



Background:

The *Marine Fisheries* Shellfish Stock Enhancement Project distributes grant monies to six Boston Harbor communities impacted by the Algonquin Gas pipeline (HubLine) construction. The goal is to enhance and restore soft shell clams in greater Boston Harbor.



Soft-shell clams (*Mya arenaria*) have been identified as an impacted species from the construction of the pipeline along the near shore areas.



Shellfishermen from the Boston Harbor communities of Boston, Hull, Quincy, Weymouth, Winthrop and Hingham have suffered declining harvest for more than a decade. Heavy “digging” pressure, poor larval recruitment and settlement, and changes to local water quality have compounded the decline in soft-shell clam production. Restoration of this valuable species is both needed and warranted.

A *Marine Fisheries* Biologist administers this project and provides technical assistance to the cities and towns in this effort. The first task is the undertaking of habitat and shellfish stock assessments with the participating communities.

Next, individual plans are developed to maximize each community's need for shellfish restoration and ability to support public propagation. Grant monies are awarded competitively to municipalities that are dedicated to management and enhancement of their shellfish flats with involvement of the fishermen and their communities.

Site selection is critical to successful shellfish restoration. Sites are identified and selected by *Marine Fisheries* and the local municipality. Currently, "clam tents" are the preferred method for soft-shell clam propagation. Wild clam larvae are "captured" by spreading netting across a flat. New methods employ plastic trays beneath the netting to aid in removal of the juvenile clams for grow-out.



Preparing for shellfish seeding



Planting seed clams



Clams ready for market

This Soft-Shell Clam Stock Enhancement grant program will directly enhance/restore shellfish in Boston Harbor as a classic shellfish restoration project. Re-establishment of this natural resource will provide long-term benefits to the involved communities as well as the habitat and ecosystem of Boston Harbor.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Mitt Romney, Governor

Kerry Healey, Lieutenant Governor

Stephen Pritchard, Secretary
Executive Office of Environmental Affairs

David M. Peters, Commissioner
Department of Fish & Game

Paul J. Diodati, Director
Division of Marine Fisheries



For more information and project updates visit our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries and click on the "HubLine" link