

Overview of the *Connecticut Shellfish Restoration Guide* Version 2022

The authors of the *Connecticut Shellfish Restoration Guide* are looking for feedback from the public on the discussion draft of the state's first comprehensive plan to restore its native marine shellfish populations. From **June 8, 2022 to 5:00PM ET on July 8, 2022**, the Guide's Task Force will be accepting written public comment on the *Connecticut Shellfish Restoration Guide*.

Comments should be submitted to: shellfish@uconn.edu

The *Connecticut Shellfish Restoration Guide* and its decision-making tools draw on the best available scientific resources, including the recently completed *Long Island Sound Blue Plan Inventory*, and lessons learned from similar efforts in other locales. The *Guide* provides an overall vision "Restore, manage, and conserve shellfish habitats to improve environmental, economic, and societal benefits known as "ecosystem services". The five key ecosystem services include:

- 1. Shellfish Production**
- 2. Coastal Habitat Provision**
- 3. Improved Water Quality**
- 4. Fisheries Production**
- 5. Shoreline Stabilization**

The *Guide* includes associated priority actions, decision-making tools, regulatory information and best management practices, and recommended high-priority restoration projects for future funding.

The *Guide* includes interactive GIS-based map tools that will help natural resource managers and coastal communities select the optimal areas for shellfish restoration based on ecological, biological, and socio-economic parameters. The [Connecticut Shellfish Restoration Map Viewer](#) is the first statewide collection of key geospatial data to be used to support decision-making for shellfish restoration. [Qualitative Oyster Habitat Surveys](#) characterize for the first time the condition of intertidal oyster populations across the state and establish a baseline to inform the planning of quantitative surveys. When combined, the information provided by these tools, site visits, and conversations with Connecticut's coastal stakeholders will help to identify suitable locations for a

variety of restoration goals and help inform a prioritization process for restoration work ensuring future efforts have the greatest chance of success.

Shellfish restoration efforts in Connecticut to date have been limited in number and scale. With this *Guide*, restoration practitioners now have access to information and tools directly relevant to Connecticut and Long Island Sound. The use of these resources will result in improved planning and permitting of restoration projects and will provide sponsor agencies with confidence in their ability to fund high priority projects that will result in the wise use, conservation and management of shellfish and shellfish habitats.