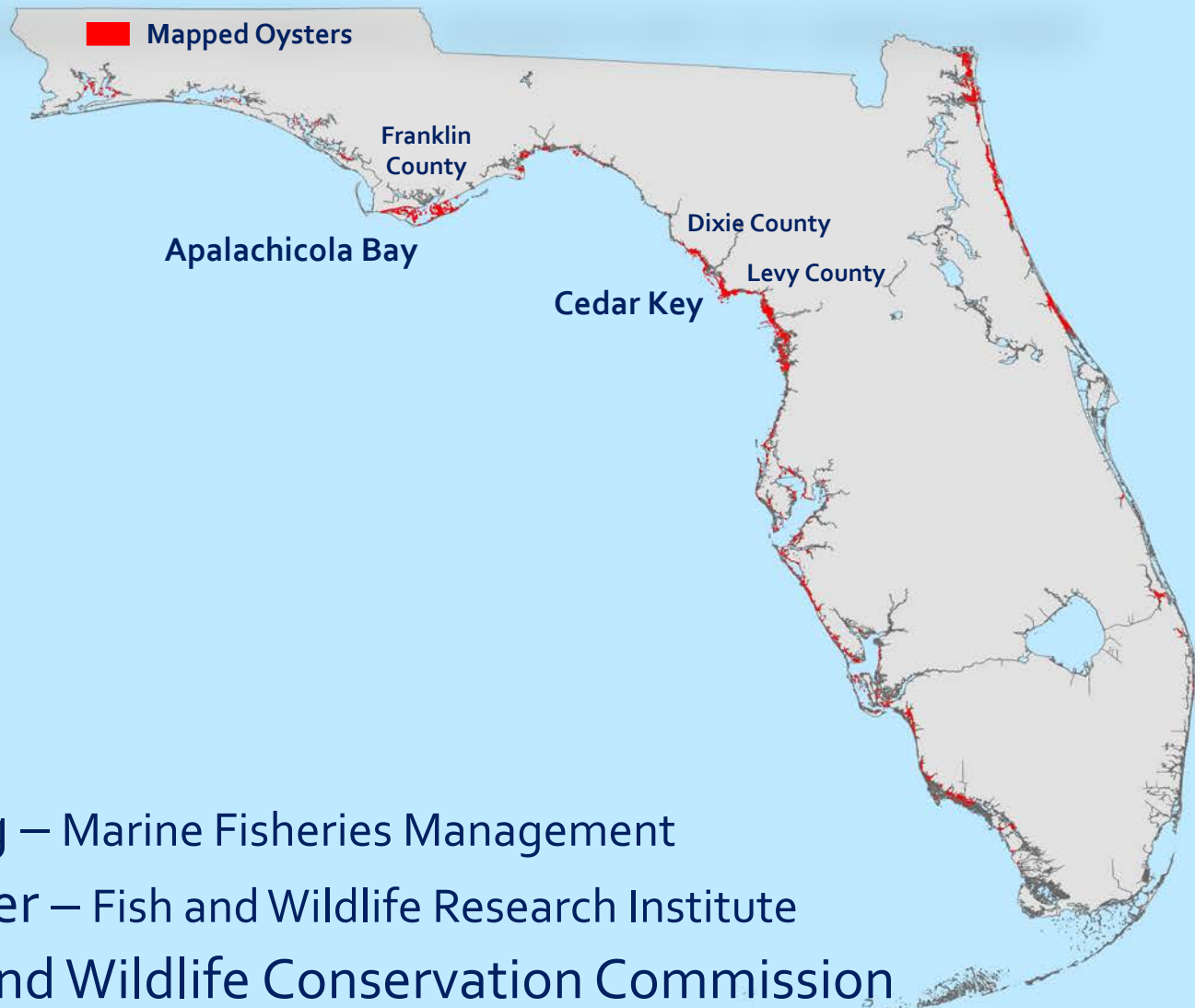


Status of Managed Oyster Resources and Recent Restoration Efforts in Florida



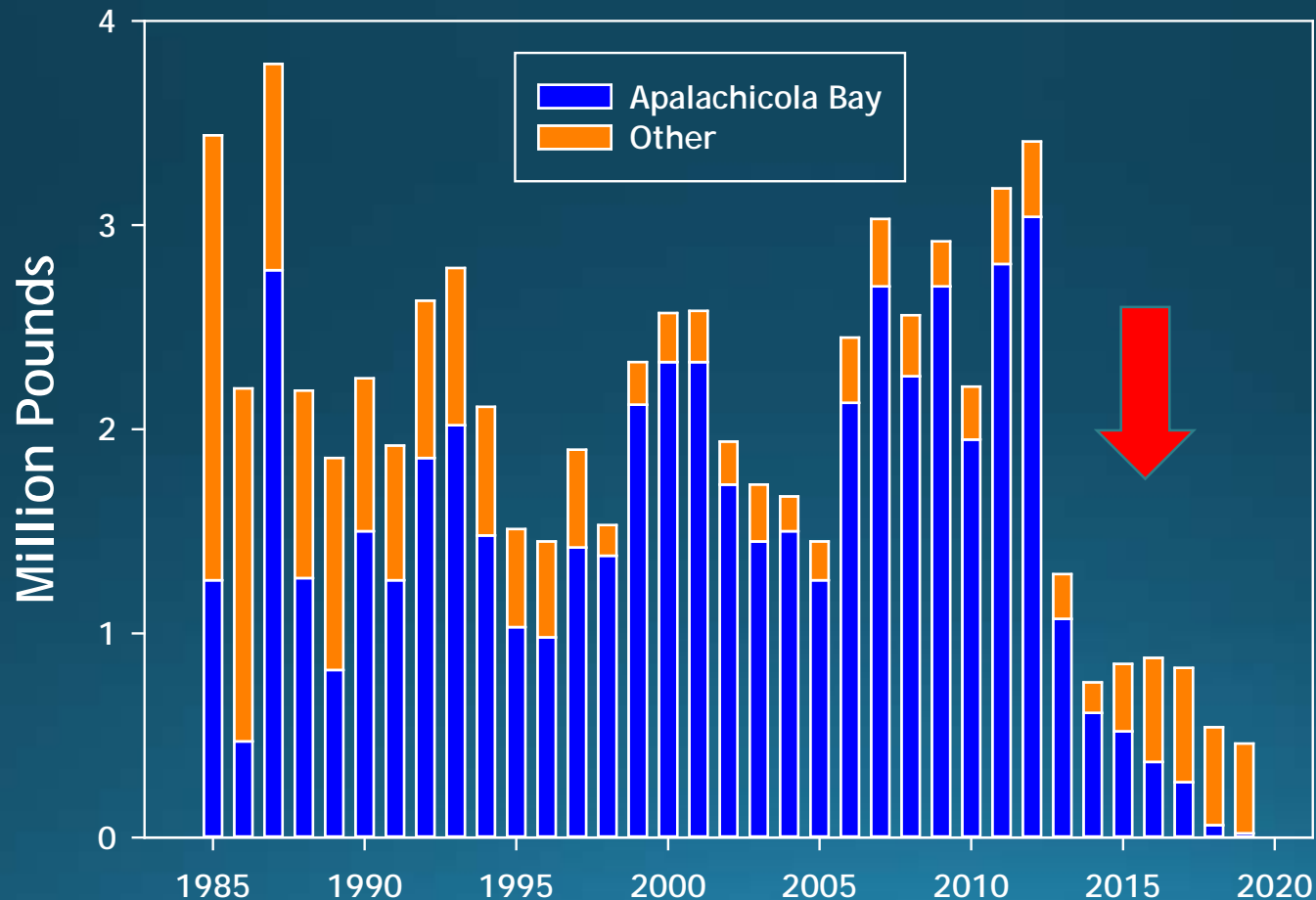
Mike Norberg – Marine Fisheries Management

Melanie Parker – Fish and Wildlife Research Institute

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

AB Oyster Fishery Collapse

Combination of poor environmental conditions, poor oyster survival, substrate loss, increased fishing pressure, etc. led to a collapse of the fishery in late 2012

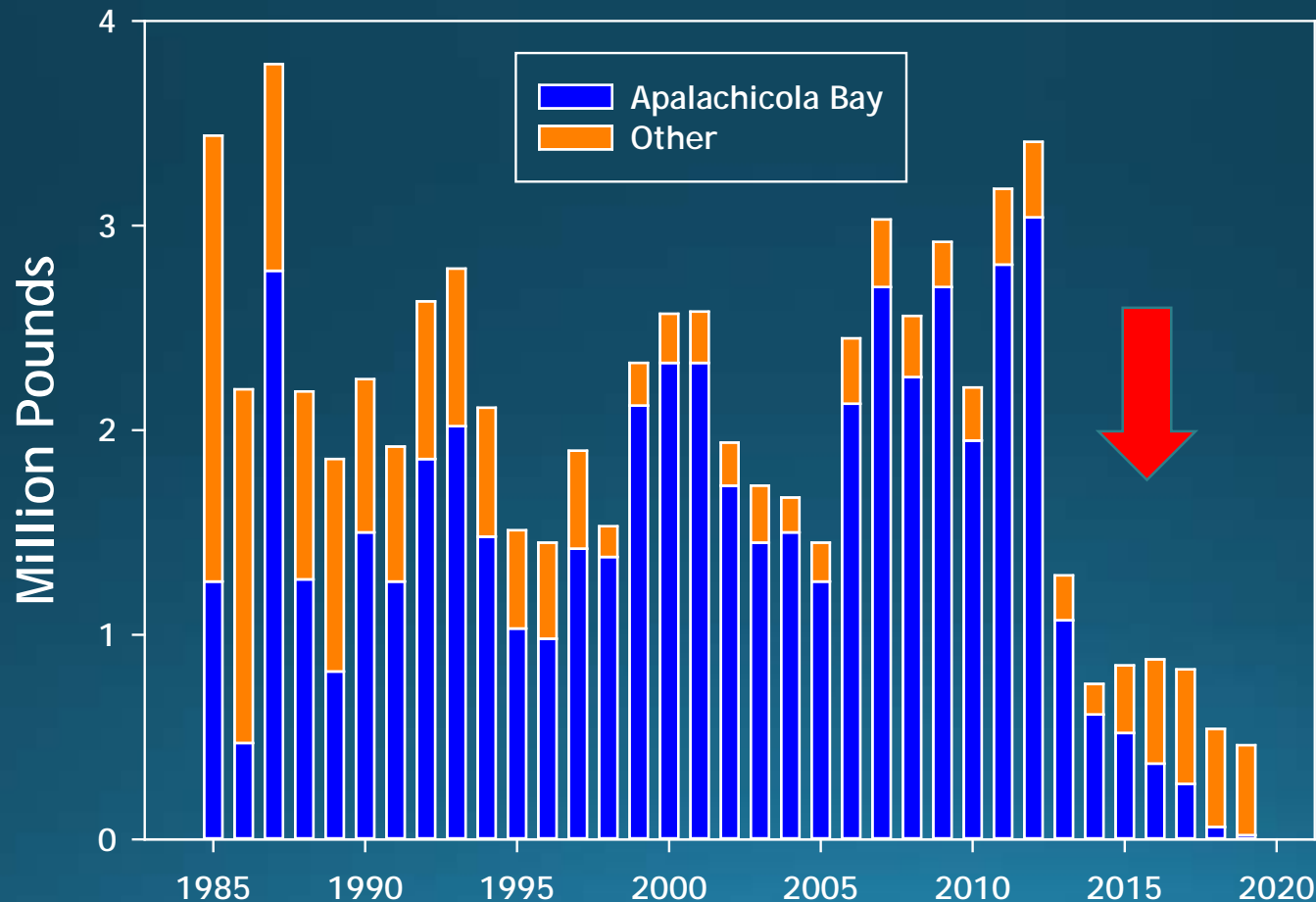


AB Oyster Fishery Collapse

2018 Statewide Landings: ~525,000 lbs (15% of 2012)

2018 AB Landings: ~56,000 lbs (2% of 2012)

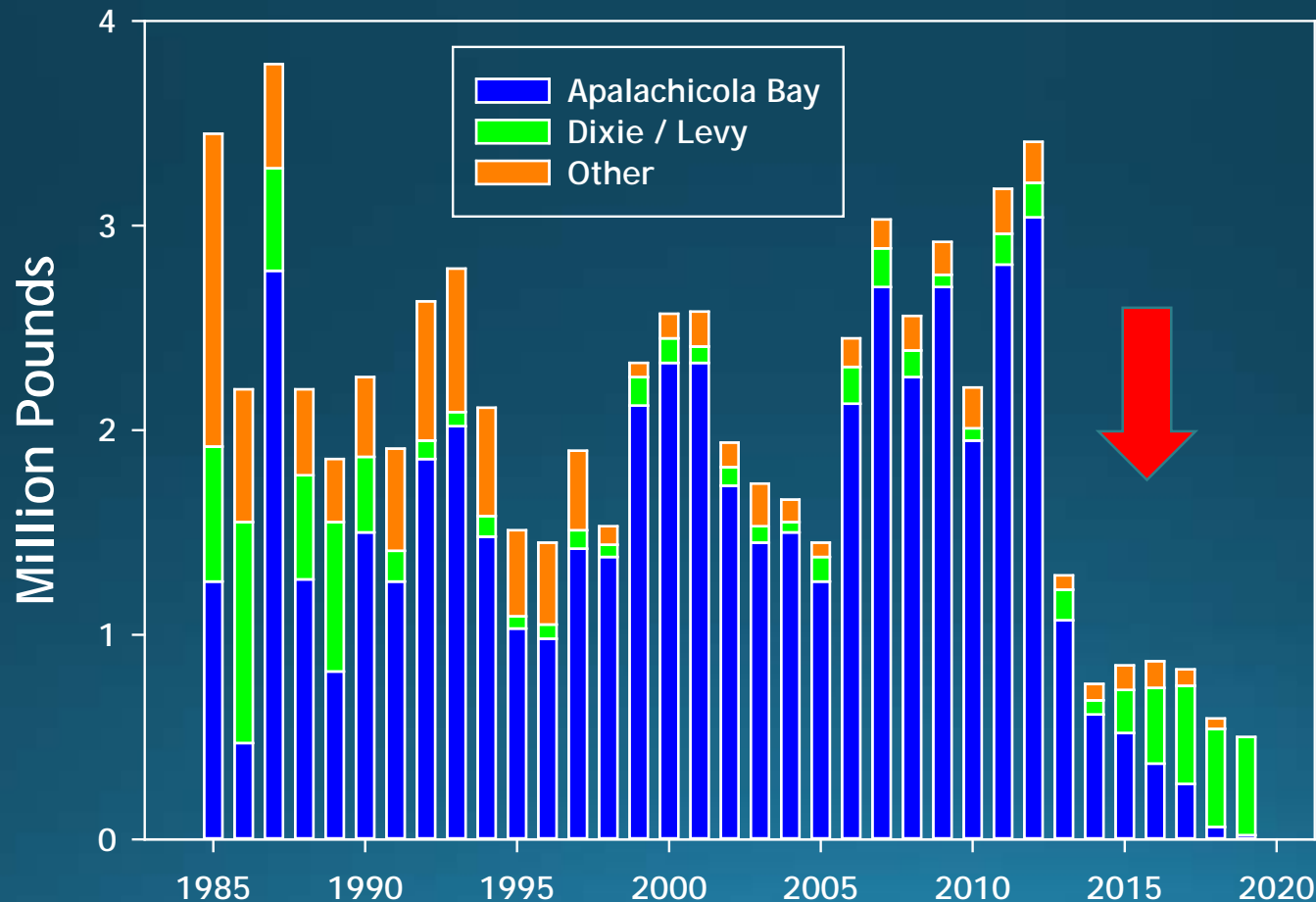
- Now only 11% of total landings



Shifts in Harvest Effort

Increased effort in Dixie / Levy Counties

- Average 0.22 million lbs from 1985 to 2012
- Increasing steadily 2015-2018 to high of 0.48 million lbs



Commercial Harvest - AB

Size Limits

- Minimum of 3" in greatest dimension
- **Implemented check stations at docks to enforce size limit**

Bag Limits

- ~~Generally 20 per person per day~~
- **2 bags per person per day**
(1 bag = 60 lbs)

Days

- ~~Harvest allowed any day of the week~~
- **Harvest allowed Mon – Thurs**



Restoration Efforts

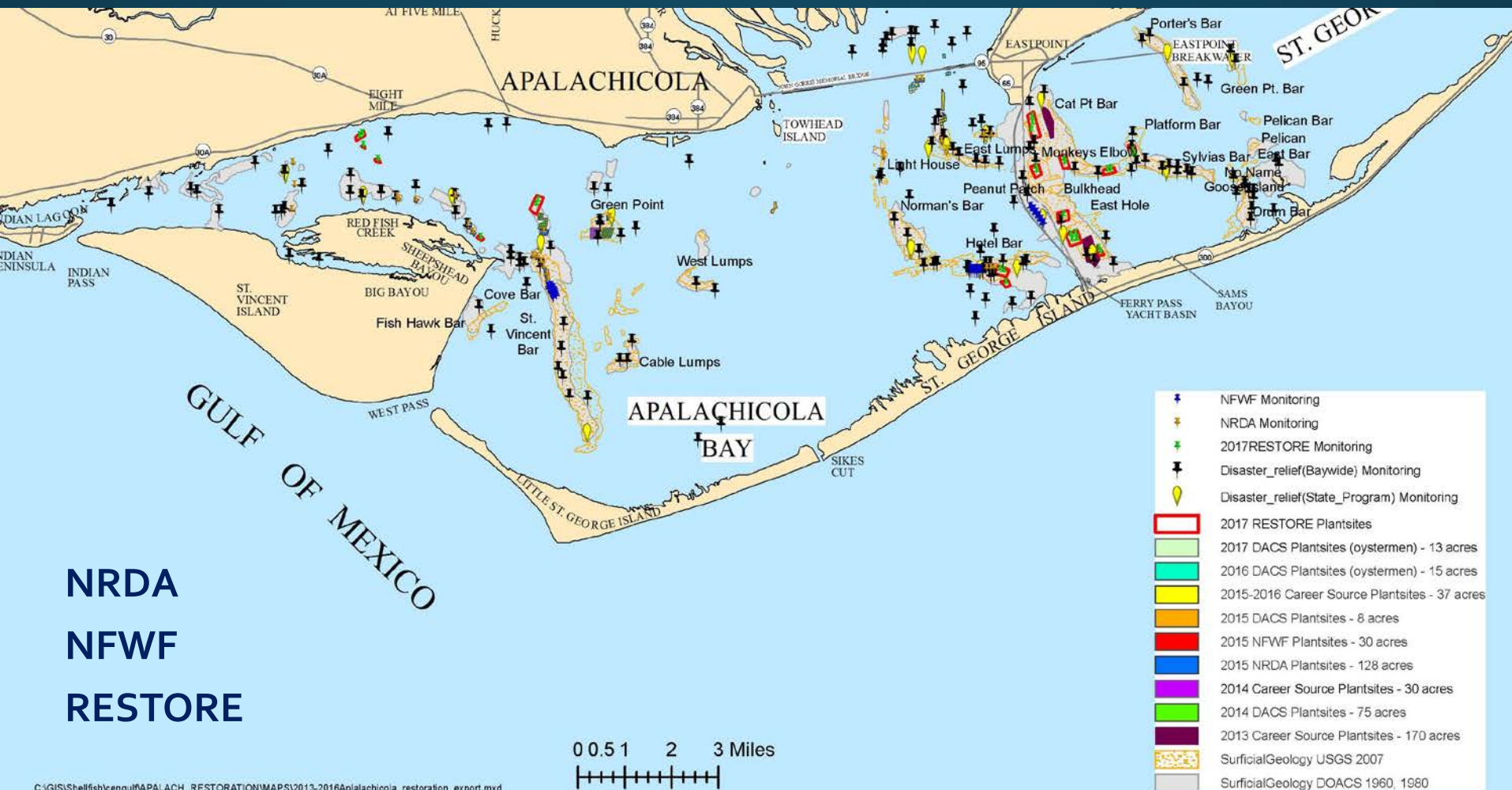
FDACS oversaw planting of 835 acres of cultch substrate from 2013 – 2017

- Placed by barges with high-pressure water
- Placed by fishermen from their oyster boats



Joe Shields, FDACS

Restoration Efforts



Summary

Current Status

- 2018 total statewide landings (0.53 million lbs) only ~22% of average from 1985-2012
- Decline primarily due to collapse of the Apalachicola Bay (AB) fishery in 2012

Management Actions for Apalachicola

- Reduced bag limits, allowable fishing days, open areas
- Requested declaration of commercial fishery failure
- Pursuing water dispute with Georgia
- FDACS cultched 835 acres in Apalachicola Bay from 2013-17
- Pursuing additional funding opportunities (NFWF, NRDA) to conduct extensive benthic mapping and more cultching

Thank you

