



MONTHLY REPORT SEPTEMBER 2019

Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

- A rough, conservative estimate of commercial catches for the month is more than 40 bushels of oysters (down from 96 in August), more than 205 bushels of quahogs (down from the high August harvest of 310) and 75+ bushels of blood clams as tracked on commercial patrol.
- Recreational shellfish permit sales for August were three Annual Resident, eight Annual Senior Resident, two Annual Non-Resident, and one Seasonal Non-Resident. Revenue totaled \$805, bringing the total number of recreational permits sold to date up to 873 = \$44,135.
- Spring tides in combination with the Labor Day holiday led to elevated recreational shellfishing numbers at Indian Neck during the first week of the month. Sunday, Sept. 1, had 60+ individuals harvesting in the tidal flats, with Wednesday, Sept. 4, seeing a modest 40+ individuals. Numbers tapered off for the remaining three weeks of the month, with an average of 20 people per day harvesting on any given Sunday or Wednesday.
- The state-sponsored quahog relay that we did at Burton Baker Beach and Chipman's Cove reached the 90-day spawning timeframe on September 16. Quahogs and water samples were sent to the state for testing, and all results came back clean. Chipman's Cove will open as always on the last Sunday in October.
- The Burton Baker area was opened for harvesting for the last four Sunday and Wednesday tides of the month. The area saw good traffic, with most individuals leaving with their weekly peck limits. Approximately 14 bushels of quahogs were harvested in these four tides, which translates into 56 happy recreational shellfishermen.
- We estimate that more than 30 bushels of oysters and 20 bushels of quahogs were harvested by recreational harvesters this month from Indian Neck.

Enforcement

- Grant inspections continued. It is taking a while because we need a grant holder present, and it has to be a convenient time for them. Tides and daylight are beginning to constrain operations.
- An individual was reprimanded for fishing at night at Indian Neck and was given a verbal warning and escorted out of the area.
- An individual was reprimanded for fishing in a commercial area without a license and escorted out of the area.
- A commercial harvester was in violation of exposure time per vibrio protocols and was made to dump his catch.

State and Town Relations

- Shellfish Constable Nancy Civetta met with the surveyors of the HDYLTA property and attended a BOS Executive Session meeting to discuss it.
- Assistant Constable John Mankevetch with the Center for Coastal Studies about doing a sonar survey of the harbor to identify areas with derelict fishing gear for subsequent removal as part of a grant they have.
- Civetta attended a Selectboard Association meeting in Eastham to hear the Division of Marine Fisheries discuss grants and other shellfishing issues.
- Mankevetch attended the Mass. Shellfish Officers Assn. fall meeting.

- The topics of overwintering of aquaculture gear and dredge boat regulations were taken up by the Selectboard and Shellfish Advisory Board. The BOS approved new overwintering regulations and a new contract with growers. Boat regulations will go back to SAB.
- Civetta attended a Dredging Task Force meeting with the Rep. Sarah Peake and the new Massachusetts Housing and Economic Development Secretary Mike Kennealy.
- We hosted an AmeriCorps site visit and attended orientation, welcoming our new Individual Placement member, Travis Lavenski.

Propagation

- The Shellfish Department has been utilizing the new barge to assist grantholders in removing spat collection devices from Chipman's Cove. Grantholders have been removing the oyster seed from these, and the Department has received some significant donations from several individuals. We appreciate these gifts and the benefit it has to our propagation efforts throughout the harbor by saving the department money and allowing us to grow Wellfleet's own oyster spawn in our waters.
- AmeriCorps participated in propagation projects on September 30th. They assisted with removing spat collection devices from Chipman's Cove, and harvested quahogs from the department grant for relay into other parts of the harbor.
- Our AmeriCorps member Travis Lavenski started and helped broadcast oysters and quahogs around the harbor. He will serve with us on Tuesdays until the end of July 2020.
- On September 5, the department began the second year of a study to determine the occurrence of a late fall oyster spawn. We are working with Barbara Brennessel and John Portnoy.
- We have relayed over 60,000 oysters this month throughout the harbor from seed that has been growing on the town grant. They have been growing from hatchery seed put out in June, and most of the stock was already approaching legal size.

Education and Public Relations

- Civetta did an interview with an artist/journalist who is doing a photographic series as an art project and for The Provincetown Independent.
- We provided seed oysters to Nauset Regional High School's Environmental Science class for its annual oyster growth study in Wellfleet Harbor.
- The department is beginning to collaborate with Barbara Brennessel and John Portnoy with input from Mass. Audubon and Barnstable County Extension on a study of oyster spat in the Herring River pre-restoration, as compared with other sites around Wellfleet Harbor where the department cultches. This should help inform our future cultching efforts in addition to giving us important foundational knowledge about Herring River oyster recruitment.

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Civetta, Shellfish Constable