



THE SEVERN RIVER ASSOCIATION

BOX 146 • ANNAPOLIS, MD 21404 • severnriver.org • 443-569-3556 voicemail

SPECIAL MID-WINTER (Jan 2016) OYSTER NEWS

There is no need to do anything for your oysters this month unless you have neglected them previously. If you haven't done so, lower your cages into the warmer water near the bottom. Then they should happily "hibernate" until spring.

This newsletter is primarily to dispel any rumors about Maryland's oyster program being suspended or changed. We received full assurance this week that DNR will fully support the MGO program this year and into the future, with new cages and spat.

The Christmas Eve press release and subsequent articles in the press misrepresented some facts concerning recent DNR decisions. The "suspension" of the oyster restoration program was only to adjust where substrate would have been placed in the Tred Avon River for next summer's spat planting, and has no impact on the massive oyster planting projects in that river or in Harris Creek or the Little Choptank where the major restoration efforts are still underway.

Another misconception was about the dredging of old shell from the Man O War Shoal just north of the mouth of the Patuxent. DNR's initial plan is to selectively dredge (in small bites) about 1 million shell for use on restoration reefs elsewhere in the Bay. This is not a wholesale destruction of that reef, let alone the 'removal' of the reef as some speculated.

If there are other questions about our program and the oyster reef in the Severn, don't hesitate to contact me.

Bob Whitcomb
Chair, SRA Oyster Committee