in this study (see Table 12 for densities on Patch Reefs by region and the Results text for Small Patch Reefs by patch density categories).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat</th>
<th>Individual Oyster Dry Tissue Biomass (g)</th>
<th>Oyster Dry Tissue Biomass Density (g/m²)a</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marsh</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>0.19 (0.03)</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>0.18 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tidal Flats</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>0.10 (0.08)</td>
<td>0.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>0.06 (0.01)</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtidal Bottom</strong>b</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Patch Reefs</strong></td>
<td>0.07 (0.001)</td>
<td>33.9-96.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>0.14 (0.02)</td>
<td>29.8-100.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>0.14 (0.01)</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Restoration Reefs</td>
<td>0.15 (0.01)</td>
<td>79.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>0.21 (0.01)</td>
<td>184.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Manmade Shoreline</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulkhead</td>
<td>0.33 (0.01)</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rip Rap (non-shell)</td>
<td>0.10 (0.01)</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Rip Rap</td>
<td>0.25 (0.03)</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknownc</td>
<td></td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Density units for all the Manmade Shoreline categories are g/linear m of shoreline as opposed to g/m²

b Densities for this category are assumed and were not measured within the scope of this study

c Data for Bulkheads used to estimate this category
Although we spread sampling throughout the study area for all habitats, we specifically stratified *Patch Reef* samples regionally as described previously. Oyster biomass density ranged from 34 - 97 oysters/m² across these regions, with the highest densities in Regions 3 and 4 (Table 12). *Small Patch Reefs* with a low, medium and high density of patches had oyster biomass densities of 30, 66 and 101 g/m², respectively.

**Table 12.** Estimated oyster dry tissue biomass density (g/m²) on *Patch Reefs* for the six regions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Oyster Dry Tissue Biomass Density (g/m²)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Spatial distribution**

The spatial distribution of live oysters throughout the study area is one of the most important products of this study. Fully exploring this distribution requires utilizing the accompanying GIS product. Here we present one example area for descriptive purposes (Fig. 23). This plot of an area near Oyster, VA was exported from ArcGIS and is similar in nature to the previous habitat distribution plots (see Figs. 15 - 20), except habitat-specific oyster density (#/m²) estimates were used (as reported in Tables 6 and 7). Although this is one example of the potential GIS products, other metrics can be evaluated, including incorporation into various potential geospatial analyses.
Figure 23. Habitat-based oyster density distribution near Oyster, VA and mapped in GIS to provide an example of one of the final GIS products of this study.
Overall stock assessment

Habitat-specific oyster density estimates were combined with the aerial footprint of those habitats to produce estimates of the total number of oyster within the study area and by habitat. The results indicate that over 3.2 billion oysters with a dry tissue biomass of 419,700 kg are found in the study area. Reef habitats contain 87% of these oysters with ~12% found in the various Marsh habitats (Table 13). Accordingly, Reef habitats contain 81% of the oyster dry tissue biomass with > 15% found in the various Marsh habitats (Table 14). Over 1 billion oysters were estimated to inhabit Patch Reefs and Small Patch Reefs (Table 15). These two habitats account for 72% and 58% of oysters and dry tissue biomass, respectively (Table 15). Overall, 23.8 million oysters containing 7,100 kg of dry tissue biomass are estimated to inhabit Manmade Shoreline (Tables 13 & 14). Most of these are found on Bulkheads (Table 16).

Table 13. Estimated total live oyster abundance (#) and relative proportion of population (%) for major oyster habitats mapped in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Live Oyster Abundance (millions)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>265.7</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats-Marsh</td>
<td>74.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>&lt;0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtidal Bottom</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Reefs a</td>
<td>2,799.7</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Manmade Shorelines</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>3,217.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a Includes Patch, Small Patch, Fringing, State Restoration and Privately Managed reefs
Table 14. Estimated total live oyster dry tissue abundance (kg) and relative proportion of the population (%) for major oyster habitats mapped in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Live Oyster Dry Tissue Biomass (thousands kg)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>47.3</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flats-Marsh</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>&lt;0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtidal Bottom</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Reefs a</td>
<td>339.5</td>
<td>80.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Manmade Shoreline</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>419.7</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>

*a This includes Patch, Small Patch, Fringing, State Restoration and Privately Managed reefs

Table 15. Total live oyster abundance (# and dry tissue biomass) and relative proportion (%) of the overall oyster population for different Reef categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Abundance (millions)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
<th>Dry Tissue Biomass (thousands of kg)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>1,101.9</td>
<td>34.2</td>
<td>156.5</td>
<td>37.3</td>
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<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>1,226.6</td>
<td>38.1</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td>20.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>446.4</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>92.4</td>
<td>22.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>14.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Restoration Reefs a</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>0.4</td>
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</table>

*a Because locations of VMRC reefs have not been digitized to date, it was difficult to ascertain which reefs should be included in this category; therefore, this area may be substantially low with some grouped in the Patch Reef category above.
Table 16. Total live oyster abundance (# and dry tissue biomass) and relative proportion of the overall oyster population for different Manmade Shoreline categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Abundance (millions)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
<th>Dry Tissue Biomass (thousands of kg)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Bulkhead</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rip Rap (non-shell)</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shell Rip Rap</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>&lt;0.1</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>&lt;0.1</td>
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</table>

The overall estimated size distribution for the entire population in the study area reflects the habitat-specific size distributions (Fig. 21), with 1.9 billion (60%) of these oysters expected to be “spat” (i.e. oysters that settled during the summer of 2007; Fig. 24). Our data indicate that 147 million (5%) “market-sized” oysters (i.e. >75 mm) are spread throughout the study area (Figure 24).

Figure 24. Estimated total oyster abundance for entire study area by shell height (mm) with standard state stock assessment size categories of “spat” (<35 mm), “smalls” (35-75 mm) and “markets” (>75 mm) noted by vertical gray lines.
DISCUSSION

This study provides the first quantitative assessment of oyster population abundance on a region wide scale in the coastal bays on the seaside of Virginia’s Eastern Shore. Our estimate of 3.2 billion oysters in this region exceeds the most recent population estimate of 1.8 billion oysters for the entire Virginia portion of Chesapeake Bay produced by the VIMS Chesapeake Bay Oyster Population Estimate (CBOPE: http://web.vims.edu/mollusc/cbope/VAPDFfiles/VABasin2006.pdf). At the time of our sampling, Dec. 2007 – June 2008, the oyster population was comprised of a wide range of sizes representing several year classes. The most abundant size class of oyster were those categorized as “spat” that measured <35 mm and are young-of-the-year that settled during the summer of 2007. Over 1 billion oysters are estimated to fall within the “small” category (35 – 75mm in shell height) and likely represent oysters between 1 and 2 years old in most cases. Our estimates also include nearly 150 million oysters in the “market-size” category. We note also that these estimates do not account for the numbers of oysters that were removed by legal and illegal harvest prior to and during our survey period. Perhaps more important than the fisheries size class designations is the fact that the size frequency distribution presented in Fig. 24 is one that suggests a self-sustaining growing population. Large numbers of recruits and reasonably good survival to reproductive age (which occurs well before oysters attain 75 mm) are indications that, if suitable habitat is available, the population has a significant potential to expand.

It is interesting to note that the dominance of Patch Reefs, in terms of oyster abundance, is similar to what we observed during a similar evaluation in the Lynnhaven River basin, which is a small tidal tributary near the mouth of Chesapeake Bay. In the Lynnhaven basin, like the seaside of the Eastern Shore, the majority of oysters are located in the intertidal zone. Oyster recruitment rates in both systems have been relatively high in recent years. Based on this previous study and our anecdotal observations, we
made a decision to focus oyster sampling effort on Patch Reefs, and it appears this was important since nearly 90% of oysters were found within that habitat.

Although we are confident in the rigor of our mapping techniques and population estimates, there are several limitations to our study design that deserve discussion. This study focused entirely on intertidal oyster habitats; therefore, no subtidal habitats were included in our mapping or sampling. While there are undoubtedly some subtidal oysters present in this area, as with other high salinity areas of the lower Middle and South Atlantic coasts of the U.S., *C. virginica* in this area occurs predominantly in the intertidal zone (Coen et al., 1999; Coen and Grizzle, 2007), where the lower limit of its distribution is determined by predation and competition (Galtsoff and Luce, 1930; Chestnut and Fahy, 1952; Dame, 1979; Ortega, 1981; O’Beirn et al., 1996) and the upper limit by physiological tolerance of exposure (Nichy and Menzel, 1967; Michener and Kenny, 1991; Roegner and Mann, 1995; Shumway, 1996). Furthermore, of the intertidal habitats studied, Fringe Reefs (especially those <30 m²) were likely underrepresented in our mapping. They were included in the marsh habitats when encountered during oyster sampling, but small fringing reefs along narrow channels may be important habitat that was under sampled in our study and should be a target of future monitoring.

We restricted oyster sampling to a period from December 2007 to June 2008 in an effort to evaluate every region after recruitment had occurred during the summer/fall 2007 and before settlement began during summer 2008. In doing so, we have avoided a population estimate that includes even higher numbers of recent recruits. Importantly, our assessment provides only a “snapshot” of the oyster population in the region. Intra- and inter-annual variation in recruitment dynamics can lead to highly variable oyster population size depending upon when samples are collected. The population assessment conducted here provides a benchmark against which to compare future stock assessments on regional or local scales.
Mapping and quantifying the oyster population with high a resolution over a scale as large as the seaside of Virginia’s Eastern Shore required some practical compromises. For example, we started with the National Wetlands Inventory habitat maps and refined its categories based on aerial over flights and aerial imagery. The alternative of building this data from the “ground up” with oyster populations in mind might have been preferable, but was impractical with the resources available. Future focus on refining delineations of these habitats would be useful.

These limitations notwithstanding, the spatially-explicit oyster population GIS product developed through this work provides a valuable tool for guiding fisheries resource management and restoration activities for oysters in this region. We suggest that future efforts build on this product by refining specific habitat designations on smaller spatial scales. This would allow for refinements in habitat-specific oyster density estimates and improve the overall oyster population estimate. Ultimately, the usefulness of this product lies in integrating it with other GIS layers (e.g., hydrological, water quality, disease distributions, recruitment rates) to elucidate the factors affecting oyster distribution and abundance throughout the region. We recommend that it serve as a baseline against which to measure the success of local restoration efforts and evaluate region-wide changes in *C. virginica* populations related to such factors as fishing pressure, disease dynamics and climate change.
LITERATURE CITED


National Watershed Boundary Dataset. Coordinated effort between the United States Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS), the United States Geological Survey (USGS), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Watershed Boundary Dataset (WBD) was created from a variety of sources from each state and aggregated into a standard national layer for use in strategic planning and accountability. Watershed Boundary Dataset for Virginia (HUC 6). Available URL: http://datagateway.nrcs.usda.gov [Accessed 01/02/2007].


### LIST OF APPENDICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appendix</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>National Wetlands Inventory codes in each of our habitat categories. Not all categories are presented and discussed in this report. Note that Project Group Code and Cat # are ESL coding that can be found in the final GIS products</td>
<td>53</td>
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<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Total area and relative proportion for oyster habitat categories (in order of habitat dominance) and total amount of manmade shoreline for the six regions of this study in order of habitat dominance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>Total area and relative proportion for oyster reef habitat subcategories (in order of dominance) for the six regions of this study in order of habitat dominance</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>NOAA Seaside Oyster Assessment-Modified National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Habitats: Metadata</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>NOAA Seaside Oyster Assessment-Patch Reefs: Metadata</td>
<td>72</td>
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<tr>
<td>VI</td>
<td>NOAA Seaside Oyster Assessment-Manmade Shoreline: Metadata</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Abbreviated metadata for the Virginia portion of the National Watershed Boundary Dataset used to delineate the six regions for this study</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>Metadata for the original National Wetlands Inventory polygons</td>
<td>90</td>
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<th>Potential C.v. Habitat</th>
<th>Subtidal or Intertidal</th>
<th>General Habitat</th>
<th>Inundation Regime</th>
<th>Project Group Code</th>
<th>Cat. #</th>
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APPENDIX I (cont). National Wetlands Inventory codes in each of our habitat categories. Not all categories are presented and discussed in this report (e.g. AQ_BED which is “aquatic bed”).

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<th>Inundation Regime</th>
<th>Project Group Code</th>
<th>Cat. #</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PUSUhs</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NON_OYS</td>
<td>NON_OYS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pf</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NON_OYS</td>
<td>NON_OYS</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix II. Total area and relative proportion for oyster habitat categories (in order of habitat dominance) and total amount of manmade shoreline for the six regions of this study in order of habitat dominance (see Table 1 for category descriptions and Figure 2 for regional stratification).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Total Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Subtidal Bottom</td>
<td>7,387</td>
<td>50.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>3,677</td>
<td>25.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>2,803</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>506</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flats-Marsh</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Reefs</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Manmade Shoreline</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) This metric is linear km instead of hectares
Appendix II (cont.). Total area and relative proportion for oyster habitat categories (in order of habitat dominance) and total amount of manmade shoreline for the six regions of this study in order of habitat dominance (see Table 1 for category descriptions and Figure 2 for regional stratification).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Total Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>1,444</td>
<td>44.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtidal Bottom</td>
<td>511</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flats-Marsh</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Reefs</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Manmade Shoreline</td>
<td>3.3 a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>15,409</td>
<td>57.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>3,930</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtidal Bottom</td>
<td>3,601</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>3,189</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flats-Marsh</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Reefs</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Manmade Shoreline</td>
<td>0.6 a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*a This metric is linear km instead of hectares*
**Appendix II (cont.).** Total area and relative proportion for oyster habitat categories (in order of habitat dominance) and total amount of manmade shoreline for the six regions of this study in order of habitat dominance (see Table 1 for category descriptions and Figure 2 for regional stratification).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Total Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>3,774</td>
<td>34.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtidal Bottom</td>
<td>2,798</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>1,495</td>
<td>13.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>1,485</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>883</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flats-Marsh</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Reefs</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Manmade Shoreline</td>
<td>2.2 (^a)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Total Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Low Tidal Flats</td>
<td>8,726</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low Marsh</td>
<td>3,735</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Marsh</td>
<td>2,199</td>
<td>12.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Subtidal Bottom</td>
<td>1,805</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High Tidal Flats</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flats-Marsh</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Reefs</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All Manmade Shoreline</td>
<td>0 (^a)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) This metric is linear km instead of hectares.
Appendix III. Total area and relative proportion for oyster reef habitat subcategories (in order of dominance) for the six regions of this study in order of habitat dominance (see Table 1 for category descriptions and Figure 2 for regional stratification).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Total Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Restoration Reefs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Restoration Reefs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Restoration Reefs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Because locations of VMRC reefs have not been digitized to date, it was difficult to ascertain which reefs should be included in this category; therefore, this area may be substantially low with some grouped in the Patch Reef category above.
Appendix III (cont.). Total area and relative proportion for oyster reef habitat sub-categories (in order of dominance) for the six regions of this study in order of habitat dominance (see Table 1 for category descriptions and Figure 2 for regional stratification).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Habitat Category</th>
<th>Total Area (Hectares)</th>
<th>Relative Proportion (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Restoration Reefs</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Restoration Reefs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small Patch Reefs</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Patch Reefs</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Fringing Reefs</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Privately Managed Reefs</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>State Restoration Reefs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Because locations of VMRC reefs have not been digitized to date, it was difficult to ascertain which reefs should be included in this category; therefore, this area may be substantially low with some grouped in the Patch Reef category above.
Appendix IV

NOAA Seaside Oyster Assessment-Modified National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Habitats (clipped by reefs)

Metadata:

Identification Information:
  Citation:
  Citation Information:
  Originator:
  Ross, P.G. and Luckenbach, M.L., College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory
  Publication Date: 12/31/08
  Title:
  NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_modifiedNWI_polygons_clipped by reefs
  Geospatial Data Presentation Form: vector digital data
  Other Citation Details:
  Online Linkage:
  \V155895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Eastern Shore Projects\Seaside Oyster Stock Assessment\NOAA Seaside Oyster Mapping-ESL 2008\NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_reefs_polygons_main.shp
  Description:
  Abstract:
  These data are part of a comprehensive survey to describe and quantify oyster habitat and the oyster population on the Seaside of Virginia's Eastern Shore. Overall, we have included aquaculture, restoration and traditional natural reef structure in addition to other habitats: marsh and flats of varying tidal inundation regimes and manmade shoreline. The specific data in this shapefile represent non-reef features as polygons: especially marshes and mudflats. Polygons were extracted from National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) data (for details and original metadata see <http://www.fws.gov/nwi/>) and re-classified and in some cases modified with respect to pertinent oyster habitat categories based on Virginia Base Map Program 1-m resolution aerial images (2002 & 2007). Tidal inundation modifiers were established based on aerial imagery and local knowledge. Companion datasets for oyster reef polygons and manmade shoreline data are available.
  Purpose:
These data were developed to support ongoing oyster restoration and research by various federal, state and NGO groups within the marshes and coastal bays of the seaside portion of the Eastern Shore of Virginia as funded by the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program.

**Supplemental Information:**

**Time_Period_of_Content:**
**Time_Period_Information:**
**Range_of_Dates/Times:**
**Beginning_Date:** 3/1/07
**Ending_Date:** 7/1/08
**Currentness_Reference:** publication date
**Status:**
**Progress:** Complete
**Maintenance_and_Update_Frequency:** None planned

**Spatial_Domain:**
**Bounding_Coordinates:**
**West_Bounding_Coordinate:** -75.970353
**East_Bounding_Coordinate:** -75.282922
**North_Bounding_Coordinate:** 38.015916
**South_Bounding_Coordinate:** 37.070143

**Keywords:**
**Theme:**
**Theme_Keyword_Thesaurus:** REQUIRED: Reference to a formally registered thesaurus or a similar authoritative source of theme keywords.
**Theme_Keyword:** oyster
**Theme_Keyword:** oyster restoration
**Theme_Keyword:** population estimate
**Theme_Keyword:** shoreline survey
**Theme_Keyword:** oyster biomass
**Theme_Keyword:** stock assessment
**Theme_Keyword:** habitat
**Theme_Keyword:** NWI
**Theme_Keyword:** National Wetlands Inventory

**Place:**
**Place_Keyword:** Eastern Shore
**Place_Keyword:** coastal bays
**Place_Keyword:** mid-Atlantic United States
**Place_Keyword:** Virginia

**Access_Constraints:**
Access to be determined by funding agency: Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program

**Use_Constraints:**
Under no circumstances can this data be published in any peer-reviewed outlet without the direct consent of the authors
Point_of_Contact:

Contact_Information:

Contact_Person_Primary:

Contact_Person: P.G. Ross

Contact_Organization:
College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory

Contact_Position: Marine Scientist, Sr.

Contact_Voice_Telephone: 757-787-5816

Contact_Electronic_Mail_Address: pg@vims.edu

Data_Set_Credit:
Ross, P.G. and Luckenbach, M.L., College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory

Native_Data_Set_Environment:
Microsoft Windows XP Version 5.1 (Build 2600) Service Pack 3; ESRI ArcCatalog 9.1.0.722

Data_Quality_Information:

Attribute_Accuracy:

Attribute_Accuracy_Report:

Completeness_Report:

Positional_Accuracy:

Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy:

Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy_Report:

Quantitative_Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy_Assessment:

Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy_Value: 10 m (estimated on average)

Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy_Explanation:

Vertical_Positional_Accuracy:

Vertical_Positional_Accuracy_Report: n/a

Lineage:

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Process_Step:
Process_Description: Dataset copied.
Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation: \V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Lynnhaven Projects\Lynnhaven Data\Final, Lynnhaven Mapping\Lynnhaven Mapping-Line

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Direct_Spatial_Reference_Method: Vector
Point_and_Vector_Object_Information:
SDTS_Terms_Description:
SDTS_Point_and_Vector_Object_Type: G-polygon
Point_and_Vector_Object_Count: 4489

Spatial_Reference_Information:
HorizontalCoordinate_System_Definition:
Planar:
Map_Projection:
Map_Projection_Name: Lambert Conformal Conic
Lambert_Conformal_Conic:
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Standard_Parallel: 37.966667
Longitude_of_Central_Meridian: -78.500000
Latitude_of_Projection_Origin: 36.333333
False_Easting: 11482916.666667
False_Northing: 3280833.333333
Planar_Coordinate_Information:
Planar_Coordinate_Encoding_Method: coordinate pair
Coordinate_Representation:
Abscissa_Resolution: 0.000512
Ordinate_Resolution: 0.000512
Planar_Distance_Units: survey feet
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Horizontal_Datum_Name: North American Datum of 1983
Ellipsoid_Name: Geodetic Reference System 80
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Denominator_of_Flattening_Ratio: 298.257222

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Entity_Type:
Entity_Type_Label:
NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_modifiedNWI_polygons_clipped by reefs
Entity_Type_Definition: Patch and fringe reefs with >50% shell-based footprint
Entity_Type_Definition_Source: Eastern Shore Lab (ESL)
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Attribute_Definition: Habitat-specific estimated individual oyster dry tissue biomass (g per oyster)
Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
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Attribute_Label: FID
Attribute_Definition: Internal feature number.
Attribute_Definition_Source: ESRI
Attribute_Domain_Values:
Unrepresentable_Domain: Sequential unique whole numbers that are automatically generated.
Attribute:
Attribute_Label: Shape
Attribute_Definition: Feature geometry.
Attribute_Definition_Source: ESRI
Attribute_Domain_Values:
Unrepresentable_Domain: Coordinates defining the features.
Attribute:
Attribute_Label: AREA
Attribute_Definition: Feature area in square feet
Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute_Label: PROJECT_GR
Attribute Definition:
Specific reef habitat category: see companion report for details
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute Label: CAT
Attribute Definition: Habitat numeric code
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute Label: REGION
Attribute Definition: Study area region (1-6)
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute Label: AREA_M2
Attribute Definition: Feature area in square meters
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute Label: CVNUM_M2
Attribute Definition: Habitat-specific oyster density estimate (# per square meter)
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute Label: CVBIO_kg
Attribute Definition: Total estimated oyster dry tissue biomass (kg) for the feature (based on feature area, oyster abundance and mean individual oyster biomass
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute Label: TOTCVNUM
Attribute Definition: Estimated total number of oysters per feature (based on area and habitat-specific oyster density)
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute Label: ATTRIBUTE
Attribute Definition: Original NWI habitat code
Attribute:
Attribute Label: CVBIOg_M2
Attribute Definition: Oyster dry tissue biomass (g per m2)
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL

Overview Description:

Distribution Information:

Resource Description: Downloadable Data
Standard Order Process:
Digital Form:
Digital Transfer Information:
Transfer Size: 0.673

Metadata Reference Information:

Metadata Date: 20081029
Metadata Contact:
Contact Information:
Contact Person Primary:
Contact Person: P.G. Ross
Contact Organization:
College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory
Contact Position: Marine Scientist, Sr.
Contact Address:
Address Type: mailing address
Address: PO Box 350
City: Wachapreague
State or Province: VA
Postal Code: 23350
Country: USA
Contact Voice Telephone: 757-787-5816
Contact Electronic Mail Address: pg@vims.edu
Metadata Standard Name: FGDC Content Standards for Digital Geospatial Metadata
Metadata Time Convention: local time
Metadata Access Constraints: None
Metadata Use Constraints:
Under no circumstances can this data be published in any peer-reviewed outlet without the direct consent of the authors
Metadata Extensions:
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Profile Name: ESRI Metadata Profile
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Generated by mp version 2.8.6 on Wed Oct 29 09:12:42 2008
Appendix V

NOAA Seaside Oyster Assessment-Reefs

Metadata:

Identification Information:
Citation:
Citation Information:
Originator:
Ross, P.G. and Luckenbach, M.L., College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory
Publication Date: 12/31/08
Title: NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_patchreefs_polygons_main
Geospatial Data Presentation Form: vector digital data
Other Citation Details:
Online Linkage:
\V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Eastern Shore Projects\Seaside Oyster Stock Assessment\NOAA Seaside Oyster Mapping-ESL 2008\NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_reefs_polygons_main.shp
Description:
Abstract:
These data are part of a comprehensive survey to describe and quantify oyster habitat and the oyster population on the Seaside of Virginia's Eastern Shore. Overall, we have included aquaculture, restoration and traditional natural reef structure in addition to other habitats: marsh and flats of varying tidal inundation regimes and manmade shoreline. The specific data in this shapefile represent isolated patch and finge reef features as polygons. Polygons were digitized based on Virginia Base Map Program 1-m resolution aerial images (2002 & 2007). Aerials overflights were undertaken to evaluate the presence of reefs that were suspected based on these images. Companion datasets for oyster habitat polygons modified from National Wetlands Inventory and manmade shoreline data are available.
Purpose:
These data were developed to support ongoing oyster restoration and research by various federal, state and NGO groups within the marshes and coastal bays of the seaside portion of the Eastern Shore of Virginia as funded by the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program.
Supplemental Information:
Time Period of Content:
Time_Period_Information:
Range_of_Dates/Times:
Beginning_Date: 3/1/07
Ending_Date: 7/1/08
Currentness_Reference: publication date
Status:
Progress: Complete
Maintenance_and_Update_Frequency: None planned
Spatial_Domain:
Bounding_Coordinates:
West_Bounding_Coordinate: -75.967180
East_Bounding_Coordinate: -75.314267
North_Bounding_Coordinate: 38.021424
South_Bounding_Coordinate: 37.084131
Keywords:
Theme:
Theme_Keyword_Thesaurus:
REQUIRED: Reference to a formally registered thesaurus or a similar authoritative source of theme keywords.
Theme_Keyword: oyster
Theme_Keyword: oyster restoration
Theme_Keyword: population estimate
Theme_Keyword: shoreline survey
Theme_Keyword: oyster biomass
Theme_Keyword: stock assessment
Theme_Keyword: habitat
Place:
Place_Keyword: Eastern Shore
Place_Keyword: coastal bays
Place_Keyword: mid-Atlantic United States
Place_Keyword: Virginia
Access_Constraints:
Access to be determined by funding agency: Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program
Use_Constraints:
Under no circumstances can this data be published in any peer-reviewed outlet without the direct consent of the authors
Point_of_Contact:
Contact_Information:
Contact_Person_Primary:
Contact_Person: P.G. Ross
Contact_Organization:
College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory
Contact_Position: Marine Scientist, Sr.
Contact_Voice_Telephone: 757-787-5816
Contact_Electronic_Mail_Address: pg@vims.edu
Data_Set_Credit:
Ross, P.G. and Luckenbach, M.L., College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory

Native Data Set Environment:
Microsoft Windows XP Version 5.1 (Build 2600) Service Pack 3; ESRI ArcCatalog 9.1.0.722

Data Quality Information:

Attribute Accuracy:
Attribute Accuracy Report:

Completeness Report:

Positional Accuracy:
Horizontal Positional Accuracy:
Horizontal Positional Accuracy Report:

Quantitative Horizontal Positional Accuracy Assessment:
Horizontal Positional Accuracy Value: 5 m
Horizontal Positional Accuracy Explanation:

Vertical Positional Accuracy:
Vertical Positional Accuracy Report: n/a
Lineage:
Process Step:
Process Description: Dataset copied.
Source Used Citation Abbreviation:
\V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Lynnhaven Projects\Lynnhaven Data\Final, Humes\Humes Line

Process Step:
Process Description: Dataset copied.
Source Used Citation Abbreviation:
\V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Lynnhaven Projects\Lynnhaven Data\Final, Lynnhaven Mapping\Lynnhaven Mapping-Line

Process Step:
Process Description: Dataset moved.
Source Used Citation Abbreviation:
\V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Lynnhaven Projects\Lynnhaven Data\Lynnhaven Assessment-ESL Final GIS Data Bundle\Lynnhaven Mapping-Line

Process Step:
Process_Description: Metadata imported.
Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation: C:\DOCUME~1\pg\LOCALS~1\Temp\xml57.tmp

Process Step:
Process_Description: Metadata imported.
Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation: C:\DOCUME~1\pg\LOCALS~1\Temp\xml5B.tmp

Process Step:
Process_Description: Dataset copied.
Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation: \V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Eastern Shore Projects\Seaside Oyster Stock Assessment\NOAA Seaside Oyster Mapping-ESL 2007\NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_patchreefs_polygons

Process Step:
Process_Description: Dataset moved.
Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation: \V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Eastern Shore Projects\Seaside Oyster Stock Assessment\NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_patchreefs_polygons_main

Process Step:
Process_Description: Metadata imported.
Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation: C:\DOCUME~1\pg\LOCALS~1\Temp\xml70.tmp

Spatial_Data_Organization_Information:
  Direct_Spatial_Reference_Method: Vector
  SDTS_Terms_Description:
    SDTS_Point_and_Vector_Object_Type: G-polygon
  Point_and_Vector_Object_Count: 4830

Spatial_Reference_Information:
  Horizontal_Coordinate_System_Definition:
    Planar:
      Map_Projection:
        Map_Projection_Name: Lambert Conformal Conic
      Lambert_Conformal_Conic:
        Standard_Parallel: 36.766667
        Standard_Parallel: 37.966667
        Longitude_of_Central_Meridian: -78.500000
        Latitude_of_Projection_Origin: 36.333333
        False_Easting: 11482916.666667
        False_Northing: 3280833.333333
      Planar_Coordinate_Information:
        Planar_Coordinate_Encoding_Method: coordinate pair
        Coordinate_Representation:
          Abscissa_Resolution: 0.000512
          Ordinate_Resolution: 0.000512
          Planar_Distance_Units: survey feet
        Geodetic_Model:
Horizontal_Datum_Name: North American Datum of 1983
Ellipsoid_Name: Geodetic Reference System 80
Semi-major_Axis: 6378137.000000
Denominator_of_Flattening_Ratio: 298.257222

Entity_and_Attribute_Information:
  Detailed_Description:
  Entity_Type:
  Entity_Type_Label: NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_patchreefs_polygons_main
  Entity_Type_Definition: Patch and fringe reefs with >50% shell-based footprint
  Entity_Type_Definition_Source: Eastern Shore Lab (ESL)
  Attribute:
  Attribute_Label: FID
  Attribute_Definition: Internal feature number.
  Attribute_Definition_Source: ESRI
  Attribute_Domain_Values:
  Unrepresentable_Domain: Sequential unique whole numbers that are automatically generated.
  Attribute:
  Attribute_Label: Shape
  Attribute_Definition: Feature geometry.
  Attribute_Definition_Source: ESRI
  Attribute_Domain_Values:
  Unrepresentable_Domain: Coordinates defining the features.
  Attribute:
  Attribute_Label: AREA
  Attribute_Definition: Feature area in square feet
  Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
  Attribute:
  Attribute_Label: SUBTIDAL_O
  Attribute_Definition: Habitat modifier for ESL use
  Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
  Attribute:
  Attribute_Label: GENERAL_HA
  Attribute_Definition: General habitat type with specific reference to 2-D vs. 3-D structure
  Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
  Attribute:
  Attribute_Label: INUNDATION
  Attribute_Definition: Estimated tidal inundation: codes refer to low, mid or high intertidal (low exposed occasionally, mid exposed most low tides and high exposed for extended periods during every tidal cycle)
  Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
  Attribute:
  Attribute_Label: PROJECT_GR
  Attribute_Definition:

**Attribute**

**Attribute Label:** CAT
**Attribute Definition:** Habitat numeric code
**Attribute Definition Source:** VIMS-ESL

**Attribute:**

**Attribute Label:** REGION
**Attribute Definition:** Study area region (1-6)
**Attribute Definition Source:** VIMS-ESL

**Attribute:**

**Attribute Label:** AREA_M2
**Attribute Definition:** Feature area in square meters
**Attribute Definition Source:** VIMS-ESL

**Attribute:**

**Attribute Label:** CVNUM_M2
**Attribute Definition:** Habitat-specific oyster density estimate (# per square meter)
**Attribute Definition Source:** VIMS-ESL

**Attribute:**

**Attribute Label:** INDBIO_G
**Attribute Label:** CVBIO_KG

**Attribute:**

**Attribute Label:** INDBIO_g
**Attribute Definition:** Habitat-specific estimated individual oyster dry tissue biomass (g per oyster)
**Attribute Definition Source:** VIMS-ESL

**Attribute:**

**Attribute Label:** CVBIOG_M2
**Attribute Definition:** Oyster dry tissue biomass (g per m2)
**Attribute Definition Source:** VIMS-ESL

**Attribute:**

**Attribute Label:** CVBIO_kg
**Attribute Definition:** Total estimated oyster dry tissue biomass (kg) for the feature (based on feature area, oyster abundance and mean individual oyster biomass)
**Attribute Definition Source:** VIMS-ESL

**Attribute:**

**Attribute Label:** TOTCVNUM
**Attribute Definition:** Estimated total number of oysters per feature (based on area and habitat-specific oyster density)
**Attribute Definition Source:** VIMS-ESL

**Overview_Description:**
Entity and Attribute Overview:

Entity and Attribute Detail Citation:

Distribution Information:
Resource Description: Downloadable Data
Standard Order Process:
Digital Form:
Digital Transfer Information:
Transfer Size: 0.673

Metadata Reference Information:
Metadata Date: 20081029
Metadata Contact:
Contact Information:
Contact Person Primary:
Contact Person: P.G. Ross
Contact Organization:
College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory
Contact Position: Marine Scientist, Sr.
Contact Address:
Address Type: mailing address
Address: PO Box 350
City: Wachapreague
State or Province: VA
Postal Code: 23350
Country: USA
Contact Voice Telephone: 757-787-5816
Contact Electronic Mail Address: pg@vims.edu
Metadata Standard Name: FGDC Content Standards for Digital Geospatial Metadata
Metadata Time Convention: local time
Metadata Access Constraints: None
Metadata Use Constraints: Under no circumstances can this data be published in any peer-reviewed outlet without the direct consent of the authors
Metadata Extensions:
Online Linkage: <http://www.esri.com/metadata/esriprof80.html>
Profile Name: ESRI Metadata Profile
Metadata Extensions:
Online Linkage: <http://www.esri.com/metadata/esriprof80.html>
Profile_Name: ESRI Metadata Profile
Metadata_Extensions:
Online_Linkage: <http://www.esri.com/metadata/esriprof80.html>
Profile_Name: ESRI Metadata Profile
Metadata_Extensions:
Online_Linkage: <http://www.esri.com/metadata/esriprof80.html>
Profile_Name: ESRI Metadata Profile

Generated by mp version 2.8.6 on Wed Oct 29 09:21:33 200
Appendix VI

NOAA Seaside Oyster Assessment-Manmade Shoreline

Metadata:

Identification_Information:
   Citation:
   Originator:
   Ross, P.G. and Luckenbach, M.L., College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory
   Publication_Date: 12/31/08
   Title: NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_manmade_polylines
   Geospatial_Data_Presentation_Form: vector digital data
   Other_Citation_Details:
   Online_Linkage:
   \V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Eastern Shore Projects\Seaside Oyster Stock Assessment\NOAA Seaside Oyster Mapping-ESL 2008\NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_reefs_polygons_main.shp
   Description:
   Abstract:
   These data are part of a comprehensive survey to describe and quantify oyster habitat and the oyster population on the Seaside of Virginia's Eastern Shore. Overall, we have included aquaculture, restoration and traditional natural reef structure in addition to other habitats: marsh and flats of varying tidal inundation regimes and manmade shoreline. The specific data in this shapefile represent manmade shorelines as line features. They were digitized based on Virginia Base Map Program 1-m resolution aerial images (2002 & 2007). Most were subsequently visited via land or boat to assess the aerial % cover of oysters and to determine specific structure materials. Companion datasets for oyster habitat polygons modified from National Wetlands Inventory and oyster reef data are available.
   Purpose:
   These data were developed to support ongoing oyster restoration and research by various federal, state and NGO groups within the marshes and coastal bays of the seaside portion of the Eastern Shore of Virginia as funded by the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program.
   Supplemental_Information:
Time_Period_of_Content:
Time_Period_Information:
Range_of_Dates/Times:
Beginning_Date: 3/1/07
Ending_Date: 7/1/08
Currentness_Reference: publication date
Status:
Progress: Complete
Maintenance_and_Update_Frequency: None planned
Spatial_Domain:
Bounding_Coordinates:
West_Bounding_Coordinate: -75.969573
East_Bounding_Coordinate: -75.325003
North_Bounding_Coordinate: 38.021659
South_Bounding_Coordinate: 37.091316
Keywords:
Theme:
Theme_Keyword_Thesaurus:
REQUIRED: Reference to a formally registered thesaurus or a similar authoritative source of theme keywords.
Theme_Keyword: oyster
Theme_Keyword: oyster restoration
Theme_Keyword: population estimate
Theme_Keyword: shoreline survey
Theme_Keyword: oyster biomass
Theme_Keyword: stock assessment
Theme_Keyword: habitat
Place:
Place_Keyword: Eastern Shore
Place_Keyword: coastal bays
Place_Keyword: mid-Atlantic United States
Place_Keyword: Virginia
Access_Constraints:
Access to be determined by funding agency: Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program
Use_Constraints:
Under no circumstances can this data be published in any peer-reviewed outlet without the direct consent of the authors
Point_of_Contact:
Contact_Information:
Contact_Person_Primary: P.G. Ross
Contact_Organization: College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory
Contact_Position: Marine Scientist, Sr.
Contact_Voice_Telephone: 757-787-5816
Contact_Electronic_Mail_Address: pg@vims.edu
Data_Set_Credit:
Ross, P.G. and Luckenbach, M.L., College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory
Native_Data_Set_Environment:
Microsoft Windows XP Version 5.1 (Build 2600) Service Pack 3; ESRI ArcCatalog 9.1.0.722

Data_Quality_Information:
Attribute_Accuracy:
Attribute_Accuracy_Report:
Completeness_Report:
Positional_Accuracy:
Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy:
Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy_Report:
Quantitative_Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy_Assessment:
Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy_Value: 5 m
Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy_Explanation:
Vertical_Positional_Accuracy:
Vertical_Positional_Accuracy_Report: n/a
Lineage:
Process_Step:
Process_Description: Dataset copied.
Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation:
\V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Lynnhaven Projects\Lynnhaven Data\Final, Humes\Humes Line
Process_Step:
Process_Description: Dataset copied.
Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation:
\V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Lynnhaven Projects\Lynnhaven Data\Final, Lynnhaven Mapping\Lynnhaven Mapping-Line
Process_Step:
Process_Description: Dataset moved.
Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation:
\V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Lynnhaven Projects\Lynnhaven Data\Lynnhaven Assessment-ESL Final GIS Data Bundle\Lynnhaven Mapping-Line
Process Step:
Process Description: Metadata imported.
Source Used Citation Abbreviation: C:\DOCUME~1\pg\LOCALS~1\Temp\xml57.tmp

Process Step:
Process Description: Metadata imported.
Source Used Citation Abbreviation: C:\DOCUME~1\pg\LOCALS~1\Temp\xml5B.tmp

Process Step:
Process Description: Dataset copied.
Source Used Citation Abbreviation:
\V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Eastern Shore Projects\Seaside Oyster Stock Assessment\NOAA Seaside Oyster Mapping-ESL
2007\NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_patchreefs_polygons

Process Step:
Process Description: Dataset moved.
Source Used Citation Abbreviation:
\V15895\Data 1\GIS Data and Projects\Eastern Shore Projects\Seaside Oyster Stock Assessment\NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_patchreefs_polygons_main

Process Step:
Process Description: Metadata imported.
Source Used Citation Abbreviation: C:\DOCUME~1\pg\LOCALS~1\Temp\xml38.tmp

Spatial Data Organization Information:
  Direct Spatial Reference Method: Vector
  Point and Vector Object Information:
  SDTS Terms Description:
  SDTS Point and Vector Object Type: String
  Point and Vector Object Count: 325

Spatial Reference Information:
  Horizontal Coordinate System Definition:
    Planar:
    Map Projection:
    Map Projection Name: Lambert Conformal Conic
    Lambert Conformal Conic:
    Standard Parallel: 36.766667
    Standard Parallel: 37.966667
    Longitude of Central Meridian: -78.500000
    Latitude of Projection Origin: 36.333333
    False Easting: 11482916.666667
    False Northing: 3280833.333333
    Planar Coordinate Information:
    Planar Coordinate Encoding Method: coordinate pair
    Coordinate Representation:
    Abscissa Resolution: 0.000512
    Ordinate Resolution: 0.000512
    Planar Distance Units: survey feet
Geodetic Model:
Horizontal Datum Name: North American Datum of 1983
Ellipsoid Name: Geodetic Reference System 80
Semi-major Axis: 6378137.000000
Denominator of Flattening Ratio: 298.257222

Entity and Attribute Information:
Detailed Description:
Entity Type:
Entity Type Label: NOAA_Seaside_Oyster_Mapping_manmade_polylines
Entity Type Definition: Patch and fringe reefs with >50% shell-based footprint
Entity Type Definition Source: Eastern Shore Lab (ESL)
Attribute:
Attribute Label: TOTCVNUM
Attribute Definition: Estimated total number of oysters per feature (based on length and habitat-specific oyster density)
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute Label: Id
Attribute:
Attribute Label: INIT_DENS
Attribute Definition: Initial oyster density category estimates (subjective visual estimates)
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute Label: FID
Attribute Definition: Internal feature number.
Attribute Definition Source: ESRI
Attribute Domain Values:
Unrepresentable Domain:
Sequential unique whole numbers that are automatically generated.
Attribute:
Attribute Label: REGION
Attribute Definition: Study area region (1-6)
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute Label: CVBIO_kg
Attribute Definition: Total estimated oyster dry tissue biomass (kg) for the feature (based on feature area, oyster abundance and mean individual oyster biomass
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute Label: PROJ_GR
Attribute Definition: Specific reef habitat category (see companion report for detailed descriptions)
Attribute Definition Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute_Label: Shape
Attribute_Definition: Feature geometry.
Attribute_Definition_Source: ESRI
Attribute_Domain_Values:
Unrepresentable_Domain: Coordinates defining the features.
Attribute:
Attribute_Label: CAT_
Attribute_Definition: Habitat category code
Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute_Label: INDBIO_g
Attribute_Definition: Habitat-specific estimated individual oyster dry tissue biomass (g per oyster)
Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute_Label: LENGTH
Attribute_Definition: Length of manmade feature (ft)
Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute_Label: LENGTHM
Attribute_Definition: Length of manmade feature (m)
Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute_Label: CVNUM_M
Attribute_Definition: Estimated oyster density per linear meter of manmade shoreline
Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL
Attribute:
Attribute_Label: CVBIOg_M2
Attribute_Definition: Oyster dry tissue biomass (g per linear m)
Attribute_Definition_Source: VIMS-ESL

**Overview Description:**

**Entity and Attribute Overview:**

**Distribution Information:**
Resource_Description: Downloadable Data
Standard_Order_Process:
Digital_Form:
Digital_Transfer_Information:
Transfer_Size: 0.673

Metadata_Reference_Information:
Metadata_Date: 20081029
Metadata_Contact:
Contact_Information:
Contact_Person_Primary:
Contact_Person: P.G. Ross
Contact_Organization:
College of William and Mary, Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Eastern Shore Laboratory
Contact_Position: Marine Scientist, Sr.
Contact_Address:
Address_Type: mailing address
Address: PO Box 350
City: Wachapreague
State_or_Province: VA
Postal_Code: 23350
Country: USA
Contact_Voice_Telephone: 757-787-5816
Contact_Electronic_Mail_Address: pg@vims.edu
Metadata_Standard_Name: FGDC Content Standards for Digital Geospatial Metadata
Metadata_Time_Convention: local time
Metadata_Access_Constraints: None
Metadata_Use_Constraints:
Under no circumstances can this data be published in any peer-reviewed outlet without the direct consent of the authors
Metadata_Extensions:
Online_Linkage: <http://www.esri.com/metadata/esriprof80.html>
Profile_Name: ESRI Metadata Profile
Metadata_Extensions:
Online_Linkage: <http://www.esri.com/metadata/esriprof80.html>
Profile_Name: ESRI Metadata Profile
Metadata_Extensions:
Online_Linkage: <http://www.esri.com/metadata/esriprof80.html>
Profile_Name: ESRI Metadata Profile
Metadata_Extensions:
Online_Linkage: <http://www.esri.com/metadata/esriprof80.html>
Profile_Name: ESRI Metadata Profile
Generated by mp version 2.8.6 on Wed Oct 29 09:25:1
Appendix VII. Abbreviated metadata for the Virginia portion of the National Watershed Boundary Dataset used to delineate the six regions for this study.

Originator:
Virginia Dept of Conservation and Recreation (VADCR)
Division of Soil and Water Conservation (DSWC)

Publication_Date: 20050318
Title: The Virginia Portion of the National Watershed Boundary Dataset (NWBD)
Edition: 3
Geospatial_Data_Presentation_Form: vector digital data
Series_Information:
Series_Name: hydrologic units
Issue_Identification: version 3 of sixth order units for Virginia
Publication_Information:
Publication_Place: Richmond, Virginia
Publisher: Virginia DCR-DSWC

Description:
Abstract:
These are the new national fifth and sixth order hydrologic units for Virginia. They have been created in compliance with the new Federal Standards for Delineation of Hydrologic Unit Boundaries (1 October 2004) and therefore differ from the previous sixth order (14 digit) hydrologic units of Virginia as developed by DCR and the USDA in 1995 from the hydrologic unit delineation standards of 1992.
This dataset covers the whole state and is seamless with surrounding state's NWBD product. Revised first through fifth order units are obtainable from codes in this layer.

Purpose:
Developed as part of a seamless hydrologic unit product for the nation.
To be used for more detailed watershed planning work in the state than can be performed using lower order units.
This becomes the official statewide sixth order hydrologic unit delineation for Virginia.

Supplemental_Information:
Origin:
Version 1 of the sixth order hydrologic units for Virginia were originally digitized at ISSL, VPI&SU in 1989 off of the USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle maps. Delineations were made by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and the USDA Soil Conservation Service, now the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). The line and attribute data were delivered to the VA DCR in DLG3 format. There were 492 units in Virginia at this version. Units were uniquely identified by a three character string and were sequentially coded downstream to upstream.

Status:
Progress: Complete but uncertified
Maintenance and Update Frequency:
Changes to the linework detail are made whenever reason can be shown to do so. These changes are usually so minor as to only be visible at a very large scale display, and do not constitute a significant variance from the original form of this version.

Spatial_Domain:
Bounding_Coordinates:
West_BoundingCoordinate: -83.675
East_BoundingCoordinate: -75.176
North_BoundingCoordinate: 39.466
South_BoundingCoordinate: 36.541
Keywords:

Theme:
  Theme_Keyword: hydrologic units
  Theme_Keyword: watersheds
  Theme_Keyword: Watershed Boundary Dataset
  Theme_Keyword: fifth order
  Theme_Keyword: sixth order

Place:
  Place_Keyword_Thesaurus:
      Counties and County Equivalents of the United States and the District of Columbia (FIPS Pub 6-3).
  Place_Keyword: Virginia

Access_Constraints: none

Use_Constraints:
Linework and hydrologic unit codes should not be altered except by the developer, as this dataset constitutes the accepted digital version of these geographic units for all state and federal programs referencing the VA NWBD. Use at scales much greater than 1:24,000 is discouraged. Crediting the VA DCR for dataset development is requested.

Point_of_Contact:
Contact_Information:
  Contact_Person_Primary:
    Contact Person: Karl Huber
    Contact_Organization: Virginia Dept. of Conservation & Recreation - DSWC
  Contact_Address:
    Address_Type: mailing and physical address
    Address: 203 Governor Street, Suite 206
    City: Richmond
    State_or_Province: Virginia
    Postal_Code: 23219-2094
    Country: USA
  Contact_Voice_Telephone: 804 371 7484
  Contact_Facsimile_Telephone: 804 371 2630
  Contact_Electronic_Mail_Address: karl.huber@dcr.virginia.gov
  Hours_of_Service: 0900-1800

Data_Set_Credit:
This dataset has been developed by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) with assistance from the Virginia Tech Biological Systems Engineering Dept. It is built upon an earlier version developed by the VA DCR with assistance from the USDA NRCS and the VA DEQ.

Native_Data_Set_Environment: UNIX (Solaris), ARC/INFO v7.2.1 thru ArcGIS 9

Cross_Reference:
Citation_Information:
  Originator: USDA-NRCS
  Publication_Date: 2000
  Title: Enhanced DRGs of Virginia
  Edition: 2000
  Geospatial_Data_Presentation_Form: digital raster graphic
  Series_Information:
    Series_Name: Enhanced DRGs
    Issue_Identification: Virginia Quads
  Publication_Information:
    Publication_Place: Fort Worth, Texas
    Publisher: USDA-NRCS

Cross_Reference:
Citation_Information:
  Originator: Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation - DSWC
Publication_Date: 19950601
Title: Virginia's Revised 14 Digit Hydrologic Unit Boundaries.
Edition: 2
Geospatial_Data_Presentation_Form: vector digital data
Series_Information:
    Series_Name: hydrologic units
    Issue_Identification: version 2
Publication_Information:
    Publication Place: Richmond, Virginia
    Publisher: Virginia DCR with USDA NRCS
Other_Citation_Details: Jointly developed by DCR and USDA NRCS.

Cross_Reference:

Citation_Information:
Originator: Virginia Dept. of Conservation and Recreation - DSWC
Publication_Date: 19910901
Title: Virginia's (Original) 14 Digit Hydrologic Unit Boundaries.
Edition: 1
Geospatial_Data_Presentation_Form: vector digital data
Series_Information:
    Series_Name: hydrologic units
    Issue_Identification: version 1
Publication_Information:
    Publication Place: Richmond, Virginia
    Publisher: Virginia DCR with USDA NRCS
Other_Citation_Details: With contractual help of ISSL.

Cross_Reference:

Citation_Information:
Originator: U.S. Water Resources Council
Publication_Date: 1974
Title: Hydrologic Unit Map of Virginia
Geospatial_Data_Presentation_Form: map
Publication_Information:
    Publication Place: Reston, Virginia
    Publisher: USGS
Other_Citation_Details: Only useful to the fourth order.

Metadata_Reference_Information:
Metadata_Date: 20050311
Metadata_Review_Date: 20060705
Metadata_Standard_Name: FGDC Content Standard for Digital Geospatial Metadata
Metadata_Access_Constraints: none

Contact_Information:
Contact Person Primary:
    Contact Person: Karl Huber
    Contact Organization: VA Dept. of Conservation & Recreation - DSWC
Contact_Address:
    Address_Type: mailing and physical address
    Address: 203 Governor Street, Suite 206
    City: Richmond
    State or Province: Virginia
    Postal Code: 23219-2094
    Country: USA
Contact_Voice_Telephone: 804 371 7484
Contact_Facsimile_Telephone: 804 371 2630
Contact_Electronic_Mail_Address: karl.huber@dcr.virginia.gov
Hours_of_Service: 0900-1800
Appendix VIII. Metadata for the original National Wetlands Inventory polygons.

National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Metadata

NOTE: This metadata document represents the static text elements of the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) Metadata. Quad-specific metadata files are available through the FGDC Clearinghouse website.

Metadata:
Identification_Information:
Citation:
Citation_Information:
Originator: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory

Publication_Date: Ranges from Oct. 1981 to present; information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad.
See the quad-specific metadata file.

Title: National Wetlands Inventory -- Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Publication_Information:
Publication_PLACE: St.Petersburg, Florida
Publisher: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory

Online_Linkage:
ftp://ftp.nwi.fws.gov/arcdata/

Description:
Abstract:
NWI digital data files are records of wetlands location and classification as developed by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The classification system was adopted as a national classification standard in 1996 by the Federal Geographic Data Committee. This dataset is one of a series available in 7.5 minute by 7.5 minute blocks containing ground planimetric coordinates of wetlands point, line, and polygon features and wetlands attributes. When completed, the series will provide coverage for all of the contiguous United States, Hawaii, Alaska, and U.S. protectorates in the Pacific and Caribbean. Coverage includes both digital data and hardcopy maps. The NWI maps do not show all wetlands since the maps are derived from aerial photointerpretation with varying limitations due to scale, photo quality, inventory techniques, and other factors. Consequently, the maps tend to show wetlands that are readily photointerpreted given consideration of photo and map scale. In general, the older NWI maps prepared from 1970s-era black and white photography (1:80,000 scale) tend to be very conservative, with many forested and drier-end emergent wetlands (e.g., wet
meadows) not mapped. Maps derived from color infrared photography tend to yield more accurate results except when this photography was captured during a dry year, making wetland identification equally difficult. Proper use of NWI maps therefore requires knowledge of the inherent limitations of this mapping. It is suggested that users also consult other information to aid in wetland detection, such as U.S. Department of Agriculture soil survey reports and other wetland maps that may have been produced by state and local governments, and not rely solely on NWI maps. See section on "Completeness_Report" for more information. Also see an article in the National Wetlands Newsletter (March-April 1997; Vol. 19/2, pp. 5-12) entitled "NWI Maps: What They Tell Us" (a free copy of this article can be ordered from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, ES-NWI, 300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley, MA 01035, telephone, 413-253-8620).

Purpose:
The data provide consultants, planners, and resource managers with information on wetland location and type. The data were collected to meet U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's mandate to map the wetland and deepwater habitats of the United States. The purpose of this survey was not to map all wetlands and deepwater habitats of the United States, but rather to use aerial photointerpretation techniques to produce thematic maps that show, in most cases, the larger ones and types that can be identified by such techniques. The objective was to provide better geospatial information on wetlands than found on the U.S. Geological Survey topographic maps. It was not the intent of the NWI to produce maps that show exact wetland boundaries comparable to boundaries derived from ground surveys. Boundaries are therefore generalized in most cases. Consequently, the quality of the wetland data is variable mainly due to source photography, ease or difficulty of interpreting specific wetland types, and survey methods (e.g., level of field effort and state-of-the-art of wetland delineation). See section on "Completeness_Report" for more information.

Time_Period_of_Content:

Time_Period_Information:

Multiple_Dates_Times:

Calendar_Date: Ranges from Feb. 1971 to Nov. 1997. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Currentness_Reference: Source photography date

Status:

Progress: Complete

Maintenance_and_Update_Frequency: Irregular

Spatial_Domain:
BoundingCoordinates:

West_Bounding_Coordinate: Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

East_Bounding_Coordinate: Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

North_Bounding_Coordinate: Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

South_Bounding_Coordinate: Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Keywords:

Theme:

Theme_Keyword_Thesaurus: None
Theme_Keyword: wetlands
Theme_Keyword: hydrologic
Theme_Keyword: land cover
Theme_Keyword: surface and manmade features

Place:

Place_Keyword_Thesaurus: USGS Quadrangle Names
Place_Keyword: Range includes all 50 states, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Access_Constraints: None

Use_Constraints:
Federal, State, and local regulatory agencies with jurisdiction over wetlands may define and describe wetlands in a different manner than that used in this inventory. There is no attempt, in either the design or products of this inventory, to define the limits of proprietary jurisdiction of any Federal, State, or local government or to establish the geographical scope of the regulatory programs of government agencies. Persons intending to engage in activities involving modifications within or adjacent to wetland areas should seek the advice of appropriate Federal, State, or local agencies concerning specified agency regulatory programs and proprietary jurisdictions that may affect such activities.

Point_of_Contact:

Contact_Information:
Contact Organization Primary:

Contact Organization: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory Center

Contact Position: Cartographer

Contact Address:

Address Type: Mailing and Physical address

Address: 9720 Executive Center Drive
City: St. Petersburg
State or Province: Florida
Postal Code: 33702
Country: US

Contact Voice Telephone: 727-570-5400

Data Quality Information:

Attribute Accuracy:

Attribute Accuracy Report: The attribute accuracy is tested by manual comparison of the source with hard copy printouts and/or symbolized display of the digital wetlands data on an interactive computer graphic system. In addition, quality control verification software (USFWS-NWI) tests the attributes against a master set of valid wetland attributes.

Logical Consistency Report:
Polygons intersecting the neatline are closed along the border. Segments making up the outer and inner boundaries of a polygon tie end-to-end to completely enclose the area. Line segments are a set of sequentially numbered coordinate pairs. No duplicate features exist nor duplicate points in a data string. Intersecting lines are separated into individual line segments at the point of intersection. Point data are represented by two sets of coordinate pairs, each with the same coordinate values. All nodes are represented by a single coordinate pair which indicates the beginning or end of a line segment. The neatline is generated by connecting the four corners of the digital file, as established during initialization of the digital file. All data crossing the neatline are clipped to the neatline and data within a specified tolerance of the neatline are snapped to the neatline. Tests for logical consistency are performed by quality control verification software (USFWS-NWI).

Completeness Report:
NWI maps do not show all wetlands, but attempt to show most photointerpretable wetlands given considerations of map/photo scale and wetland delineation practices. A target mapping unit (tmu) is an estimate of the size class of the smallest group of wetlands that NWI attempts to map consistently; it is not the smallest wetland mapped. Recognize that some wetland
types are conspicuous and readily mapped (e.g., marshes and ponds) and smaller ones may be mapped. Drier wetlands and forested wetlands (especially evergreen) are more difficult to photointerpret and larger ones may be missed. The tmu also varies with photo scale; in forested regions, the tmu may be 3-5 acres (1:80K photos), 1-3 acres (1:58K), or 1 acre (1:40K). NWI maps should show most wetlands larger than the tmu. In the treeless prairies, a 1/4 acre tmu is possible due to the openness of terrain and occurrence of wetlands in distinct depressions. Take notice of the photo scale/type used to make the maps (see legend) and realize that black and white photos tend to yield more conservative interpretations than color infrared film. Most farmed wetlands (e.g., mucklands) are usually not mapped, except for pothole-type wetlands, cranberry bogs, and diked former tidelands (Sacramento Valley). Partly drained wetlands are conservatively mapped due to photointerpretation limitations. No attempt was made to identify regulated wetlands from other wetlands. Recognize that maps produced through photointerpretation are not as accurate as one prepared from on-the-ground surveys, so NWI boundaries are generalized.

Positional_Accuracy:

Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy:

Horizontal_Positional_Accuracy_Report: Horizontal

Lineage:

Source_Information:

Source_Citation:

Originator:
The Domain includes U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), special project. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Publication_Date: Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Title:
The Domain includes National Aerial Photography Program (NAPP), National High Altitude Photography (NHAP), USDA, Farm Service Agency, Aerial Photography Field Office, NASA or special project photography. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Geospatial_Data_Presentation_Form: Remote-sensing image

Publication_Information:

Publication_Place: Reston, Virginia
Publisher: U.S. Geological Survey

Source_Scale_Denominator: Ranges from 20,000 to 132,000. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Type_of_Source_Media: Domain includes black and white, color infrared, or natural color aerial photograph film transparency. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Source_Time_Period_of_Content:

Time_Period_Information:

Multiple_Dates_Times:

Calendar_Date: Ranges from Feb. 1971 to Nov. 1997. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Source_Currentness_Reference: Photo date

Source_Citation_Abbreviation: PHOTOS

Source_Contribution: Wetlands spatial and attribute information

Source_Information:

Source_Citation:

Citation_Information:

Originator: U.S. Geological Survey

Publication_Date: Ranges from 1902 to 1995. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Title: topographic map

Geospatial_Data_Presentation_Form: map

Publication_Information:

PublicationPlace: Reston, Virginia

Publisher: U.S. Geological Survey

Source_Scale_Denominator: Domain includes 20000, 24000, 25000, 30000, and 62500. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Type_of_Source_Media: stable-base material
Source_Time_Period_of_Content:

Time_Period_Information:

Single_Date_Time:

Calendar_Date: Ranges from 1902 to 1995. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Source_Currentness_Reference: publication date

Source_Citation_Abbreviation: USGS QUAD

Source_Contribution: base cartographic data

Source_Information:

Source_Citation:

Citation_Information:

Originator: U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service

Publication_Date: Varies

Title: County Soil Surveys

Geospatial_Data_Presentation_Form: map

Publication_Information:

Publication Place: Washington, DC

Publisher: Government Printing Office

Source_Scale_Denominator: Varies

Type_of_Source_Media: paper

Source_Time_Period_of_Content:

Time_Period_Information:

Single_Date_Time:

Calendar_Date: Varies

Source_Currentness_Reference: publication date

Source_Citation_Abbreviation: SOILS

Source_Contribution: wetlands location and classification

Process_Step:
Process_Description:
NWI maps are compiled through manual photointerpretation of NHAP or NAPP aerial photography supplemented by Soil Surveys and field checking of wetland photo signatures. Delineated wetland boundaries are manually transferred from interpreted photos to USGS 7.5 minute topographic quadrangle maps and then manually labeled. Quality control steps occur throughout the photointerpretation, map compilation, and map reproduction processes. Digital wetlands data are either manually digitized or scanned from stable-base copies of the 1:24,000 scale wetlands overlays registered to the standard U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) 7.5 minute quadrangles into topologically correct data files using Arc/Info software. Files contain ground planimetric coordinates and wetland attributes. The quadrangles were referenced to the North American Datum of 1927 (NAD27) horizontal datum. The scanning process captured the digital data at a scanning resolution of at least 0.001 inches; the resulting raster data were vectorized and then attributed on an interactive editing station. Manual digitizing used a digitizing table to capture the digital data at a resolution of at least 0.005 inches; attribution was performed as the data were digitized. The determination of scanning versus manual digitizing production method was based on feature density, source map quality, feature symbology, and availability of production systems. The data were checked for position by comparing plots of the digital data to the source material.

Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation: PHOTOS

Source_Used_Citation_Abbreviation: USGS QUADS

Process_Date: Ranges from 1979 to 2001. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Source_Produced_Citation_Abbreviation: NWI

Spatial_Data_Organization_Information:

Direct_Spatial_Reference_Method: Vector

Point_and_Vector_Object_Information:

SDTS_Terms_Description:

SDTS_Point_and_Vector_Object_Type: Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Spatial_Reference_Information:

Horizontal_Coordinate_System_Definition:

Planar:
Grid_Coordinate_System:

Grid_Coordinate_System_Name: Universal Transverse Mercator

Universal_Transverse_Mercator:

UTM_Zone_Number: Ranges from 4 to 20. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Transverse_Mercator:

Scale_Factor_at_Central_Meridian: 0.9996

Longitude_of_Central_Meridian: Ranges from -159.0 to -63.0. Information for this element varies for each 7.5' quad. See the quad-specific metadata file.

Latitude_of_Projection_Origin: 0.0

False_Easting: 500000.0

False_Northing: 0.0

Planar_Coordinate_Information:

Planar_Coordinate_Encoding_Method: Coordinate pair

Coordinate_Representation:

Abscissa_Resolution: 0.61

Ordinate_Resolution: 0.61

Planar_Distance_Units: Meters

Geodetic_Model:

Horizonal_Datum_Name: North American Datum of 1927

Ellipsoid_Name: Clarke 1866

Semi_major_Axis: 6378206.4

Denominator_of_Flattening_Ratio: 294.9787

Entity_and_Attribute_Information:

Detailed_Description:

Entity_Type:

Entity_Type_Label: Wetland
Entity_Type_Definition: Wetlands are lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. For purposes of this classification wetlands must have one or more of the following attributes: 1) at least periodically, the land supports predominantly hydrophytes; 2) the substrate is predominantly undrained hydric soil; and 3) the substrate is non-soil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of each year.


Attribute:
Attribute_Label: Wetland classification
Attribute_Definition: Classification of the Wetland

Attribute_Domain_Values:

Codeset_Domain:

Codeset_Name: Valid wetland classification code list
Codeset_Source: Photointerpretation Conventions for the National Wetlands Inventory, January 1995

Distribution_Information:
Distributor:
Contact_Information:
Contact_Organization_Primary:
Contact_Organization: Cooperator-Run Distribution Centers
Contact_Address:
Address_Type: List@www.nwi.fws.gov/Maps/distribution_ctrs.htm
Distribution_Liability: None
Standard_Order_Process:
Non_digital_Form: Hardcopy NWI wetlands maps at various scales, on diazo paper composited with USGS base map.
Digital Form:

Digital Transfer Information:

Format Name: Arc Export and Shapefile

Digital Transfer Option:

Online Option:

Computer Contact Information:

Network Address:

Network Resource Name:
ftp://ftp.nwi.fws.gov/arcdata/

Network Resource Name:
http://www.nwi.fws.gov/

Access Instructions: Anyone with access to the Internet may connect to NWI's server via anonymous ftp and download available NWI digital wetlands data in Arc Export and Shapefile formats. Indexes for NWI hardcopy maps and digital data are also available. Digital wetlands data can be downloaded for 7.5 minute quadrangles throughout the USA. To access: ftp to the NWI server, login as anonymous, enter your e-mail address at the password prompt, change to the arcdata directory for Arc Export data, or change to the shapedata directory for Shapefile data. Use the ftp 'get' command to transfer readme file for further instructions.

View the NWI home page by pointing your World Wide Web browser to the http address shown above.

Online Computer and Operating System: Sun Model 450 Unix server. Solaris 8 operating system.

Offline Option:

Offline Media: Arc Export Everything Tape - 8mm cartridge tape (5 Gb)

Recording Capacity:

Recording Density: 5

Recording Density Units: gigabytes

Recording Format: tar

Metadata Reference Information:
Metadata_Contact:

Contact_Information:

Contact_Person_Primary:

Contact_Person: Andrew Paul

Contact_Organization: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, National Wetlands Inventory Center

Contact_Position: Cartographer

Contact_Address:

Address_Type: Mailing and Physical address

Address: 9720 Executive Center Drive
City: St. Petersburg
State_or_Province: Florida
Postal_Code: 33702

Contact_Voice_Telephone: 727-570-5400

Contact_Facsimile_Telephone: 727-570-5420

Contact_Electronic_Mail_Address: Andrew_Paul@fws.gov

Metadata_Standard_Name: FGDC Content Standards for Digital Geospatial Metadata