



Town of Oak Bluffs, Massachusetts

Shellfish Department

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September 2019 Report

This month marks the height of our growing season. Survival and growth rates have been very good for all species. Soft shell clams have reached a viable size and have all been seeded out. The second delivery was later than usual but, they also grew faster than the first. The supplier was not able to fulfill our order by 100,000. Next year's order will make up the difference at no additional charge. The upweller has been disassembled and the parts have been stored for the season.

About half of the oysters have been moved from the tidal upweller into bags and bottom cages for overwintering. The rest are still growing to size and should be prepared for overwintering by the middle of next month.

We have started emptying the quahog nursery rafts. The first of the rafts was slow going. Our water pump failed due to lack of maintenance. Thanks to our part time Deputy, Garrett Albiston, it is up and running. As of today we have resumed emptying the rafts. They should be completed by the end of next week. I don't foresee delays of this nature in the future as I am implementing an equipment maintenance program.

Scallop seed has been growing well in both Sengekontacket and Lagoon ponds. We will be emptying the grow bags and seeding scallops out starting mid October. The scallop nursery cages in Sengekontacket have been removed. The spat bags collected next to nothing. I believe this is due to the placement of the cages. I chose to put them off of Pecoy point to keep them away from boat traffic. Next year I will put them in a different location in Sengekontacket. All of the scallop nursery cages in the lagoon are doing well. Even the spat bags on the cages that were emptied have many scallops in them. Those between the hatchery and Brush pond have shown the best growth. The scallop cage and spat bags in Farm pond produced very little.

The Select board has authorized the proposed opening dates for scallop season. The dates have been posted on our website.

In cooperation with the Tisbury Shellfish Department and the Oak Bluffs Water Department, we have removed the ladders from the herring run for the season.

During the month of August the Tisbury Harbormaster pumped out seven boats in the Oak Bluffs side of Lagoon pond. The total volume was 170 gallons.

In preparation for tropical storm Dorian, we pulled both boats out. We were able to perform some mid-season maintenance while they were out. They are now back in the water and running well.

Our new boat is seeing some progress. While it is still with the mechanic the Deputies have been able to start planning for the new culling board.

I have started initial work on getting the Farm pond restoration and culvert project reinstated. It looks like we have lost some funding due to delays caused by requests for additional studies. I am working on getting current project costs as prior amounts were from 2013 and undoubtedly increased.

The Town will be doing a small dredging project in Sengekontacket pond to provide material for the North Bluff beach restoration. The dredging will probably start in October and will be limited to areas around the second bridge, Sarson Island, and section one.

Respectfully submitted,