

Fishing and Boating Services 2026 Work Plan

1 MANAGEMENT

Apply analyses of the best available data, community input and professional judgment to effective and equitable management of the harvest and use of Maryland's fishery resources while balancing economic opportunity and sustainability.

2026 Focus areas: Management response to stock assessments for blue crab and red drum; and ASMFC decisions for striped bass. Mitigate Invasive fish biomass through pilot programs, yellow perch management review, engage in Aquaculture/SAV interaction issues, develop self-sustaining wild trout in North Branch of Potomac River (NBPR), complete trout management plan, Create a climate change fishery management plan for Maryland that focuses on adaptation and resilience, finalize process for implementing BMPs for the public oyster fishery and for sanctuary areas.

1.1 OBJECTIVE: Develop management actions for the conservation of Maryland's fishery and aquatic resources through collaboration and engagement with state, regional, and federal management partners, as well as advisory bodies and the public.

1.1.1 STRATEGY: Provide leadership and an informed presence at interjurisdictional / intergovernmental arenas that create regulation or policy that is impactful to Maryland.

- Represent Maryland DNR at meetings of ASMFC, MAFMC and PRFC in addition to various committees and workgroups associated with these entities. Ensure thorough preparation for each meeting including complete review of materials, coordination with other state Commissioners/representatives and thorough outreach to stakeholders.
- Coordinate meetings of the Aquaculture Review Board to develop statewide aquaculture policy, management and streamlining of the lease application process with state and federal regulatory agencies (e.g., MDH, MDE, USACE, NMFS, MHT, USCG).
- Represent Maryland as a voting delegate at the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC).
- Coordinate with interagency shellfish public health management efforts with local, state and federal regulatory agencies (e.g. MDH, MDE, USFDA).
- Represent Maryland on the Policy Committee for the Susquehanna River Anadromous Restoration Cooperative (SRAFR).
- Review comprehensive growth plans, participate in environmental reviews, and work with local and state governments to conserve watershed ecological function needed for fisheries.

1.1.2 STRATEGY: Foster strong relationships with Maryland partner agencies, advisory bodies and elected representatives to inform our management decisions.

- Prepare technical and policy briefings, host and provide follow-up for meetings of Governor and DNR Secretary- Appointed commissions and committees as well as additional meetings of associated work groups. Examples include the Tidal and Sport Fisheries Advisory Commissions, The Oyster Advisory Commission, The Aquaculture Coordinating Council and The Boat Act Advisory Committee.
- Plan, prepare for and host at least 2 Coastal Fisheries Forums with Atlantic coastal recreational and commercial sectors.
- Plan, prepare for and host at least 1 meeting of the Statewide Oyster Committee and 1 meeting of each county oyster committee.
- Coordinate with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission to host public hearings and informational meetings around pending regulatory changes for tidal/coastal species.
- Engage with federal, state and interjurisdictional partner management agencies to share information, leverage resources, set consistent policy and address emerging issues.
- Engage with Chesapeake Bay Program Bay Agreement Implementation Teams, and Workgroups as the next Bay Agreement (Beyond 2025) is developed.
- Obtain and incorporate feedback from legislators when carrying out relevant fishery management actions, developing department-sponsored bills, or enacting relevant policies.
- During the legislative session, attend weekly departmental briefing meetings on ongoing legislative and bill hearings. Strategize communications with legislators as bills develop.
- Educate legislators on 'hot topics' and priority FABS initiatives ahead of the annual legislative session.

1.1.3 STRATEGY: Promulgate rules, regulations, and policies to achieve desired management actions.

- For every regulatory action, identify potentially impacted stakeholders and strengthen communication pathways to maximize transparency. Consider feedback at implementation.
- Develop regulatory scoping documents for presentation to advisory bodies and to the public.
- Document, process and archive feedback to scoped, proposed and implemented management. During the scoping phase, use analyses to develop potential alternatives to the original regulatory concept. Document and archive feedback on management actions. ***Scale back:*** *The regulatory division will be required to prioritize regulatory drafting and submission after consideration of public feedback and agency priorities to accommodate decreased staffing levels.*
- Coordinate with other DNR units to ensure that departmental procedures, policies and management actions are consistent with the needs of FABS.

- Develop public notices in accordance with fishery needs and regulatory requirements.

1.2 OBJECTIVE: Maximize compliance with established rules and develop appropriate authority to implement management actions necessary to conserve fishery and aquatic resources.

1.2.1 STRATEGY. Ensure current and future Fishery Management Plans adhere to the requirements of Maryland statute, provide adequate authority to manage species, and allow for adaptive management in the face of changing environmental, ecological, and climatic conditions.

- Complete annual Fishery Management Plan (FMP) reports required by § 2-1257 of the State Government Article. Annually present FMP review to the Tidal and Sport Fisheries Advisory Commissions.
- Complete FMPs including their reviews, updates, amendments, and revisions to ensure optimal conservation and use of fishery resources as well as adherence to legal requirements and to mandated timetables.
- Draft new FMPs for adoption following departmental procedures and requirements.
- Maintain awareness of and connections with federal and interstate fishery management plan initiatives to incorporate effects of climate change into fishery resource management.
- [Work with members of our advisory bodies to obtain feedback on a climate change fishery management plan that will add adaptability and resilience measures to our state fishery management planning.](#)

1.2.2 STRATEGY: Strengthen regulatory compliance through collaboration with enforcement partners, the Office of the Attorney General, the Maryland court system, and advisory bodies.

- Identify optimal regulatory strategies based on resource needs and public feedback. Draft and submit proposed and final regulation packages, including preparation of required economic impact estimates. Coordinate with relevant units of the Department to meet legal and legislative requirements and deadlines for submission and adoption of regulations.
- Track criminal violations and conduct administrative actions to enforce the Department's license suspension and revocation system.
- Maintain license suspension and revocation lists.
- Enter administrative penalties into the Maryland licensing system and Interstate Wildlife Violators Compact (IWVC).
- Engage with advisory bodies (e.g. Fishing and Boating Services Penalty Workgroup), law enforcement, Office of the Attorney General, local prosecutors and the Maryland judiciary to recommend penalties and to implement educational outreach in order to maximize regulatory compliance.
- Increase regulatory and statutory compliance through coordination with Maryland state agencies, other states' agencies, and the federal government.
- Coordinate with the Natural Resources Police and with the Maryland Judiciary around fishing and boating enforcement and penalty issues.

1.2.3 STRATEGY: Ensure protection of wild stocks of fish by issuing permits for special projects in accordance with Maryland statutes and regulations.

- Review and issue scientific collection permits for individuals and organizations to ensure sampling activities are consistent with agency management and policies.
- Review and issue aquatic studies permits (educational aquaculture permits) to ensure fish raised in the classroom do not adversely impact wild populations. ***Scale back:*** *FABS has transferred the role of issuing educational aquaculture and aquatic studies permits related to DNR-administered school projects to the Watershed and Climate Services Unit of DNR who administers these projects.*
- Review applications and issue other non-fishing permits including fee fishing lakes, out-of-state suppliers, and stocking permits.

1.3 OBJECTIVE: Manage oyster populations for ecological growth and for economic opportunity.

1.3.1 STRATEGY: Develop efficient and innovative methods to streamline aquaculture leasing including mechanisms to incorporate Best Management Practice (BMP) credits.

- Work with partners such as the Critical Areas Commission to streamline and facilitate aquaculture siting processes.
- Use innovative technologies to facilitate reporting requirements and processing for aquaculture leases, including development of an electronic reporting platform.
- Issue limited-scope Research & Development permits to facilitate site/gear testing before full lease review.
- Work with DNR Resource Assessment Service (RAS) to consider SAV bed interactions as part of spatial planning related to aquaculture and fishery needs.
- Maintain databases required for the aquaculture siting tool.
- [Facilitate implementation of BMPS in aquaculture leases.](#)

1.3.2 STRATEGY: Engage with county oyster committees to implement planting and sustainable harvest on public shellfish fishery areas.

- Track county oyster budgets and work with county committees to develop annual projects for public fishery areas.
- Engage with county oyster committees in determining the opening and closing of public shellfish fishery areas to harvest.
- Monitor contract and project status of shell planting activities.
- Coordinate production of materials necessary for annual oyster harvest. Examples include oyster closure books, buy-ticket booklets, and bushel tags.
- Develop data-driven management options based on the oyster stock assessment and communicate assessment results and management options to advisory bodies and county oyster committees.

1.4 OBJECTIVE: Efficiently administer commercial fisheries while balancing conservation with economic opportunity.

1.4.1 STRATEGY: Administer quotas in a timely and transparent manner.

- Process and verify commercial and recreational harvest data for permitted species in a timely manner to track quotas.
- Conduct commercial permitting tasks associated with tag distribution, permit card distribution, allocation of quota, and temporary and permanent transfers of quota.
- Manage commercial fisheries for permitted species to ensure the quota is harvested without exceeding the quota.

1.4.2 STRATEGY: Develop pilot programs for new fisheries or gears.

- Implement pilot fisheries to create economic opportunity and mitigate biomass of invasive fish species.
- Engage with advisory bodies and the community to assess emerging ideas for pilot fisheries.

1.5 OBJECTIVE: Develop management actions for the use of Maryland's hatcheries to support recreational fishing, fish population enhancement and reintroductions to support conservation projects.

1.5.1 STRATEGY: Support put and take youth rodeo programs

- Rear adult trout to at least 0.5 pounds while adhering to each facility's fish health plan.
- Explore options to enhance existing facilities and establish new coldwater facilities.
- Rear adult rainbow trout to support at least 50 youth rodeo events.
- Rear channel catfish and hybrid (bluegill x green sunfish) to support rodeo programs.

1.5.2 STRATEGY: Support warm and coldwater sportfish population enhancement and restoration.

- Put and Grow trout stocking in the North Branch Potomac River, Youghiogheny River and Antietam Creek.
- Stock black bass in tidal freshwater, impoundments and the Potomac River; Walleye into the Potomac River, Susquehanna River and impoundments.
- Produce saugeye (walley x sauger) for Piney Run Reservoir
- American shad larval and juvenile introductions to Choptank and Patapsco Rivers; Hickory shad larval and juvenile introductions to the Patapsco River.

1.5.3 STRATEGY: Reintroduce brook trout to suitable habitats using hatchery production from wild gametes.

- Establish a quarantine facility.
- Conduct fish health screening prior to introduction of age 0 production

2 SCIENCE AND DATA

Consistently implement scientifically accepted methods of data collection and analysis in support of state, interjurisdictional, interagency, and all other resource and policy development decisions.

2026 focus areas: Implement electronic data collection in select FABS programs within tidal monitoring and assessment, hatcheries, expand red drum data collection, test baitfish for viruses of concern, develop fish health database, replace Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) machine for fish health testing, blue crab stock assessment, striped bass stock assessment.

2.1 OBJECTIVE: Provide high quality sampling data that informs management at the state, regional, and coastwide level.

2.1.1 STRATEGY: Maintain rigor and consistency for long term biological monitoring programs while incorporating periodic review of survey efficiency and relevancy.

- Conduct over 35 fishery dependent and independent surveys across the State to monitor and assess the status of aquatic species and habitats (see appendix 1 of individual surveys).
- Survey aquaculture lease areas (active and potential) to assess oyster densities in potential leases and SAV presence around active leases.
- Develop, review, and adapt survey Standard Operating Procedures using accepted scientific methods and the best available technology.

2.1.2 STRATEGY: Collaborate with academic and research institutions and other partners to proactively design and implement studies to address current and emerging issues.

- Partner with Maryland Department of the Environment to monitor fish kill events for emerging disease outbreaks.
- Partner with Horn Point Laboratory to monitor their larval oyster disease.
- Partner with USGS Eastern Ecological Science Center to research the cause and population level impacts of endocrine disruption and intersex on smallmouth bass population in the Potomac River
- Partner with USGS Eastern Ecological Science Center and DNR Wildlife and Heritage to conduct diet surveys of Cormorants.
- Maintain open exchange of data, information and analytical tools with academic partners.
- Partner with USGS Eastern Ecological Center, USFWS Lamar Fish Health Lab, and the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Services (APHIS) to monitor fish for emerging pathogens.
- Expand and strengthen our collaborative partnership with NOAA at the Cooperative Oxford Laboratory (COL) to enhance the expertise and knowledge within FABS' COL Division and Aquatic Animal Health Program regarding species and health issues monitored by FABS. Host quarterly partnership meetings

- Manage and operate NOAA's R/V Chesapeake for scientific research (e.g., Fishing and Boating Services, NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service) or use by other partners. Research projects include the Upper Bay Resident Finfish Species Survey, dive operations related to oyster restoration, and response to large dead stranded marine animals.

2.2 OBJECTIVE: Provide expert analyses of available data for the development of management recommendations.

2.2.1 STRATEGY: Provide leadership and an informed presence at technical meetings with our state, interstate/regional, and federal science partners.

- Represent Maryland and provide analytical expertise for technical, stock assessment and analytical committees of interjurisdictional regulatory bodies such as the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries commission, NOAA Fishery Management Councils.
- Engage in diverse state and regional working groups and committees to foster relationships, showcase Maryland DNR scientific expertise and provide scientific analyses to support management of Maryland's aquatic resources. Examples include the Chesapeake Bay Stock Assessment Committee, American Fisheries Society Technical Committees.
- Enhance communication with partners. Provide timely updates and detailed analyses to state, interstate, and federal partners to ensure Maryland remains a trusted source of expertise.
- Build and maintain strategic relationships. Strengthen partnerships (e.g. NOAA, USFWS, interstate aquatic resource committees) to enhance scientific collaboration on shared priorities.

2.2.2 STRATEGY: Provide scientific analyses to inform state-specific management and emerging issues.

- Conduct stock assessments for Maryland-specific species with independent peer reviews as needed.
- Develop data-driven options for the implementation of regulatory requirements of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission and/or the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council.
- Conduct innovative analyses to address species-specific, multi-species, habitat, ecosystem and fishery dynamic questions for the purpose of contributing to the body of fisheries knowledge and enhancing management strategies.
- Conduct detailed testing of baitfish from select Maryland suppliers to identify the risk of importation of viral pathogens that pose a threat to Maryland fish populations.

2.3 OBJECTIVE: Curate state-of-the-art data systems to acquire, house and share data to increase transparency of Maryland fishery statistics.

2.3.1 STRATEGY: Develop improvements to aquaculture and commercial fishery harvest reporting systems and reporting compliance.

- Work to incorporate an electronic harvest reporting component into Phase 2 of Maryland Outdoors.

- Develop and implement electronic reporting for Maryland seafood dealers using FACTS™.
- Fund independent, third-party harvest reporting verification of commercial harvest through roving monitors.
- Process and verify commercial harvest data in a timely manner.
- Maintain a DNR website displaying missing commercial and for-hire (charter) reports. Evaluate other methodologies to increase reporting compliance.
- Conduct QAQC analysis on harvest data to ensure data is of the highest quality.

2.3.2 STRATEGY: Employ state-of-the-art technology to streamline data collection in the field and to enable new investigations.

- Transition the entry of field data to electronic platforms where appropriate.
- Develop and deploy field-based protocols for environmental DNA (eDNA) sampling to monitor pathogens, invasive species, and biodiversity in Maryland's waterways.
- Develop and deploy field-based protocols for environmental DNA (eDNA) sampling to monitor pathogens within the state hatcheries.
- Conduct pilot studies to test the efficacy and accuracy of eDNA and imaging technologies in Maryland-specific aquatic environments.
- Use real-time molecular diagnostics to inform risk assessments for aquatic animal movements and disease management.

2.3.3 STRATEGY: Seek opportunities to improve recreational harvest data collection.

- Conduct Access Point Angler Intercept Surveys according to Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) procedures.
- Partner with federal agencies (NMFS) on the continued development and enhancement of national recreational fishing and harvest data via MRIP and other programs.
- Increase angler participation in recreational fishing/shellfishing data collection thus allowing for improved data within fisheries assessments; freshwater creel surveys.
- Conduct For-Hire (charter) survey calls to determine recreational harvest and effort.
- Conduct Highly Migratory Species surveys to collect information on recreational harvest and effort of species like tuna.

2.3.4 STRATEGY: Increase public awareness of Maryland's commercial and recreational fishery statistics.

- Maintain a website with the current status of quota-managed fisheries.
- Develop and maintain DNR websites displaying annual summaries of commercial fisheries harvest data.
- Work with the Maryland Department of Agriculture Seafood Marketing to increase commercial markets for blue catfish.
- Develop and maintain DNR websites displaying annual summaries of freshwater fisheries survey data, fish stocking, and public reports of monthly activities.

2.3.5 STRATEGY: Maintain, develop and curate databases to facilitate data sharing, power collaborative analyses and increase functionality across platforms.

- Engage with the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP) committees to maintain commercial, recreational, and biological data sharing.
- Fulfill fishery-dependent and fishery-independent data requests.
- Develop databases for hatchery and wild fish that integrate with the Aquatic Animal Health Program to efficiently track fish health during production and as part of stocking initiatives.
- Maintain existing Geographic Inland Fisheries Survey System (GIFS), impoundment, coldwater databases and enhance functionality with developing technology.
- Incorporate data presentation software (i.e. Google Looker Studio) to increase quality and efficiency of data reporting.
- Develop standardized databases and digital tools for electronic field data collection and protocols to improve the collection, storage, and overall management of fisheries and hatchery resources.
- Utilize IT, database management skills, GIS analysis, and programming to manage, manipulate, archive, protect, and display shellfish, finfish, and wildlife data for internal use as well as communicating resource information to the public via mapping products.

2.4 OBJECTIVE: Maintain state-of-the-art laboratories to monitor fish and shellfish health in all of Maryland's aquatic habitats and Maryland DNR hatcheries.

2.4.1 STRATEGY: Invest in technology and laboratory equipment upgrades to ensure the most accurate and efficient testing for monitoring fish and wildlife health.

- Replace aging Polymerase Chain Reaction machine for a more efficient machine with expanded capabilities including the ability to multiplex assays.
- Replace the discontinued laboratory water purification system, which is used to prepare all chemical reagents and diagnostic materials.
- Obtain access to or purchase state-of-the-art bacterial identification systems (MALDI-TOF) for improved accuracy in diagnostics.
- Coordinate with NOAA to upgrade airflow and biosecurity measures in the virology and biomolecular labs to reduce the risk of contamination.

3 Ecosystem Assessment and Restoration

Implement visionary and proactive strategies to conserve, enhance and restore aquatic habitat while considering the impacts of land use and climate change as well as the importance of rare, threatened and endangered species to ecosystem health.

2026 focus areas: Oyster restoration within sanctuary areas, work with the Oyster Advisory Commission (OAC) to explore potential projects for under-performing sanctuary areas, invasive species monitoring, supplemental sampling for juvenile striped bass and other ecosystem parameters, watershed-based habitat management, marine mammal avoidance technology (e.g., acoustical devices) for Atlantic gill net fisheries.

3.1 OBJECTIVE: Pursue opportunities and resources for large scale habitat restoration and conservation to achieve enhanced ecosystem services and improved aquatic habitats.

3.1.1 STRATEGY: Work with the Oyster Advisory Commission and all partners to further Maryland's efforts to restore oysters in sanctuary areas and beyond.

- Finalize funding and logistical plans to begin implementing large scale oyster restoration projects in one or more of the following sanctuary areas: Herring Bay, Hoopers Strait, Nanticoke River and Tilghman Island.
- Continued implementation of the multi-year "mixed use" Eastern Bay Project, working with partners such as the Oyster Coalition, to improve Eastern Bay's oyster sanctuary population, fishery, and aquaculture.
- Work closely with partners to develop next steps and strategies to maximize oyster populations in sanctuaries that require substantial investment due to poor oyster habitat.
- Envision through public processes mixed-use oyster projects that balance the conservation and growth of oyster populations and economic opportunity.
- Facilitate the potential for implementing BMPs to increase oyster populations in sanctuaries

3.1.2 STRATEGY: Leverage partnerships and pursue opportunities to restore and conserve upstream aquatic habitats.

- Identify, prioritize and develop data-driven recommendations to conserve areas with habitats essential for productive fisheries.
- Plan, coordinate, and implement fish passage capital project activities throughout the tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay. 2026 projects include: Daniels Dam (feasibility study review); Eden Mills eel ladder completion and monitoring; Wilson's Mill invasive species selective passage project; eDNA monitoring below and above four dams in Maryland for invasive and diadromous fishes; Conowingo Dam fish lift (feasibility study).
- Provide scientific-based recommendations to federal and state agencies on potential fish passage projects.

- Conduct assessments of fish blockages including biological data, environmental concerns, social and economic considerations, regulatory and policy evaluations.

3.1.3 STRATEGY: Foster public participation and commercial involvement to create large-scale artificial reefs in Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

- Maintain open permits for reef sites within Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries that can receive reef materials from contractors, NGOs and state agencies.
- Coordinate with contractors to identify reef sites suitable for receiving large quantities (hundreds to thousands of tons) of secondary use concrete, stone, or steel.
- Coordinate with NGOs and volunteer groups to arrange deployments of reef balls, reef pyramids, and other volunteer-produced reef materials.
- Work with local fishing groups and other stakeholders to identify and obtain permits for new artificial reef sites.
- Inspect potential reef materials and oversee all deployments on artificial reef sites.
- Work with state agencies and contractors to identify reef projects with the potential to act as mitigation for tidal impacts.

3.2 OBJECTIVE: Increase understanding of threats and of mechanisms to control invasive aquatic organisms through collaboration with DNR Units and external partners.

3.2.1 STRATEGY: Maximize opportunities through collaboration and the sharing of information and resources with other DNR Units and partner agencies.

- Align shellfish and fish health programs with invasive species management. Share data on the effects of invasive species (e.g. invasive bivalves, fish pathogens) on shellfish and fish health and incorporate these findings into habitat restoration efforts, especially for vulnerable species.
- Leverage spatial data analysis to track and map the spread of invasive species across state waters, collaborating with other DNR units to inform habitat protection and management decisions.
- Enhance aquatic animal health monitoring through collaboration with other DNR units and state agencies to track the health impacts of invasive species on native aquatic populations and develop protocols for early detection and management.
- Participate in regional workgroups to address management and control of invasive fishes (e.g., Chesapeake Bay Program Invasive Catfish Workgroup, Invasive Species Matrix Team, Mid-Atlantic Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species).
- Conduct collaborative research with partner agencies to identify non-consumptive, ecologically beneficial uses of invasive catfish, such as protein sources for livestock or fertilizer for agriculture.

3.2.2 STRATEGY: Identify and implement actions that reduce the spread and existing biomass of invasive fishes.

- Explore mechanisms to interrupt pathways of introduction that cause aquatic nuisance species range expansions.

- Identify incentives and remove regulatory barriers for commercial harvesting and processing of invasive catfish.
- Develop simple population models to determine if levels of harvest of invasive fishes are expected to result in recruitment overfishing or changes in size structure.

3.3 OBJECTIVE: Ensure that the management of our fishery resources considers the interconnection of land and water, importance of aquatic habitat and the impacts of climate change.

3.3.1 STRATEGY: Expand an ecosystem approach to management by engaging other DNR Units (i.e. Wildlife and Heritage, Land Acquisition and Planning, Outdoor Recreation/Access) and other state agencies.

- Integrate ecosystem health data across DNR units. Collaborate with Wildlife and Heritage, Land Acquisition and Planning, and Outdoor Recreation/Access to incorporate marine mammal, sea turtle, fish and shellfish health data into statewide conservation and recreation planning efforts.
- Develop and establish institutional pathways across agencies and DNR units to manage on a watershed basis.
- Collaborate through the Maryland Commission on Climate Change's Adaptation and Resiliency Workgroup to assist the agency in coordinating State level adaptation and resilience efforts, especially those relating to fisheries and other natural resources.
- Conduct Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Act Project Reviews.
- Coordinate with MDE on aquatic resource management efforts including but not limited to: environmental review, stream designation and existing use determinations, stormwater management that reduces thermal impacts, and small pond thermal review.
- Work with the Critical Area Commission (CAC) to enhance protection of anadromous fish spawning areas under their jurisdiction.

3.3.2 STRATEGY: Engage with local government agencies and watershed partners to conserve critical habitat and limit impacts to Maryland's watersheds including impacts of invasive species.

- Coordinate with key partners including those from Pennsylvania, New York, the USFWS and USGS to develop and employ technical and policy related solutions to restore anadromous fish in the Susquehanna River Basin. Includes attendance to regular meetings of the Susquehanna River Anadromous Fish Restoration Cooperative.
- Provide critical habitat spatial data to local land planning agencies and the Maryland Department of Planning. Collaborate on approaches to conserve critical habitat.
- Leverage local government partnerships to improve citizen awareness of aquatic resource issues.
- Review comprehensive growth plans for threats to fish habitat and fisheries.
- Assess the likelihood that restoration projects offered for review by FABS can enhance fish habitat and fisheries.

- Coordinate and provide technical guidance to partners (e.g. USACE, WSSC, and Baltimore City) on dam operations to enhance reservoir and tailwater conditions for coldwater aquatic resources.
- Engage with the USACE at least once a year to maintain dialogue regarding dam release policies that protect tailwater fisheries and the potential to develop additional trout rearing facilities in conjunction with planned hydropower projects.
- Meet with county and local government officials/agencies and commercial developers to present the information and to establish a dialog on the issues relating to the conservation and value of Maryland's coldwater resources and native brook trout.
- Monitor and assess restoration activities to provide evidence of success or failure.

3.3.3 STRATEGY: Explore potential management strategies that sustain services of multiple resources while recognizing environmental and ecological constraints.

- Develop indicators of status for ecosystem attributes important to fisheries management that are communicable to the public.
- Develop ecosystem-based assessments to evaluate management trade-offs.
- Develop control rules that include ecosystem status for managing fisheries.

3.4 OBJECTIVE: Coordinate with management partners and the public to conserve, protect and monitor the status of rare, threatened and endangered (RTE) aquatic species.

3.4.1 STRATEGY: Collaborative conservation through stranding response and public engagement.

- Pursue federal and state funding opportunities such as the John H. Prescott Marine Mammal Rescue Assistance Grant, the Species Recovery (Section 6) Grant, and the Sea Turtle Angler Intercept Survey to support monitoring, response and diagnostic testing of dead stranded marine mammals and sea turtles
- Collaborate with National Park Service, Ocean City and other coastal communities, and the USCG to enhance coverage and increase efficiency to report dead stranded marine animals.
- Collaborate with NMFS, FABS managers, and the National Park Service to devise strategies to reduce by-catch of dolphins and other protected marine species.
- Revitalize volunteer networks and develop outreach programs aimed at educating the public on marine conservation and stranding response protocols. Leverage partnerships with local organizations, such as the National Aquarium, to involve the public in data collection, species monitoring, and conservation advocacy, while raising awareness of the threats faced by RTE species.

3.4.2 STRATEGY: Restore freshwater mussel populations and assess freshwater mussel health.

- Partner with Hatchery programs to produce native freshwater mussels for release into suitable habitats, focusing on restoring populations of rare, threatened, and endangered species.

- Finalize design plans for a freshwater mussel hatchery to be co-located with the Joseph Manning Hatchery in Brandywine Maryland. Secure funding in 2026 and plan for construction in 2027. A fully functioning freshwater mussel hatchery will boost freshwater mussel production for restoration purposes.
- Collaborate and leverage funds with partners (e.g., Potomac Riverkeeper Network, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania) to propagate and restore freshwater mussels in areas of the Susquehanna and Potomac River basins.
- Integrate Aquatic Animal Health Program expertise to monitor and assess the health of hatchery reared and wild freshwater mussels, screening for pathogens, pollutants, and environmental stressors.
- Establish protocols for the early detection of diseases and environmental stressors affecting freshwater mussels, ensuring timely intervention and support for population recovery.
- Attend and/or present at conferences, such as the National Shellfisheries Association meeting, to stay up to date on emerging freshwater mussel diseases, improve communication, and share advances in real time.

4 Stakeholder Outreach

Provide the citizens of Maryland with timely information, utilizing state of the art tools to answer questions, educate, raise awareness or engage for sustainable boating and fisheries-related resources.

2026 focus areas: Fact sheet for molluscan shellfish disease control policy; develop proactive messaging around fish health events; increase participation in fishing and boating through a communications and marketing strategy, high school fishing clubs, and educational programming. Continue support of offshore wind engagement. Engage with Licensing and registration service on phase 2 rollout of the Maryland Outdoors licensing system (focused on the commercial license renewal process).

4.1 OBJECTIVE: Maintain an engaged and informed constituency through excellent public service, strong internal communications and an array of public outreach techniques including multiple technology platforms.

4.1.1 STRATEGY: Proactively establish and communicate a consistent message from the agency to foster an engaged, informed and interactive public.

- Communicate proactively with DNR leadership to review pending issues, plan strategy and develop messaging for the public.
- Coordinate with the DNR Communications Office to release background pieces on high visibility issues.
- Develop and distribute educational fact sheets on new regulatory/policy initiatives.
- Produce the annual Fishing and Crabbing guide in print and digital form.
- Employ the new Maryland licensing system 'Maryland Outdoors' to distribute important information to licensees.
- Develop outreach initiatives designed to educate the public and showcase fisheries initiatives on an array of issues (e.g. coastal marine conservation issues, efforts to protect threatened and endangered marine mammals and sea turtles, survey methods, aquatic animal health, fisheries research and management goals).
- Engage the public through video news, print media interviews, social media posts and talks with angler and community groups. *Scale back: the weekly fishing report and anglers log are included under this task as things FABS does each year. Due to staff reductions, FABS plans to reduce the frequency of the Fishing Report and roll the Anglers Log into the Departmental Instagram account. Budgetary and staffing constraints will also reduce the number of events attended by FABS staff.*
- Provide timely and accurate customer service through a dedicated phone line and email account.

4.1.2 STRATEGY: Maintain FABS web presence with relevant information while using the most up-to-date and approved technologies.

- Develop and maintain webpages representing all FABS programs.
- Develop and maintain forms to collect information and feedback from the public regarding FABS programs, initiatives and policies.

- Work with all FABS staff to keep all public facing information up to date and relevant.

4.1.3 STRATEGY: Create and maintain public facing signage with clear, understandable, and informative messaging.

- Create drafts of graphic material such as posters, signage, publication layouts and notices.
- Review public messaging to ensure it adheres to the department's communication policies and procedures.
- Work with internal human resources staff to review signage and public-facing documents/webpages for non-English speakers.

4.1.4 Create and distribute messaging of important information to constituents through a bulk email system.

- Create drafts of bulk email messages based upon requests from all unit programs. Work with programs to finalize messages and to determine which subscribers will receive emails based upon their preferences.
- Collaborate with the DNR Communications Office to review final versions of email messaging and to schedule distributions.
- Respond appropriately to replies received to bulk emails distributed by the unit.

4.1.5 STRATEGY: Create and distribute messaging and interact with communities through state-approved social media platforms.

- Work with all FABS programs to develop and agree on the content and timing of key messaging to the public.
- Monitor FABS social media platforms for questions aimed at the unit or department and respond within an appropriate timeframe.
- Monitor FABS social media platforms for inaccurate information and when appropriate, intercede with correct/clarifying information.
- Maintain FABS social media accounts including monthly reports and login security while adhering to the department's policies.

4.2 OBJECTIVE: Administer Governor and Secretary-appointed advisory bodies to reflect the diversity of Maryland's commercial and recreational fishing communities and cultures.

4.2.1 STRATEGY: Administer and maintain commissions and committees; build relationships with members.

- Carry out functions required to hold successful meetings including establishing agendas and summaries, following up on meeting outcomes, and completing administrative tasks.
- Function as a liaison between advisory body members and staff to ensure seamless transfer of information and to facilitate engagement of advisory body members on pressing issues.

4.2.2 STRATEGY: Engage in the recruitment of advisory body members.

- Coordinate with the DNR liaison to the Governors Appointments Office to assist in the recruiting and/or vetting of applicants.
- Maintain close communication with clubs, groups, and other organizations whose activities are associated with and are impacted by FABS work so that they are effective members or potential members of advisory bodies.
- Assist individuals who are interested in applying to Governor and/or Secretary-appointed advisory bodies with the application process and follow up internally with the vetting process to keep projected timeframes.
- Complete orientation of new advisory body members.

4.3 OBJECTIVE: Build and maintain relationships with communities to maximize their engagement with management of Maryland's fishery resources and maintenance of its waterways.

4.3.1 STRATEGY: Develop and maintain relationships with relevant organizations to educate, seek engagement, and build consent around emerging fishery management issues.

- Maintain regular communications and engagement with clubs, groups, and businesses whose activities are associated with and are affected by FABS' initiatives.
- Develop and maintain email lists of interest groups and businesses to keep stakeholders engaged, informed, and up to date on unit-related topics.
- Have periodic direct communication via phone or in person with groups and businesses to maintain relations.
- Ensure constituent groups are informed and engaged by providing periodic presentations on relevant FABS initiatives.

4.3.2 STRATEGY: Collaborate with other units to implement the Fisheries Recruit, Retention, and Reactivation (R3) Plan and develop initiatives to engage the public as active stewards of Maryland's fishery resources.

- Draft and distribute information to the public on R3-related events and activities.
- Support FABS staff to engage with R3 activities and assist them with outreach and promotion. Work with staff whose work is involved in R3 related activities to assist with outreach and promotion.
- Employ Maryland's licensing system 'Maryland Outdoors' to further R3 goals through messaging, marketing and outreach.

5 Fiscal Responsibility

Maintain proper records that provide accurate and transparent accounting of our unit's monetary resources to meet staffing and operating costs to achieve our goals. Engage with opportunities to balance revenue with mission-critical tasking.

2026 focus areas: Provide support for license revenue analyses, provide analyses and support on budget related transactions, engage with other DNR units on Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation activities, work with members of the Sport and Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commissions on a comprehensive review of fishing license structure.

5.1 OBJECTIVE: Ensure fiscal stability and efficient administration of the unit.

5.1.1 STRATEGY: Provide ongoing support and services to FABS staff for all fiscal operations.

- Track all expenditures and revenues. Process all payments, invoice needs, and corrections with Fiscal and Administrative Services (FAS).
- Purchasing and procurement requests. Includes monthly reconciliation of credit card purchases, completing large Requests for Proposals (RFP), advertising and sorting bids from EMMA. Creating and tracking Purchase orders
- Process all submissions related to travel, and expenses reimbursements in coordination with FAS.
- Maintain database records for all fleet vehicles, fuel purchases, and maintenance costs.
- Maintain database records for all inventory needs in FABS.

5.1.2 STRATEGY: Provide clear and transparent reports to our management partners and the public regarding the use of our monetary resources to achieve our mission.

- Identify the reports required with associated timelines (e.g. annual Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission Budget Report).
- Create an annual FABS fiscal management work plan.
- Build templates for each report so that fiscal staff can efficiently reproduce each report as required.
- Develop standard operation procedures that provide clear instructions on tasks.

5.1.3 STRATEGY: Work to ensure that annual state budget proposals are reflective of the work characterized in the FABS Annual Work Plan.

- In conjunction with Strategy 5.1.1, add budget proposal needs in the annual FABS fiscal management plan.
- Perform quarterly review of budget to ensure accurate numbers for future requests.
- Ensure that the budget is properly coded at the beginning of the process so that it correctly reflects where funds are needed.
- Review spending trends so that we can properly align funds.

- Properly plan grant match funds.
- Research, collaborate and partner with organizations that can provide access to new funding opportunities'
- Identify goals and ensure the grantor priorities align with our mission.
- Research the grantor's track record to ensure credibility, accountability and responsiveness.
- Create a grant calendar and timeline to ensure we are staying on track.

5.1.4 STRATEGY: Work collaboratively across the Agency and with our advisory bodies, and constituents to develop strategies to maintain license revenue to support our mission.

- Build a feedback process to identify misaligned fees.
- Consider feedback from annual budget reports to advisory bodies when reviewing fees.
- Provide adequate feedback to constituents to ensure buy-in when change is needed.
- Collaborate with other DNR units to implement FABS plan for R3.

5.2 OBJECTIVE: Provide FABS staff with education and training related to procurement, budget, and grants management.

5.2.1 STRATEGY: Work with DNR's Finance and Administrative Services (FAS) to provide staff with updated policies relevant to project/program budget management.

- Fiscal staff attend regular training sessions hosted by FAS for all procedures related to FABS fiscal management.
- Revisit procedures with exceptional redundancy. Work with FAS staff to ensure procedures are streamlined.
- Revisit procedures that create undue workflow burden on fiscal staff and subsequent delays in processing. Work with FAS staff to ensure procedures are streamlined.

5.2.2 STRATEGY: Provide clear instructions for FABS staff on budget management tools and practices.

- Establish a folder on the FINtranet with presentations/instructions on current procedures and fiscal staff contacts. Ensure fiscal staff contacts update documents as required.
- Update FABS expenditures and revenues monthly and ensure Program staff review regularly.
- Expand existing grant tracking tools to incorporate special fund match expenditures monthly so managers can more accurately determine funds available for procurement.
- Conduct annual meetings of FAS, federal grant managers, administrative staff, and division directors to assess the budget process and ways to improve efficiency.

6 Safety & Accessibility

Protect the boating public by removing marine hazards and marking navigation channels and provide information regarding boating and fishing access and opportunities throughout Maryland.

2026 focus areas: Vessel Turn-in Program, Relocate or replace Improperly located/Aged Float Free Channel Buoys, Conduct Frequent maintenance of flash flood-impacted buoys in the Upper Potomac, Gunpowder, and Elk Rivers, Install New Navigational or Danger Buoys in shallow water areas impacted by USCG buoy reductions, Create Metes and Bounds for MDE Shellfish Marina Buffers.

6.1 OBJECTIVE: Provide Maryland's boating/fishing public, industry communities, and federal and local partners with timely hydrographic operations assistance to promote safe navigation on Maryland's waters.

6.1.1 STRATEGY: Maximize boating safety by installing and maintaining required navigational and regulatory buoys, markers, and signs.

- Mark the waterways of the state accurately and as permitted by the USCG in the Chesapeake Bay, Ocean City region. Markers include buoys, day markers and signs.
- Report marker discrepancies, damages or needed changes to the USCG.
- Coordinate with NRP Resource markers to be used in its enforcement cases.
- Communicate with local business, watermen and government entities to ensure staff and equipment can meet current and future needs.
- Prepare fiscal notes for repairs and maintenance of large vessels, small boats, motors, trailers, vehicles, and facility needs.
- Plan routine field surveys to determine proper placement of state monuments, regulatory buoys and signs utilizing Geodetic survey equipment.
- Construct buoys/signs/pilings and weights to hold buoys.
- Maintain 3 large vessels with ice-breaking capability and 14 smaller vessels.

6.1.2 STRATEGY: Maximize marine safety and minimize environmental harm by removing or preventing abandoned vessels and hazardous debris.

- Manage the Abandoned Boat and Debris (AB&D) grant program and serve as the primary contact for Fishing and Boating Services.
- Maintain the database related to abandoned boats and debris projects and the data related to Unit procurements, grants, contracts, bids, and vendor information.
- Coordinate with the NRP, MDE, USACE, USCG, NOAA, local governments and other DNR staff to secure information needed to effectively implement the AB&D program.
- Maintain open shipping channels in the Chesapeake Bay, Ocean City region and inland waters of Coastal Maryland by coordinating the removal of aquatic debris and ice.
- Maintain a comprehensive understanding of the abandoned boat law (§8-721) to elucidate abandoned vessel issues concerning citizens, private enterprises, local governments, and law enforcement agencies.

6.1.3 STRATEGY: Provide efficient and accurate hydrographic surveys for public notice.

- Field research and surveys supporting natural resource and boating laws in a timely fashion.
- Field surveys for aquaculture (oyster leases), MDE closures, boating safety zones and debris removal.
- Develop staff training to maintain fully trained GIS data collection and accurate buoy placement.
- Establish and maintain effective communication among DNR units and with outside agencies.

6.2 OBJECTIVE: Develop and maintain accurate, web-based tools to identify fishing and boating access.

6.2.1 STRATEGY: Provide timely public access to programs such as: Marine Law Enforcement Information Network (MLEIN), iShellfish, Gear Lines Map, Maryland Speed Zone App, and Maryland's Shellfish Harvesting and Closure Area Mapping.

- Update and maintain current and accurate information on statewide aids to navigation. Maintain detailed records with the USCG and work to implement updates and changes.
- Provide timely REST Service for the public to access boating support service's GIS data via interactive map tools.
- Coordinate with DNR web-based tools staff to user friendly applications and most up-to-date information.
- Develop user friendly public access tools to easily meet public needs.

6.2.2 STRATEGY: Provide GIS data in a timely manner for existing, newly installed, relocated, or removed buoys and markers as a vital component of access and safety.

- Lead in the collection of GIS data for boating impact assessment, safe boating, its statics and maps for the Legislature and Public.
- Plan routine field surveys to determine proper placement of state monuments, regulatory buoys and signs utilizing Geodetic survey equipment.
- Create new and maintain updated GIS data for a wide range of products such as navigational information, speed limits, fishery lines, buoy locations, public safety zones and piling locations.

6.3 OBJECTIVE: Proactively coordinate with the boating/fishing public, industry communities, and federal and local partners to ensure navigational safety and enjoyable access opportunities.

6.3.1 STRATEGY: Support programs conducted by our management partners regarding regulations, waterway safety, and enforcement.

- Establish and maintain effective working relationships as a liaison for the state. Coordinate communication and work reports with our Federal, State and Local partners.
- Work with Governmental Advisory Groups to develop programs to enhance waterway use by promoting proper marking methods, rules concerning safety and security zone, mooring buoys, navigational aids, speed areas, fisheries management areas and MDE water quality closed areas.
- Act as an “Expert Witness” at legal or court hearings, conferences, and meetings involving the assigned responsibilities of boating safety, fisheries regulations and MDE water quality regulations.
- Make recommendations for statutory/regulatory changes that enhance the public’s ability to meet the state’s regulatory goals.

6.3.2 STRATEGY: Provide timely customer service to our boating, recreational fishing, and commercial industries.

- Communicate with the Department’s Office of Communication, Natural Resource Police, USCG, USACE, other State Agencies, the public and press for all major events.
- Provide all emergency rescues and responses such as evacuation for flooding, boat accident rescue, fire, or in the event of ice, cold water rescue and searching for missing persons on the water.
- Work to expand technologies and communication methods such as texting or email that provide immediate information sources to impacted citizens and/or companies.

7 Workforce

Promote equity for all Maryland residents through a diverse, effective, and professional workforce.

2026 focus areas: Leadership training opportunities for staff, career mentoring, DEIJ engagement.

7.1 OBJECTIVE: Maintain a competent and credible workforce through staff training, career development, and participation in professional committees and conferences.

7.1.1 STRATEGY: Provide FABS specific Human Resources support to liaise with the Human Resources Service.

- Facilitate the recruitment process for open positions, internal recruitments and promotions, position reclassifications, and retirements.
- Provide staff with support regarding payroll, benefits and leave, and separation from state service.
- Facilitate the Performance Evaluation Plan process for the mid cycle and end cycle reviews.
- Maintain personnel records for all staff.
- Disseminate human resources information and policy as made available from the State of Maryland (DBM) or the Department to FABS staff.
- Provide Human Resource management: Ensures that FABS provides a positive and productive work environment that handles employee relations, policies and compliance in a professional manner.

7.1.2 STRATEGY: Provide staff with career development, leadership and supervisory training to develop a cohesive workforce and prepare staff for leadership roles.

- Budget for training
- Ensure communication of and access to low-cost training opportunities.
- Host workshops, seminars, and conferences to share research findings and best practices. Create internships, fellowships, or visiting scientist programs to train and learn from experts at partnering institutions.

7.1.3 STRATEGY: Provide opportunities for, and encourage staff to participate in, robust intra-agency diversity discussions and activities.

- Participate in the DNR DEIJ team to work toward improvement agency-wide.
- Ensure operation of the Organizational Effectiveness Team (OET) to support staff meetings, events, recognition, and Unit wide opportunities for staff education, team building, and overall unit efficiency and staff morale.
- Participate in DNR Regional Teams to maximize coordination with other units in the various state regions.

Appendix I Fishing and Boating Services List of Annual Surveys Conducted

Survey Name	Target Species	Is the survey legally mandated and/or required by a fisheries management body?	What sources of funding support the survey? Are there specific requirements to receive funding?	Which months of the year does the survey occur?
North East River Gill Net, Conowingo Dam hook and line, Nanticoke River fyke or gill net survey	American shad River herring	ASMFC Fishery dependent and independent sampling requirements are set for each river, not each state. PA, MD, DC, PFRC, and VA coordinate as needed. Locations: Inriver, Upper Chesapeake, Susquehanna River, Nanticoke River, Potomac River.	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-61-R	March-May
Commercial Survey	Atlantic menhaden	ASMFC Age and length data from the commercial bait harvest. 1x 10-fish sample (age and length) per 200 metric tons landed for bait purposes for MD, PFRC, VA, and NC.	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-61-R	Late May through Early September
Commercial Survey	Weakfish	ASMFC Addendum I to Amendment 4 requires non de minimis states to collect 6 individual fish lengths per metric ton of weakfish landed commercially + 3 individual fish ages per metric ton of total weakfish landed.	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-61-R	Late May through Early September
Lobster sampling	American lobster	No	No federal funding	

HSC Spawning Survey (partnership Maryland Coastal Bays Program)	Horseshoe crab	ASMFC	Cooperative partnership with the Maryland Coastal Bays Program, part of the National Estuary Program. The Dept. does not receive federal funding.	May- June -July
HSC Biomedical Harvest Monitoring	Horseshoe crab	ASMFC	No federal funding	June through November
Tautog Ageing Structures	Tautog	ASMFC	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant F-50	
Coastal Bays Trawl Survey	American eel Black sea bass Bluefish Cobia Croaker HSC Menhaden Summer Flounder Spot Spotted Seatrout Tautog Weakfish	*Offshore trawl survey canceled in 2020 ASMFC	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant F-50	April through October

Coastal Bays Beach Seine Survey	American eel Black sea bass Bluefish Croaker Drum (Black, Red) HSC Menhaden Summer Flounder Spot Spotted Seatrout	ASMFC	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant F-50	June and September
Coastal Bays SAV Habitat Survey	Tautog	No Does not currently contribute to stock assessments, submitted for the ASMFC tautog assessment.	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant F-50	
Catch Card Census	Highly Migratory Species	ICCAT/Federal/State Discard reporting requirements.	Federal contract via ACCSP	
Anadromous Fish Stream Spawning: Fisheries Ecosystem Assessment Division (FEAD)	Herring species, white and yellow perch	No	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-63-R	March-May

Subestuary Anadromous Fish Spawning and Nursery (FEAD)	Striped Bass, Yellow Perch	No	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-63-R	March-May
Summer Habitat Chesapeake Bay (FEAD)	Multiple marine, estuarine, anadromous	No	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-63-R	July-September
Striped Bass Forage (FEAD)	Striped Bass and major forage species	No	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant F-63-R	Oct-Nov
Striped Bass Temperature DO Squeeze Project (FEAD-RAS collaboration)	Striped Bass	No	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant F-63-R	July-Sept
Striped Bass Disease	Striped bass	No	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-110-R	Field work: August-Decemb er; Lab work: January-July
White Perch Biomarkers and Liver Tumours	White perch	No	No grant funds. Only special funds.	No set schedule. Work is done periodically throughout the year.

Freshwater Fisheries Surveys - all freshwater habitat (i.e., streams, rivers, impoundments, tidal waters, etc.) using multiple gear types.	Various game/sportfish and nongame species that occupy MD's freshwater habitat, including, but not limited to: brook, brown and rainbow trout, largemouth and smallmouth bass, walleye, northern pike, panfish, fish community data, invasive fish species, water quality and physical habitat data. etc.	No, but a lot of data that we collect are utilized by other agencies for regulatory purposes - e.g., the Maryland Department of the Environment utilizes our data to update/improve Maryland's Water Quality Standards as required by the CWA. In addition, data collected through our efforts are utilized by other DNR units and numerous permitting agencies at the local, state and federal level in an effort to avoid, minimize, or mitigate potential environmental/aquatic impacts through the environmental review process.	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant- F-48 and special funds	May through October
Fall Oyster Survey	Oysters	Survey itself is not legally mandated but is used to inform the oyster stock assessment and FMP, which are legally mandated	Md. Dept. of Transportation (MDOT)	October through November
Fall Oyster Disease Survey (part of above Fall Oyster Survey)	Oysters	Survey itself is not legally mandated but is used to inform the oyster stock assessment and FMP, which are legally mandated	Md. Dept. of Transportation (MDOT)	October through November
Oyster Sanctuary Survey	Oysters	Legally mandated through the requirement of reports at 5-yr intervals on the status of the sanctuaries	MDOT	April/May and September

Coastal Bays Shellfish Survey	Primary target is hard clam, although records made of all molluscan shellfish caught, including both commercially valuable species e.g. razor clams, bay scallops, channeled whelks, and ecologically valuable species	Survey itself is not legally mandated but is used to inform the coastal Hard Clam FMP	General Funds	December/January
Choptank River gill net survey (adults) seine survey (juveniles) Patapsco River gill net survey (adults) seine survey (juveniles)	Restoration of American shad and hickory shad by hatchery stocking in the Choptank and Patapsco rivers.	No	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-57-R	March-June (adults) June-October (juveniles)
Atlantic sturgeon research on Nanticoke River estuary. Adult gill netting. Juvenile otter trawl. Deploy acoustic receivers. Collaboration with UMCES, DNREC, DESU and UDEL.	Atlantic Sturgeon	No	National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Species Recovery Grants to States (Section 6 Program)	March-December

Striped Bass Spawning Stock Survey	Striped Bass, American Shad, Atlantic Menhaden	Yes - ASMFC. Striped bass CPUE results are an index in the coastwide stock assessment. USFWS - fish are tagged during this survey as part of USFWS's Cooperative Coastwide Tagging Program.	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-61-R	Late March to mid-May
Juvenile Index Survey	Striped Bass, American shad, blueback herring, alewife herring, Atlantic menhaden	Yes - ASMFC. YOY and age 1+ indices are used in the coastwide stock assessment.	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-61-R	July, August, September
Commercial Check Station Sampling	Striped Bass	USFWS requires monitoring and report for funding	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-61-R; monitoring and report required to USFWS	June through February
Pound Net Sampling	Striped Bass	USFWS requires monitoring and report for funding	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-61-R; monitoring and report required to USFWS	June through December
Spring Creel Survey	Striped Bass	USFWS requires monitoring and report for funding	Federal Aid from Sport Fish Restoration grant, F-61-R; monitoring and report required to USFWS	May - June
Blue Crab Summer Trawl Survey	Primarily designed for blue crab, also provides useful information for spot, croaker, summer flounder, and others	No	Special Funds	May - October

Winter Dredge Survey (Collaboration with Virginia)	Blue Crabs	No	Special Funds	December - March
Cooperative Data Collection Program	Commercial Blue Crab Survey	No	Special Funds	April - November

Appendix II. Acronyms

ACCSP	Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program
ASMFC	Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission
CAC	Critical Area Commission) Maryland
CZM	Coastal Zone Management
DBM	Department of Budget and Management (Maryland)
DNR	Department of Natural Resources (Maryland)
FABS	Fishing and Boating Services (Maryland DNR)
FAS	Fiscal and Administrative Services (Maryland DNR)
FMP	Fishery Management Plan
GIFS	Geographic Inland Fisheries Survey System
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
IWVC	Interstate Wildlife Violators Compact
MAFMC	Mid Atlantic Fishery Management Council

MDE	Maryland Department of the Environment
MDH	Maryland Department of Health
MHT	Maryland Historical Trust
MRIP	Marine Recreational Information Program
NBPR	North Branch of the Potomac River
NEAFWA	Northeast Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration
NPS	National Park Service
NRP	Natural Resources Police (Maryland)
OAC	Oyster Advisory Commission
OAG	Office of the Attorney General (Maryland)

PRFC	Potomac River Fisheries Commission
RAS	Resource Assessment Service (Maryland DNR)
RTE	Rare Threatened and Endangered
SFAC	Sport Fisheries Advisory Commission
SRAFRC	Susquehanna River Anadromous Fish Restoration Cooperative
TFAC	Tidal Fisheries Advisory Commission
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USCG	United States Coast Guard
USFDA	United States Food and Drug Administration
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
WSSC	Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission