



News

New oyster cultivation facilityOK'd at Horn Point Laboratory

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CAMBRIDGE The Maryland Board of Public Works approved a contract Wednesday for the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science to move forward with the construction of a state-of-the-art oyster cultivation facility at the Horn Point Laboratory in Cambridge.

The new facility will increase Horn Point's ability to produce oyster spat for Maryland's Chesapeake Bay restoration efforts. The oyster cultivation facility will rest on a 300-foot pier reaching into the Choptank River and will improve the efficiency of large-scale restoration efforts by allowing researchers to more easily move spat-laden oyster shell to barges destined for restoration sites. The construction of the facility will be managed by the Maryland Department of General Services and is expected to be completed in fall 2010.

"The new oyster cultivation facility removes a bottleneck in the production of oyster spat for Bay restoration," said UMCES President Dr. Donald Boesch. "The new facility will allow the Center's researchers to ramp-up restoration efforts by annually producing one-to two-billion spat-on-shell for placement in the Bay and its rivers."

Horn Point's oyster hatchery produced 580 million oyster spat in 2008, a record number for the facility. After rearing oysters in the hatchery, Horn Point works with the State of Maryland and the Oyster Recovery Partnership to place the spat-on-shell at designated sites throughout the Chesapeake Bay.

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