

The background image on the left side of the slide shows several blue oyster bags and red mesh traps. One of the blue bags in the foreground has the text "OLD COVE", "Oysters", and "DUXBURY BAY" printed on it. The red mesh traps are partially visible behind the bags.

Massachusetts Shellfish Initiative

- Steering Committee
- Task Force
- Assessment Committee
- Scoping Committee
- Strategic Plan Workgroup

MSI

Assessment Committee Charge

- 1. Assess the capacity and status** of state and town government and NGO support and programming for shellfish including but not limited to current staffing, labs, hatcheries, research, monitoring, education, outreach, town programs and economic impacts of shellfish in Mass;
- 2. Assess the status of existing strategic goals** related to Massachusetts shellfish, across state agencies, nonprofit organizations and municipalities;
- 3. Compile public input** that has been collected through surveys and agency requests for public comment associated with shellfish in Mass., as well as informal feedback gathered by the committee.

MSI Assessment Committee

Jeff Kennedy – DMF/Chair

Brent Valli – Town of Wellfleet

Chris Manulla – Town of Wellfleet

Daniel Morton - Wellfleet Wild Harvester

Diane Murphy – CCCExt & WHSG

Eli Powell – City of New Bedford

Ginny Parker - Wellfleet Citizen

Lindsey Williams - MIT Sea Grant

Liz Lewis – Town of Barnstable

Mark Begley - Barnstable Shellfish Grower

Melissa Sanderson - CCCFA

Michele Insley - Wellfleet S PAT

Nancy Civetta – Town of Wellfleet

Nathan Davis - Orleans Wild Harvester &
Shellfish/Waterways Committee

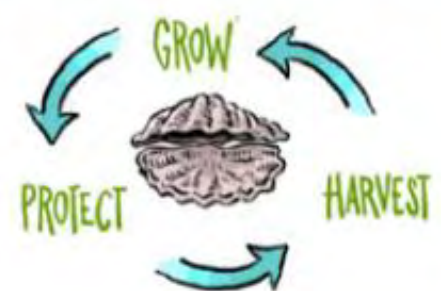
Renee Gagne – Town of Chatham

Ron Bergstrom – CC Commission &
Chatham Wild Harvester

Steve Kirk – TNC

Suzanne (Phil) Phillips – Wild Harvester &
Orleans Shellfish & Waterways Committee
Town of Chatham

Todd Callaghan - MCZM



MASSACHUSETTS SHELLFISH INITIATIVE

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presented MAY 4, 2021

REPORT ON THE MASSACHUSETTS SHELLFISH INITIATIVE STRATEGIC PLAN

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

- ▶ Massachusetts Shellfish Growing Areas are some of the most heavily utilized and economically, ecologically and culturally valuable shared spaces in state.
- ▶ Managing User Group Conflicts is complex in Massachusetts due to the high and varied use of coastal waters.
- ▶ Economic and environmental factors associated with shellfish resources and a growing need for more effective stakeholder coordination compound these challenges.

MASSACHUSETTS SHELLFISH INITIATIVE (MSI)



- ▶ **MSI** - a stakeholder driven process to develop a plan to enhance the economic, environmental and social benefits of Massachusetts shellfish and forge a clear path forward
- ▶ **Task Force Members** - DMF, NOAA, TNC, Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance, Massachusetts Aquaculture Association, an independent Massachusetts shellfish harvester and grower, plus municipal and state reps

The background image is a coastal scene during twilight. The sky is filled with soft, grey clouds, with a hint of orange and pink light from the setting or rising sun. Below the sky, a body of water stretches across the middle ground. Several small, dark silhouettes of boats are visible on the water. In the foreground, a line of trees and vegetation is visible, their forms dark against the lighter sky and water. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

VISION:

Massachusetts State and Municipalities Manage Sustainable, Healthy and Robust Populations of Shellfish Accessible to a Diverse Suite of Commercial and Public Stakeholders who Actively Participate in the Management Process, with the Widespread Support of the Broader Public for Shellfish Resources, Improved Water Quality, and Coastal Ecosystems.

STRATEGIC PLAN

The MSI Task Force developed a plan to balance the growing and competing demands for shellfish resources, to address current and emerging challenges, with the purpose to benefit all shellfish stakeholders.

Recommendations are categorized under the following six objectives:

1. Foster communication and coordination among local, state and federal managers, and develop improved guidance for communication
2. Build public and stakeholder capacity to support shellfish resources and shellfish fisheries
3. Develop management, research and industry resources
4. Support and promote balanced and sustainable economic opportunities
5. Support and promote cultural and historical uses of shellfish
6. Ensure ecologically sound management and enhancement of shellfish resources and coastal ecosystems



The MSI Strategic Plan was Crafted to be Reflective of the Commonwealth's Unique Characteristics and the Dynamic Nature of Nearshore Shellfish Resources.

OBJECTIVE 1: Foster Communication and Coordination Among Local, State and Federal Managers, and Develop Improved Guidance for Communication

Recommendation

Develop and strengthen communication between managers, regulators and community groups both within and across all levels of government with the creation of a Shellfish Advisory Panel (SAP) that is inclusive of shellfish stakeholders. This will provide a forum for all regulatory, economic and social aspects of nearshore shellfish resources.



OBJECTIVE 2: Build Public and Stakeholder Capacity to Support Shellfish Resources and Shellfish Fisheries



Recommendation

Improve how local and state shellfish managers communicate and engage with stakeholders by increasing shellfish management capacity at state and local levels to improve communication between shellfish stakeholders.

The MSI Task Force calls for a statewide campaign to increase public awareness surrounding shellfish resources in state waters to raise awareness of the economic and ecological value of shellfish resources and shellfisheries.

OBJECTIVE 3: Develop Management, Research, and Industry Resources

Recommendation

- ▶ Increase resources (staff, equipment, labs) to expand monitoring and testing required for growing area classification, shellfish human health hazards, and shellfish disease.
- ▶ Increase research focused on issues impacting shellfish resource health, public health, and shellfish production at the local, state and federal level.
- ▶ Increase support that promotes industry development, communication, market opportunities and resiliency.





WE MUST:

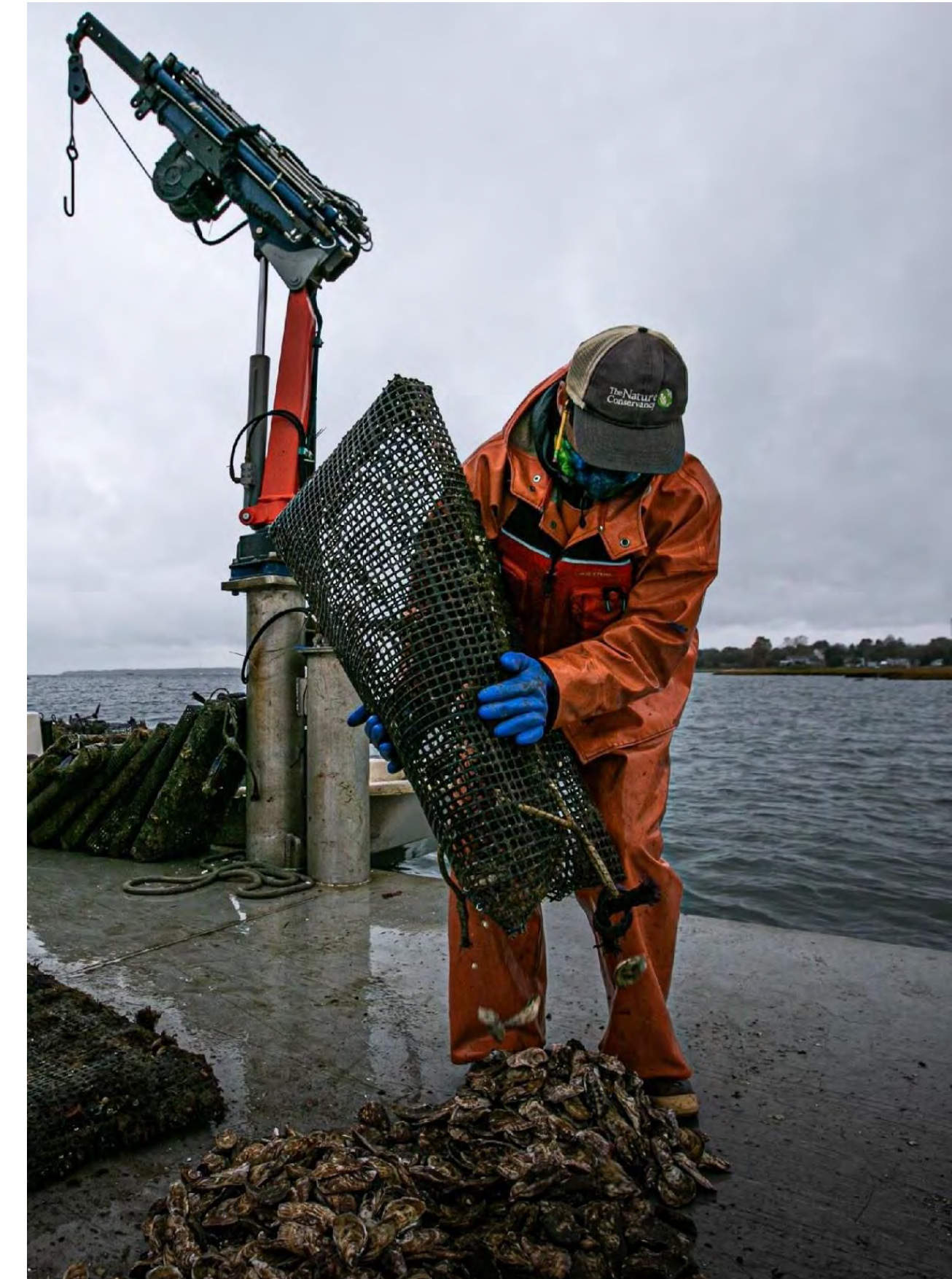
- ▶ Provide Stakeholder Education, Training and Incentives for More Effective and Equitable Shellfish Management
 - ▶ Simplify State Aquaculture Licensing and Permitting
 - ▶ Evaluate Changes for Direct-to-Consumer Sales
- ▶ Strengthen Shellfish Labelling for Traceability to Retail Consumer
 - ▶ Educate Growers On Species Diversification Opportunities
 - ▶ Educate the Public About the Importance of Massachusetts Shellfish

OBJECTIVE 4: Support and Promote Balanced and Sustainable Economic Opportunities

Recommendation

Encourage economic opportunities around shellfish that are in line with the character and interests of individual communities. Examples include an incentive program to encourage outcome-defined municipal shellfish management plans and forums for stakeholder discussion.

Increase sustainable economic opportunities around shellfish resources and shellfisheries while balancing shellfish sanitation concerns. This is achieved with trainings, better data collection and increased patrol capacity.



OBJECTIVE 5: Support and Promote Cultural and Historical Uses of Shellfish

Recommendation

Protect public access to coastal waters and habitat quality with clear guidance on aquaculture permitting requirements with consideration for protecting public access and wild harvest.

Additionally, there must be: 1)an increase in research dollars for social and natural science related to shellfish resources and their use; 2)more programs to improve water quality and reduce coastal pollution; 3)incentives for nature-based solutions to stormwater and wastewater management; 4)tribal, recreational and wild harvest representation on the proposed MA SAP.



OBJECTIVE 6: Ensure Ecologically Sound Management and Enhancement of Shellfish Resources and Coastal Ecosystems



Recommendation

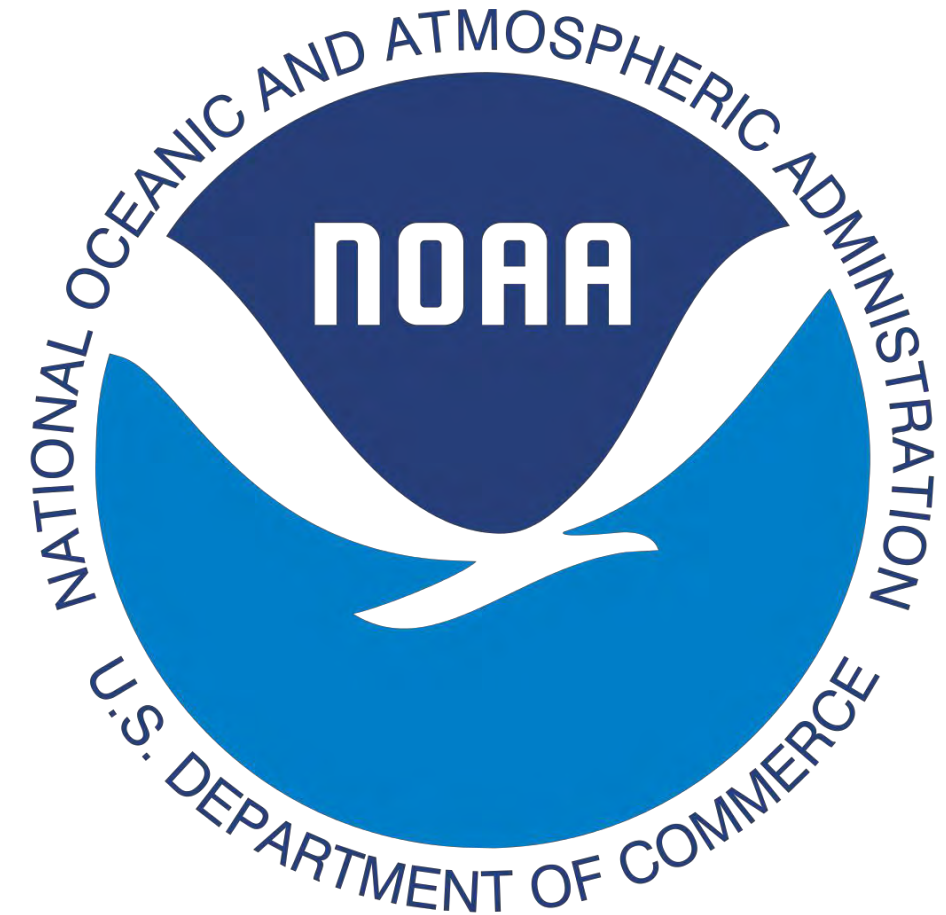
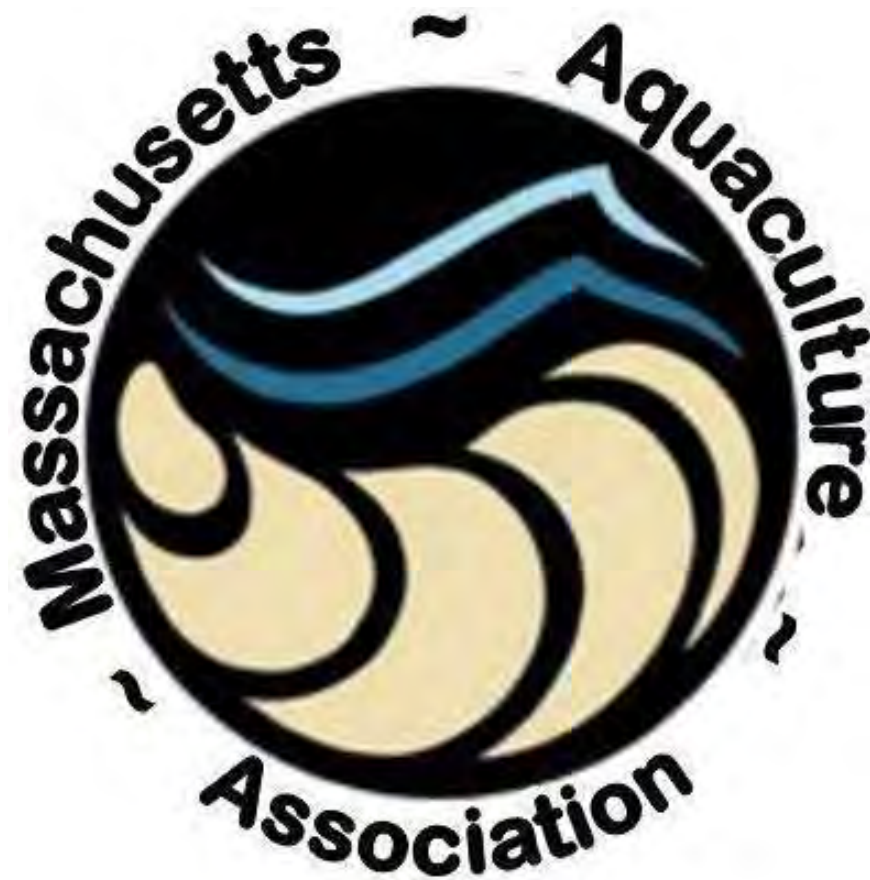
Ensure shellfish and coastal restoration efforts are designed to consider animal health and management implications, and do not result in adverse impacts. This is achieved by developing minimum standards and further best practice guidance on restoration activities in contaminated waters, and a requirement that restoration efforts demonstrate balance between shellfish fisheries interests and public health.

A wooden boardwalk with railings leads from the foreground into a vast marshy landscape at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, red, and dark grey, with the sun low on the horizon. The marsh is filled with green grass and small pools of water reflecting the sky. The boardwalk is made of wooden planks and has wooden railings on both sides, leading the eye towards the horizon.

WE BELIEVE:

Implementing these Recommendations will Improve Marine Resource Planning, Support Shellfish Research, Provide for Shellfish Restoration and Farming Improvements and Promote Innovative Financing for Conservation and Commercial Activities alike

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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