

Section 8: Status of living resources in the Maryland Coastal Bays

General Introduction

Healthy populations of living resources in the Coastal Bays are vital. Phytoplankton are an important component of the base of the food web. Fish populations are ecologically and economically important, while shellfish (hard clams, scallops) also play an important role in filtering the bay. There is evidence that seagrasses and shellfish exist in a synergistic relationship in which the shellfish help to maintain water clarity necessary for the grasses to become established, and both are important in providing habitat for juvenile fish. The grasses enhance water clarity with their baffling effects, and their root masses serve to protect shellfish from predators. The following chapters each deal with one of these many living resources components.

Chapter 8.1 Analysis of phytoplankton populations in the Maryland Coastal Bays

Chapter 8.2 Status of finfish populations in the Maryland Coastal Bays

Chapter 8.3 Fish kill trends in the Maryland Coastal Bays

Chapter 8.4 Status of shellfish populations in the Maryland Coastal Bays

Chapter 8.5 Summary of benthic community index results for the Maryland Coastal Bays

Chapter 8.6 Status of blue crabs in the Maryland Coastal Bays

Chapter 8.7 Status of horseshoe crab populations in the Maryland Coastal Bays

Chapter 8.8 Status of the endangered piping plover population in the Maryland Coastal Bays

Chapter 8.9 Aquatic non-native and invasive species in the Maryland Coastal Bays