

## WSD DRAFT FIVE-YEAR PROPAGATION PLAN

### Quahogs

- We have four (4) year classes of quahogs under nets, from 2018-2021. Johnny began bullraking the 2018 nets last year for the Indian Neck recreational area and a modest amount for the commercial shellfishery). He will continue to dig and deploy these clams as they reach legal size.
- State-run contaminated quahog relay:
  - Conversations with managers of this program seem to feel that the supply of quahogs will last at least another five years. We plan on participating in this program as our primary method for clam propagation as long as we continue to have good results.
  - In 2023, we deployed more than 860 bushels of quahogs to Chipman's Cove and 93 bushels to Burton Baker Beach for the recreational shellfishery. It cost the department \$0.07/clam and is paid for from our revolving fund. The state has reduced the purging period from 90 to 60 days allowing us more flexibility on opening and restocking areas.

### Oysters

- 2023 Hatchery:
  - We are scheduled to receive 100,000 oyster seed from Cape Cod Oyster (paid for from our revolving fund) in addition to between 80,000-90,000 seed through County and State funds (free).
  - We are likely to explore purchasing additional oyster seed at the beginning of the fiscal year (contingent upon supply and gear space).
  - We are planning (contingent on Selectboard approval) to begin securing and growing out 80,000-100,000 oyster seed for the proposed Blackfish Creek dredging mitigation site. (Gear and shell stock paid will be paid for from the dredging budget.)
- 2023 Remote Set:
  - Currently, approximately 140,000 hat seed are awaiting maturity earmarked for the Indian Neck recreational shellfishery.
  - We have increased our hat effort to 95 stacks, all dipped and ready for deployment.
  - We have secured 100 shell bags made from recycled the restaurant oyster and quahog shell program (all shell aged one year). These will be deployed with our hats, and we expect good results. These are likely to be utilized in the proposed Blackfish Creek dredging mitigation site (pending Selectboard approval of the plan) this fall.
  - Cultch: Our Chapter 91 permit was issued in the summer of 2022, and it is already clear after less than one week of clutching that we will be constrained with where we can deploy it. The permitted areas are small in comparison to where the department used to cultch, and we don't have confidence in some of the areas that were permitted. This is a process that we inherited and were not a part of from the beginning. We have initiated an addendum to our permits through dredging mitigation funds. Our goal is to include all areas of Wellfleet Harbor that have been traditionally cultched and areas where we know that cultch will successfully perform as oyster nursery habitat. Should we obtain the necessary permits, we will operate as usual with a full volume of cultch. If permitting is not secured, we will limit 2024 cultch purchasing due to lack of permitted bottom.
    - Two and a half truckloads would be paid for from the dredging budget.

- Four truckloads would be paid for from our revolving fund. This is half of what we are budgeted for, and we will use the excess funds for other resources, such as oyster seed, additional hats and contaminated quahogs. Upon receipt of Chapter 91 permits, we will fully fund our cultch budget again. (Currently at \$10,000/year.)
- As we work through the years to deploy cultch around the harbor, we will adapt as necessary to performance and supply issues.