



October 2024 Texas MSSC Updates:

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Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

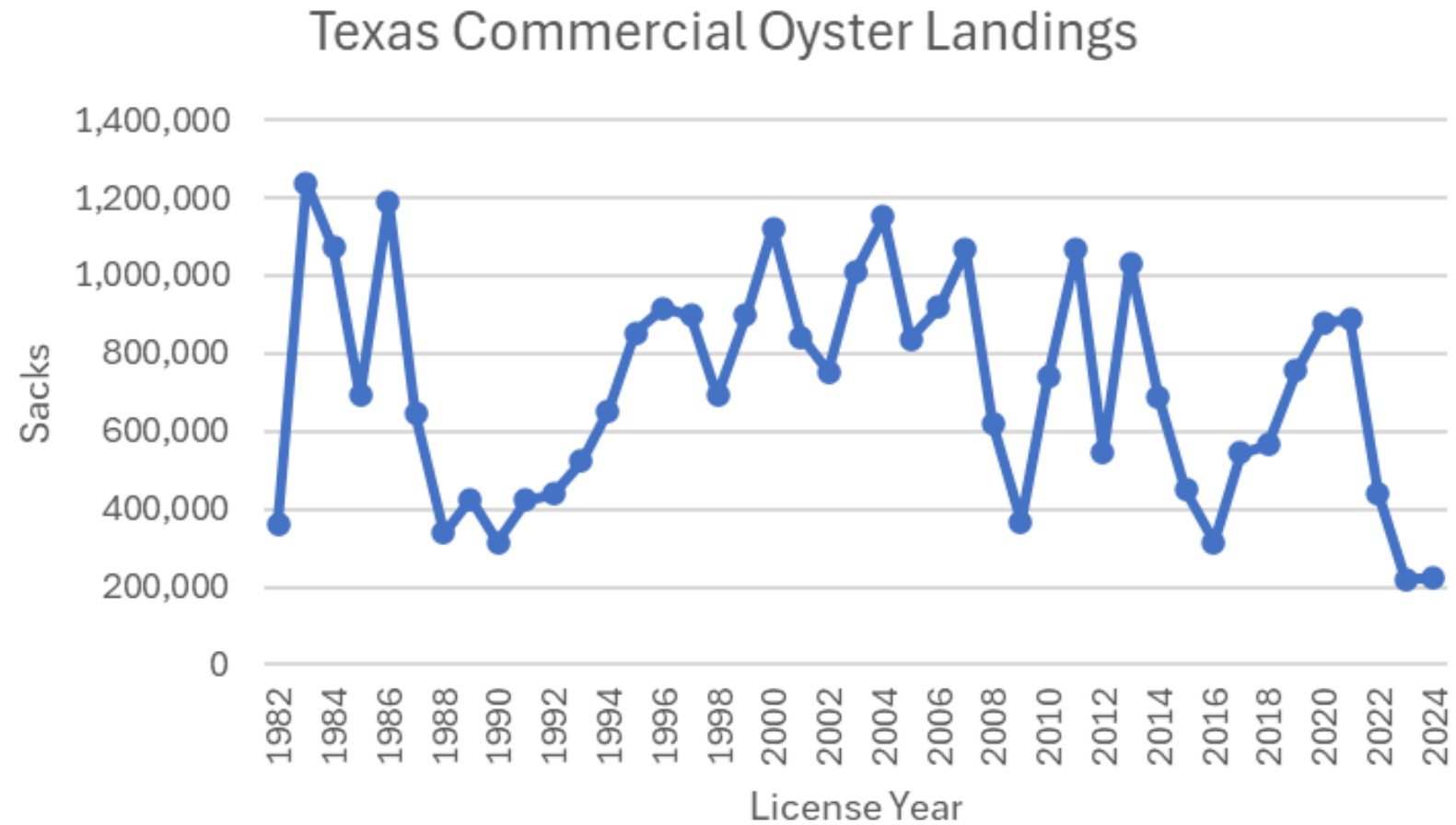


Commercial Harvest and Resource Status

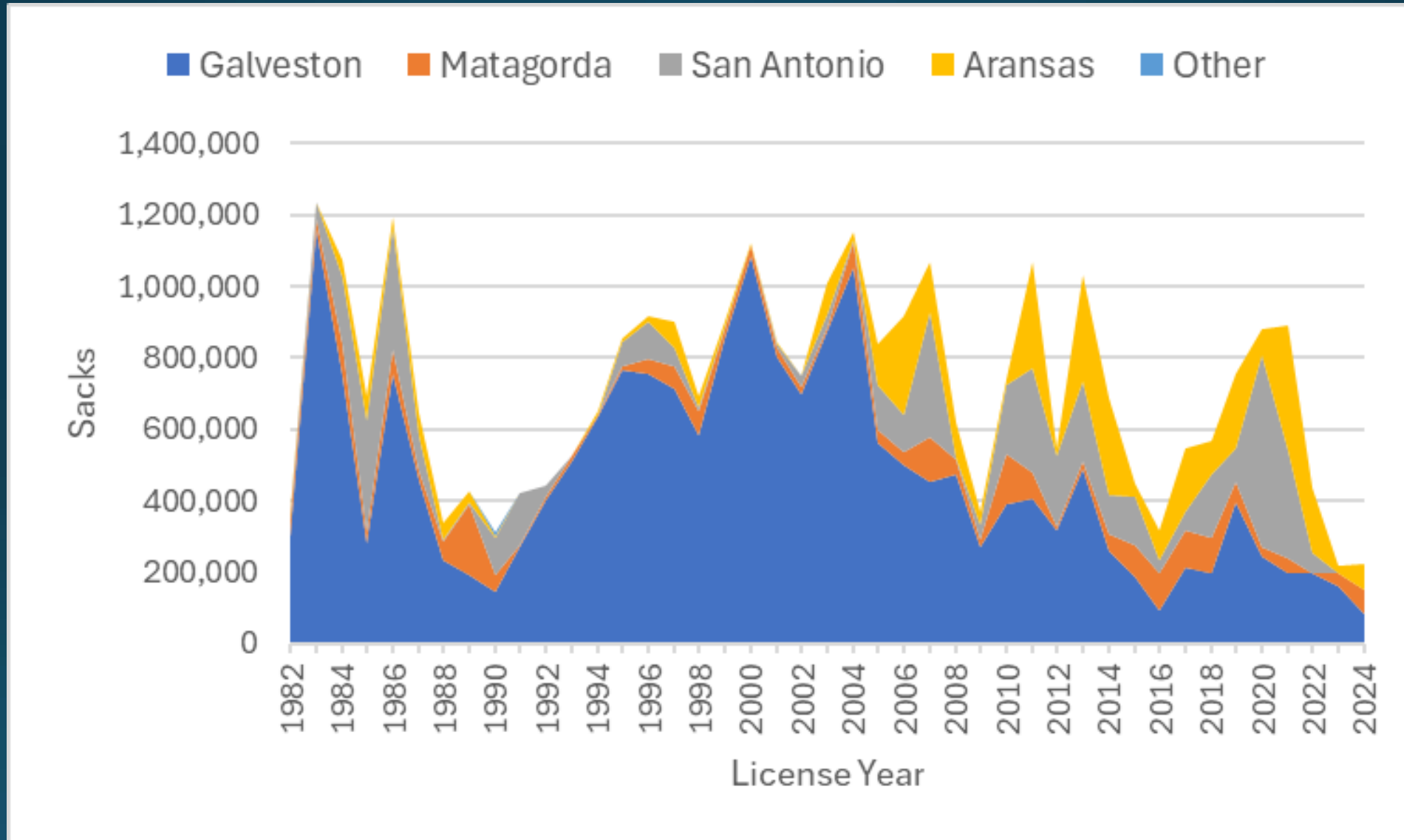
Oyster-Producing Bays in Texas



Commercial Landings

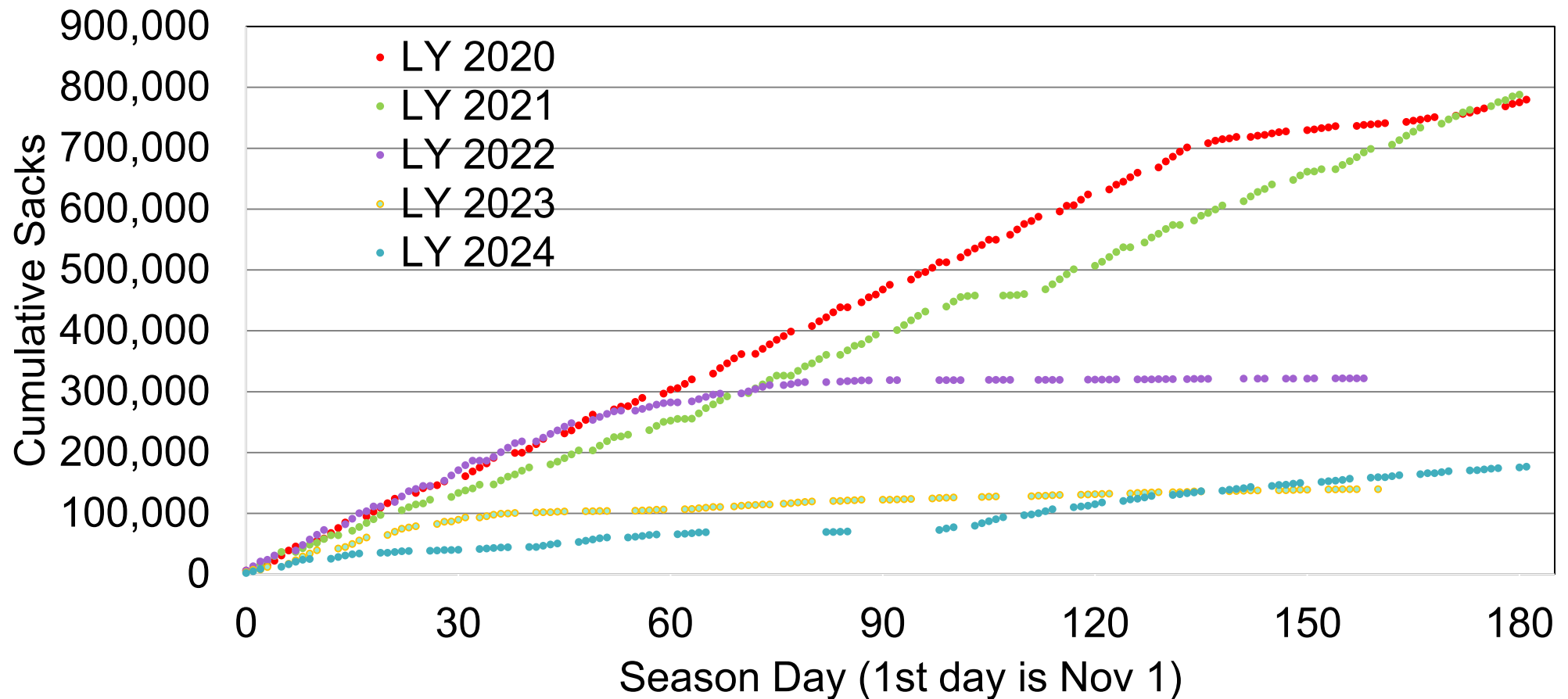


Commercial Landings by Bay System



Length of Season

Cumulative Oyster Sacks: 2020 - 2024 Seasons



Closure History – Galveston Bay

Harvestable Days in Galveston Bay, 2013-2024

*No harvest allowed on Sundays
**No harvest allowed on Saturday and Sundays



Pre-Season Sampling 2024

Harvest Area	Avg Market (≥3") CPUE	Avg 2-2.99" CPUE	Avg 1-1.99" CPUE
TX-1	224	848	1,328
TX-3	0	72	3,072
TX-5	252	744	12,312
TX-6	162	519	3,216
TX-7	204	216	3,916
TX-9	0	0	36
TX-11	0	0	0
TX-12	156	360	448
TX-13	486	414	1,374
TX-14	282	402	330
TX-15	384	372	492
TX-16	156	96	300

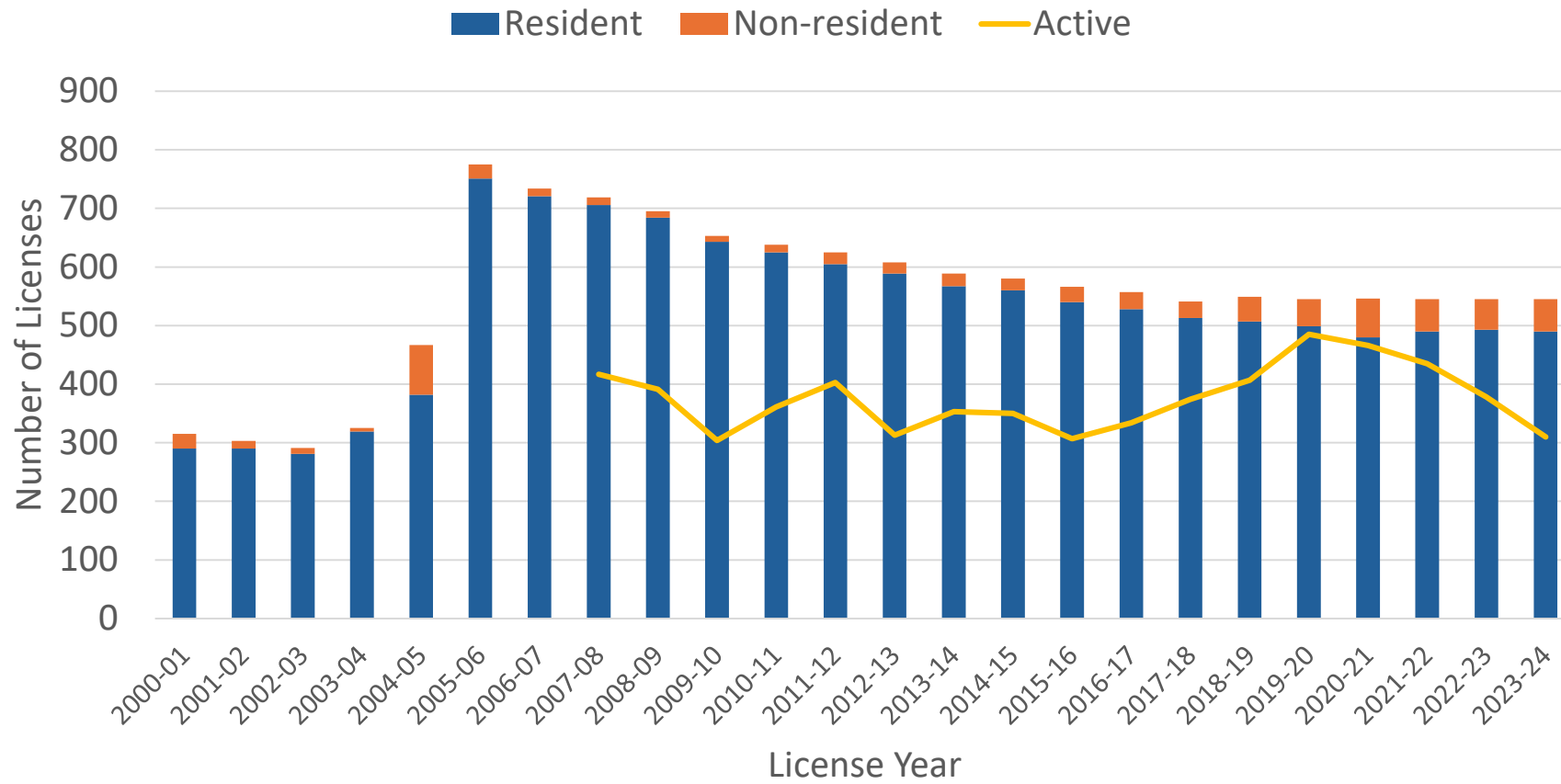
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TX-18	300	450	666
TX-19	858	1,059	1,707
TX-20	654	1,998	1,320
TX-21	390	492	1,032
TX-24	492	444	1,440
TX-25	204	120	1,244
TX-26	654	444	696
TX-27	336	192	252
TX-29	1,242	4,632	9,726
TX-30	1,720	6,444	8,572
TX-32	391	9,547	5,337

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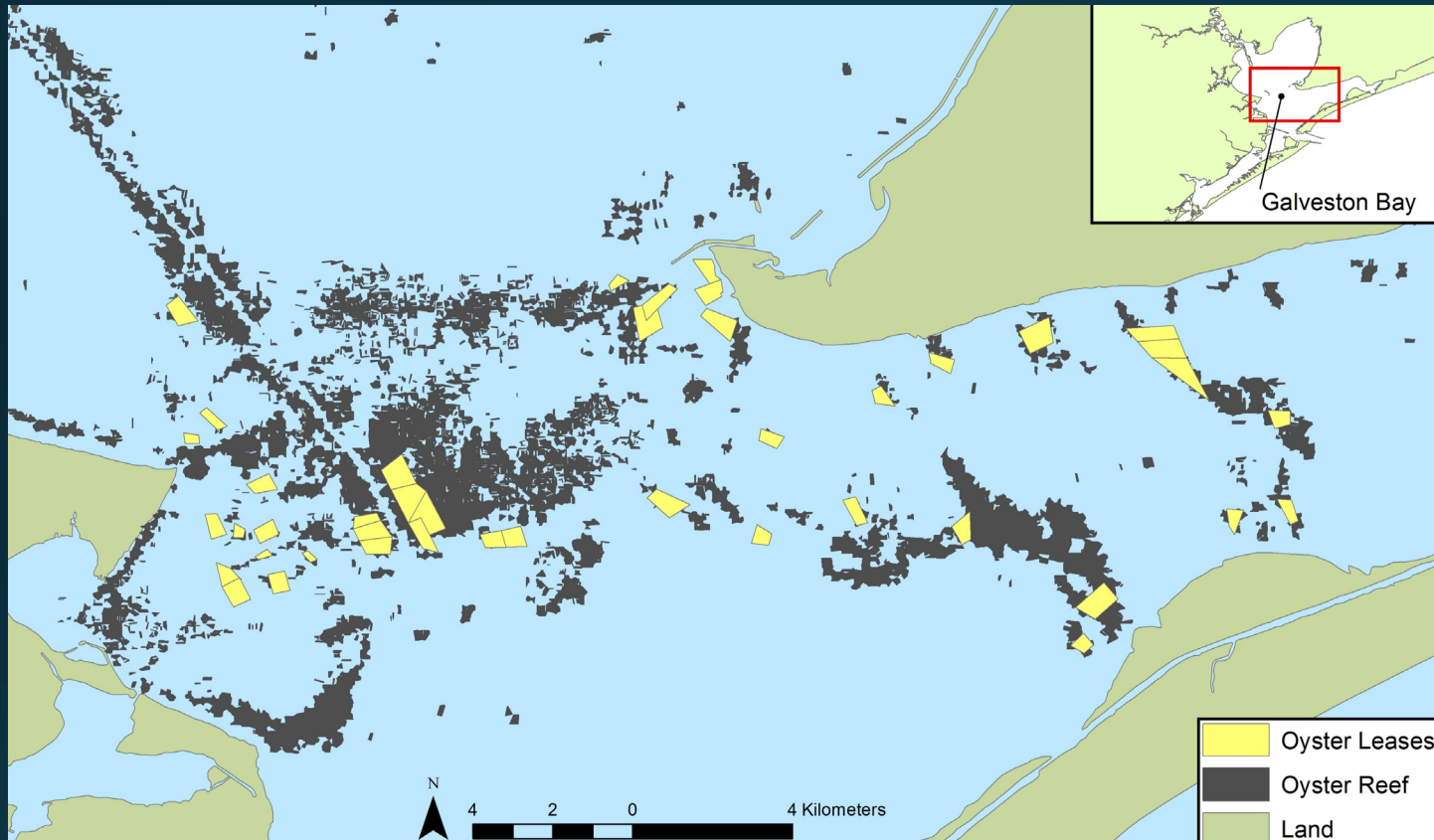
Texas Commercial License Trends



- Downward trend in active license users as resource availability has declined
- Limited success with buyback program

Certificates of Location (COL)

- COL = "lease"
- Legislature delegated authority to create restoration COLs
- Possibly expand to other bay systems
- In the process of creating framework for rules
- To Commission in November 2024 with goal of adopting in January 2025
- Ability to fully implement depends on other agencies





Cultivated Oyster Mariculture (COM)

Timeline of Cultivated Oyster Mariculture (COM) Program

Authorized by
86th Legislature
HB1300

May
2019



Aug
2020

Oyster
mariculture
program takes
effect

First COM
permit issued

July
2021



Current Status

- 3 Hatcheries
- 2 Nurseries

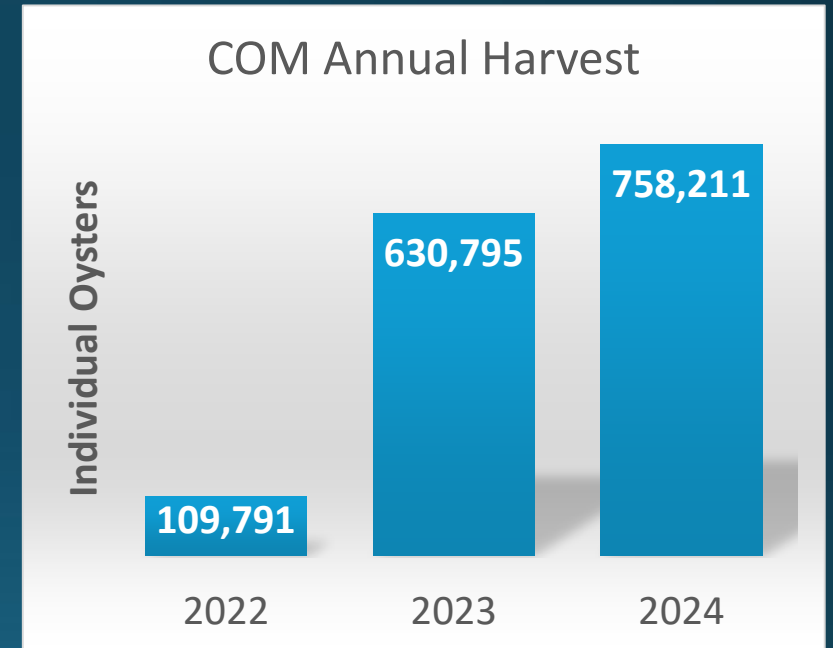
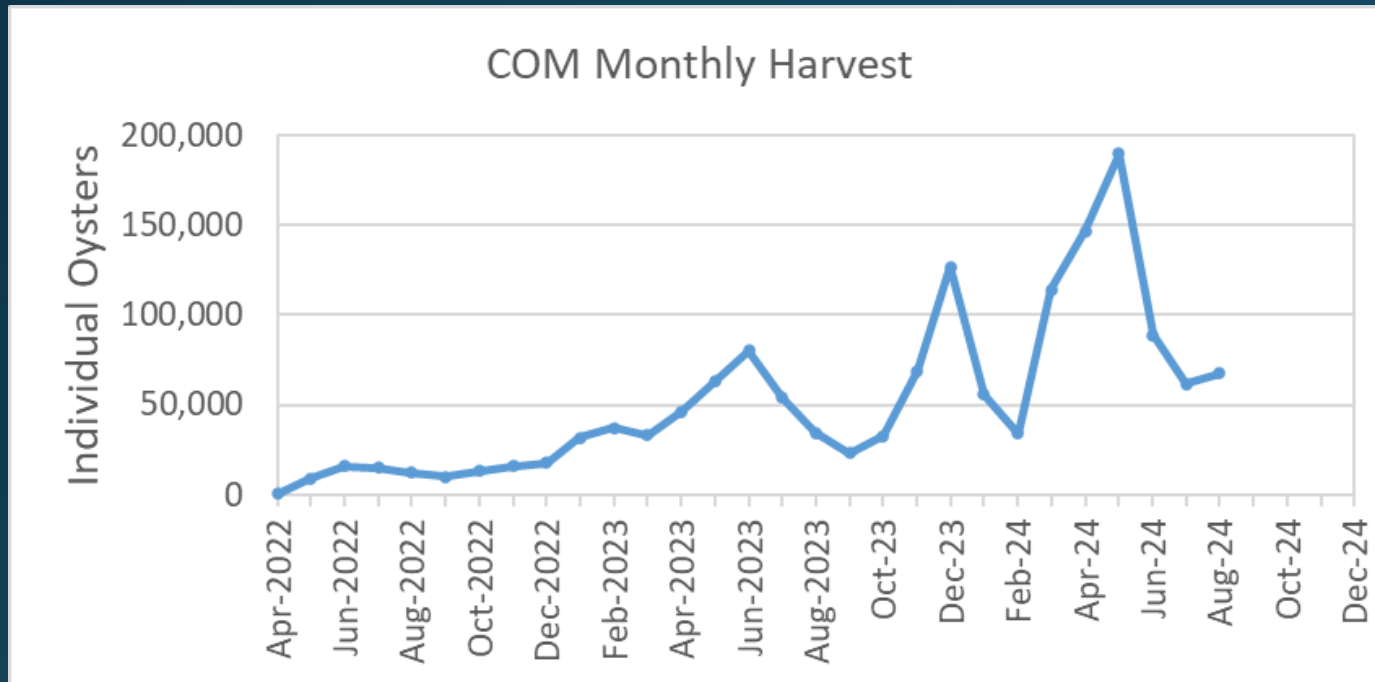
- 11 Grow-Out sites
- 10 in Conditional status

Over 1.5M oysters
harvested since
2022

Average
price per
oyster \$0.67



Private Harvest - Cultivated Oyster Mariculture (COM)



* As of 9/9/2024

Proposed Revisions to Cultivated Oyster Mariculture Program Regulations



Proposed Amendments

Clarify and refine program rules



Revisions based on feedback from TPWD biologists, Game Wardens, COM industry members, and guidance from Department of Health and National Shellfish Sanitation Program (NSSP)

Shore-based Tumbling and Sorting

Specify that farmers may take oysters out of their permitted area for tumbling and sorting



Permit Transfers

- Allow permit transfers
 - Permit provisions and dates stay the same
 - Transfer (application) fee of \$200



Photo credit ORRC via Laurie Lynn Imagery Inc.

Sunset Provision

- Before the sunset date of Dec 31, 2027:
 - Use of non-Texas tetraploid line allowed
 - Use of out-of-state hatcheries allowed
- Texas tetraploid line not expected by current sunset date
- Currently only one commercial scale hatchery in Texas



Propose to extend until Dec 31, 2033

Size Limit Change for COM Oysters

- Change harvest size limit from 2.5" to 2"
- Add 5% cargo allowance for oysters between 1.5"– 2"



Photo credit ORRC via Laurie Lynn Imagery Inc.



Other

- Minor rule clarifications and changes
- Repeal rules that are no longer necessary with new updates or are now redundant

On schedule to adopt these changes in November 2024





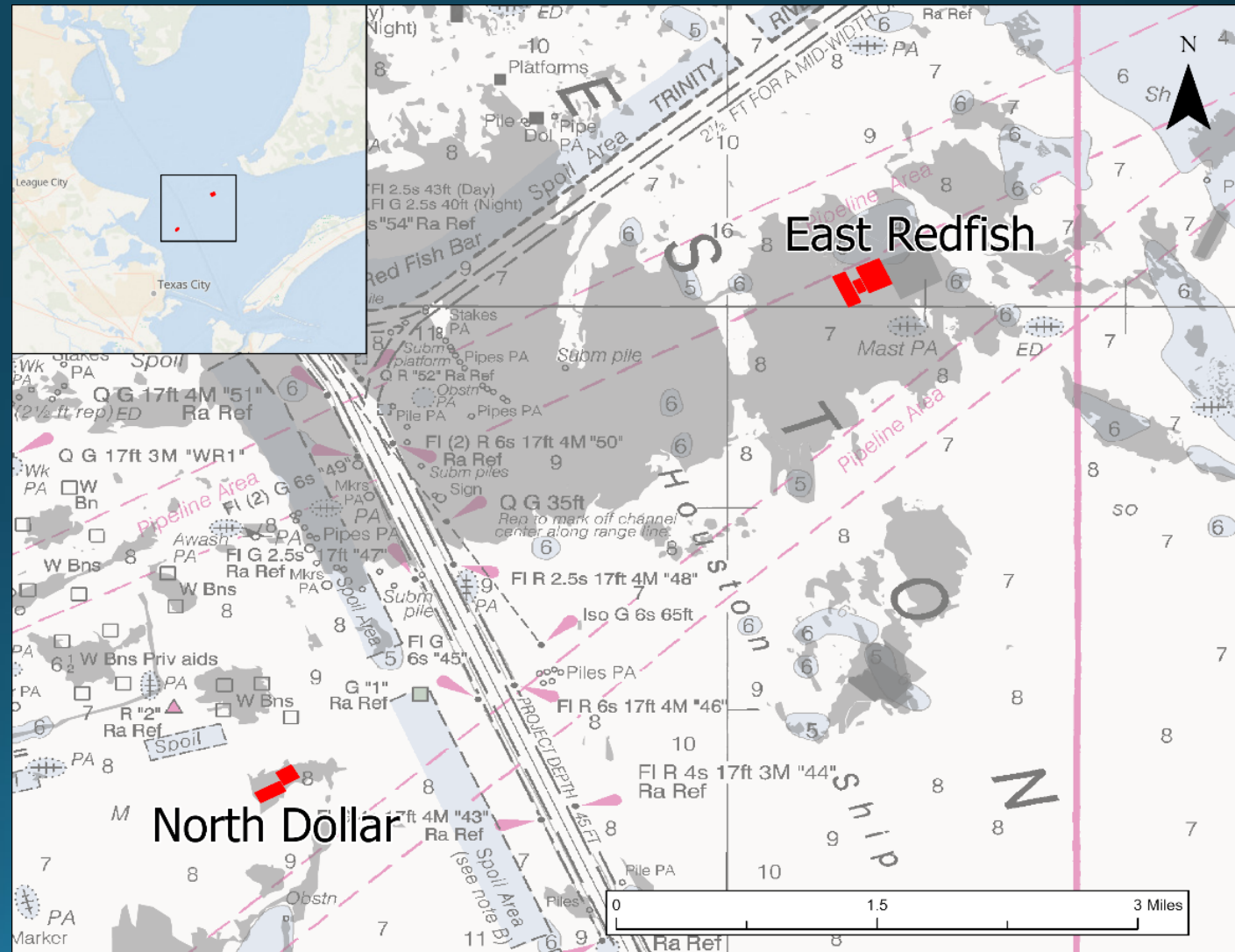
Restoration

Recent and Upcoming Restorations

- **On-going monitoring of experimental restoration designs**
 - **Testing:** flats vs mounds, cultch depths, mound spacing, vertical relief
 - **Preliminary results:** More cultch = more recruitment
 - Performing cost-benefit analysis (dollars to oysters)
- **Engaging stakeholders in site selection, project planning, and construction for all types of restoration**
- **New approaches in Texas**
 - **Maintenance layer**—supplementing moderately degraded reefs with 1-2” of shell
 - **Broodstock/sanctuary reefs**
 - Self-policing (large) cultch or restoring in areas closed to harvest

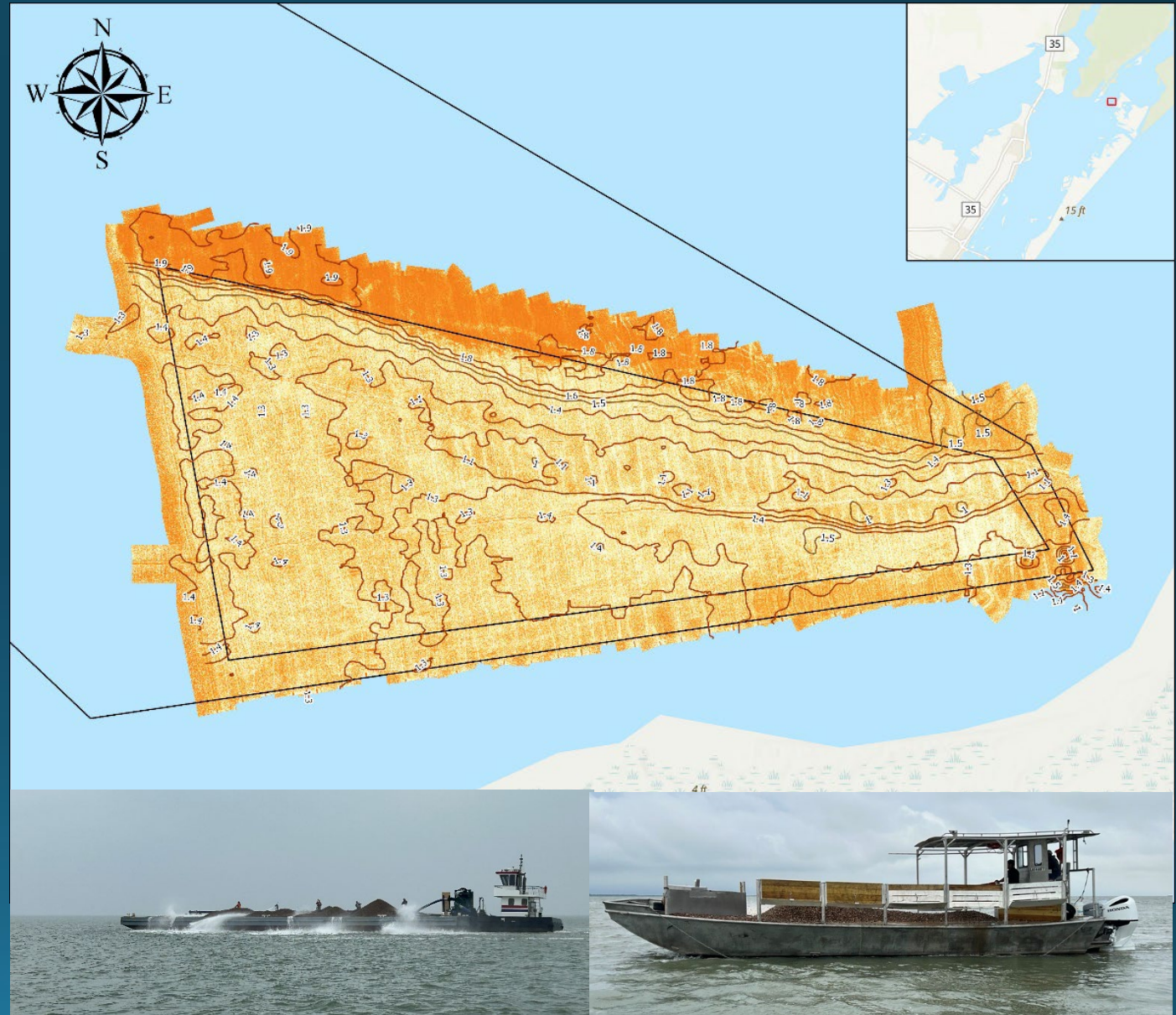
North Dollar and East Redfish, Galveston Bay

- Restored Sept 2023
- ~\$3.7M in CARES Act funding
- Utilized previously permitted sites
- 3-6" flats approach
- 30 acres in total



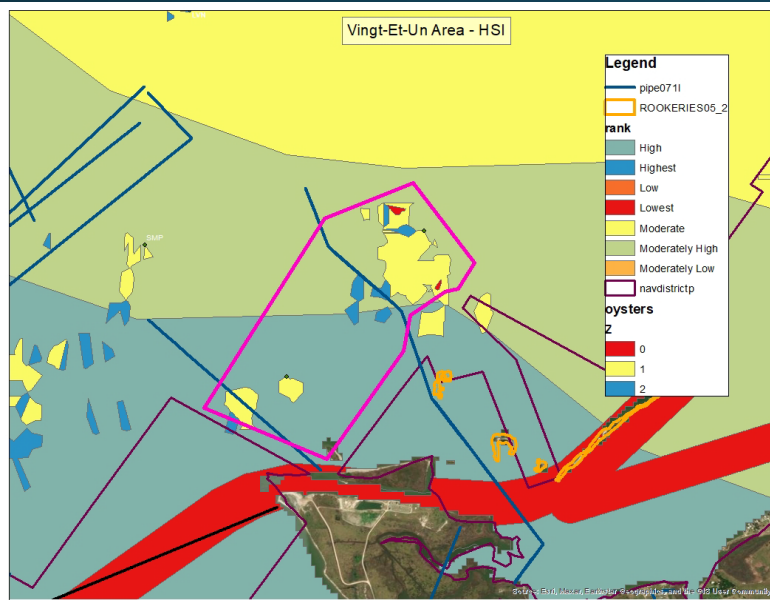
Carlos Reef, Carlos Bay

- Restored May 2024
- ~\$2.4M from Hurricane Harvey Disaster Relief Funding, TAMUCC, and other sources
- Maintenance layer (1-2") approach
- Contracted out to industry members
- Carlos Bay closed to harvest
- 70 acres



Upcoming: NRDA Funded Restorations

Intertidal and Subtidal



Trinity Bay

Currently planning/permitting

Sites selected with stakeholder input

- 50 acres
- Intertidal and subtidal

Intertidal



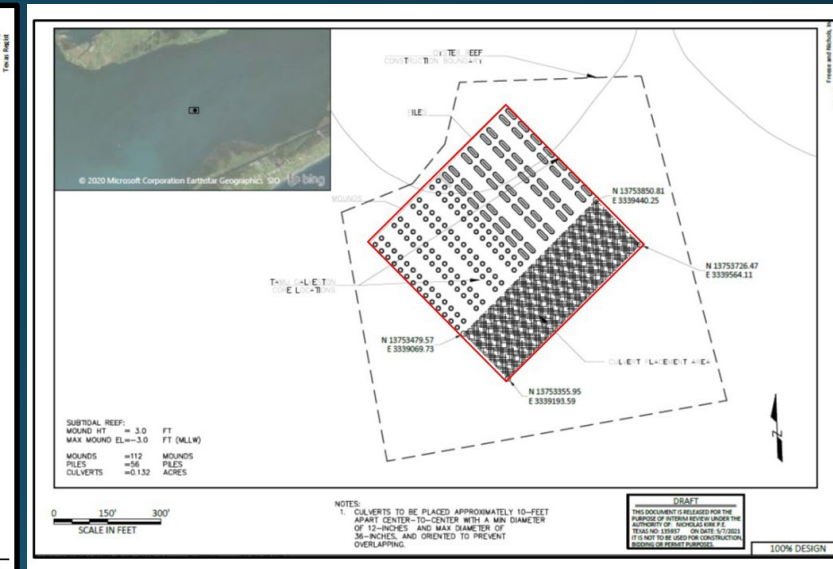
East Galveston Bay

Currently permitting/bidding

1,436 reef mounds

- 6 acres

Subtidal



East Galveston Bay

Currently permitting/bidding

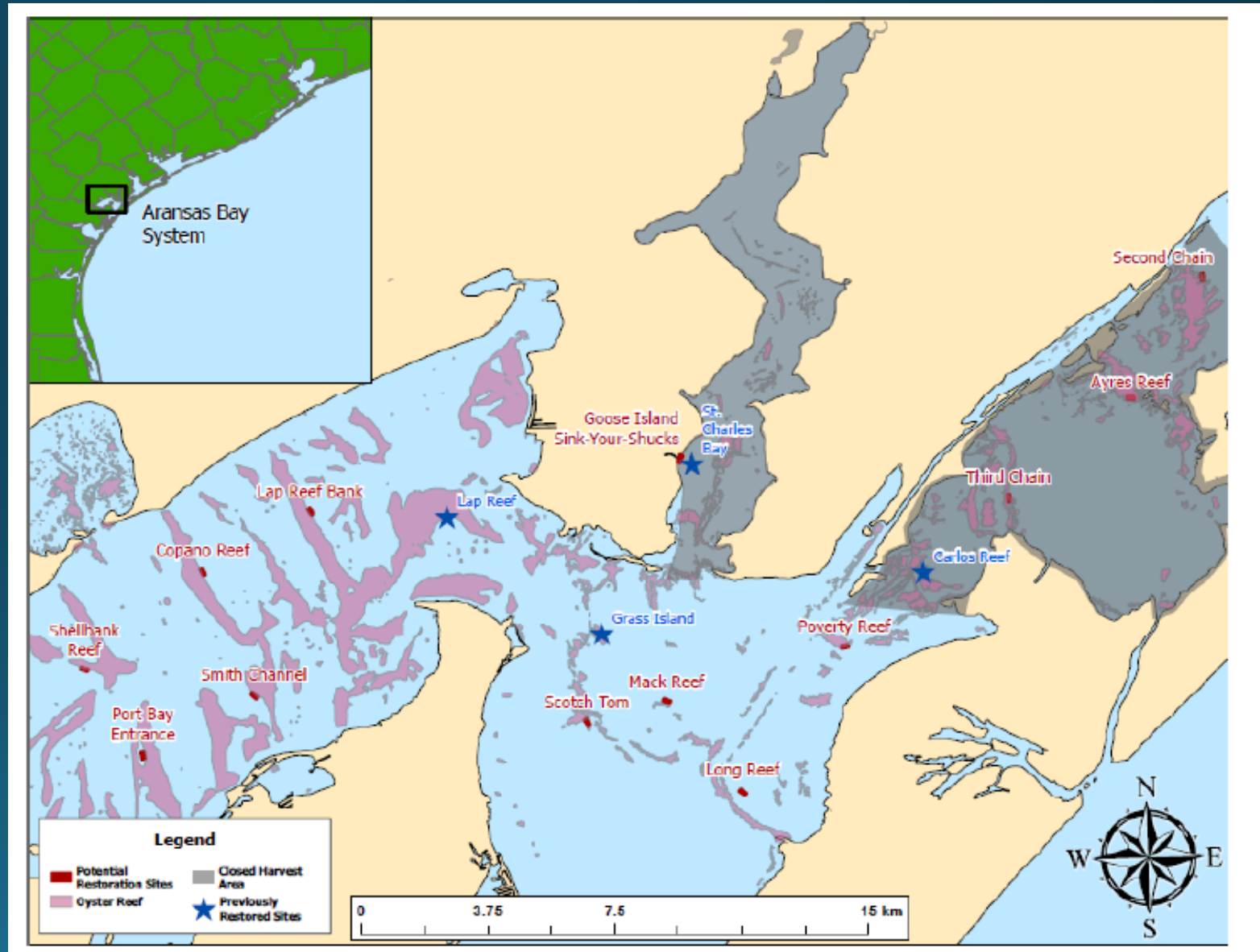
112 mounds, 56 ridges

Area reserved for recycled materials

- 1.4 acres

Upcoming: Network of broodstock reefs in Aransas Bay system

- Funded by NOAA Transformational Habitat Restoration Grant
- TPWD in partnership with MANERR, CBBEP, HRI, and TNC
- Creating a network of sanctuary (unharvestable) reefs
 - 2-3 sites in Aransas/Copano Using self-policing cultch
 - 1 site in St. Charles TPWD closed area
 - 1-2 sites in Carlos-Mesquite-Ayres TPWD closed area
- Construction in ~2027
- Stakeholder involvement



Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Oyster Shell Recovery Program

- HB51 (2017) includes a requirement for dealers to:
 - Return 30% by volume of the total quantity of oysters harvested the previous license yearOR
 - Pay a fee to the department to return an equivalent amount of cultch to public reefs
- Currently the fee is \$1.32 per sack (no increase)

Oyster Shell Recovery Program Updates through LY24

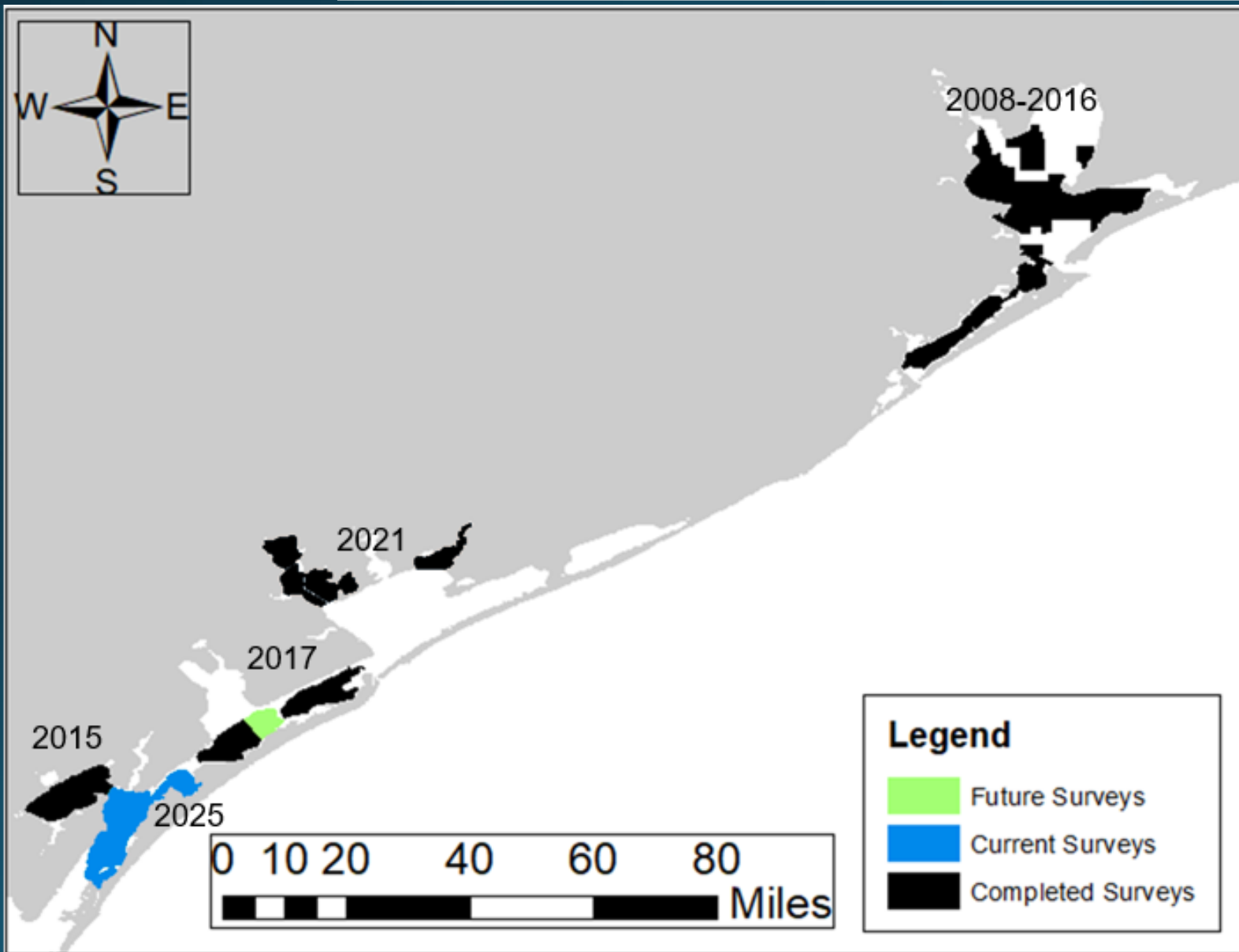
				Final Disposition		
LY	Sacks Harvested	Cultch Due (cu yds)	Fee in lieu of cultch	Cultch (cu yds)	Fee (\$)	% accounted for
2018	564,787	9,805.30	\$745,518	6,590.5	\$243,879	
2019	754,565	13,100.00	\$996,025	9,705.3	\$232,615	
2020	878,503	15,251.70	\$1,159,624	3,219.9	\$306,294	
2021	861,939	14,964.12	\$1,137,759	16,150.2	\$253,124	
2022	428,438	7,438.10	\$565,538	7,724.9	\$146,953	
2023	218,746	3,797.65	\$288,745	2,848.8	\$44,169	
2024	220,833	3,833.88	\$291,500	5,447.0	\$25,223	
Total	3,927,811	68,191	5,184,709	51,686.6	1,252,257	*100.9
Balance (as of 9/6/2024)		30.5	\$158,620	75.8%	24.2%	

*note: over 100% accounted for due to surplus of cultch placed by some dealers

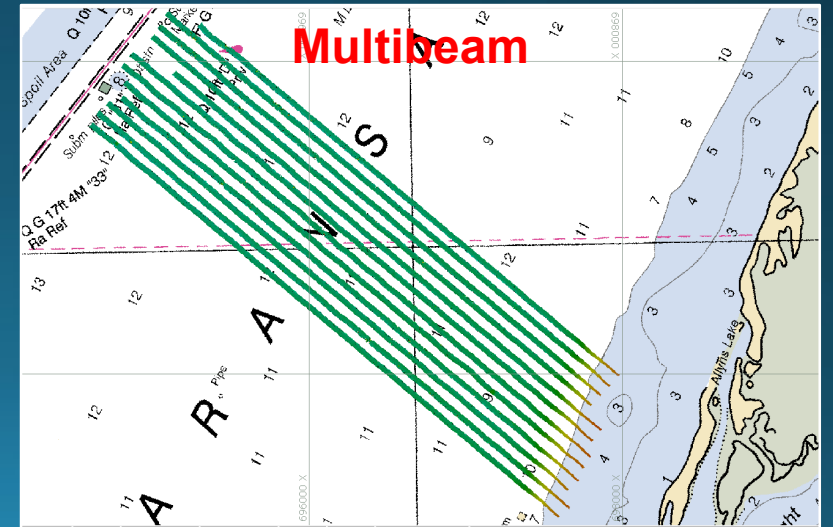
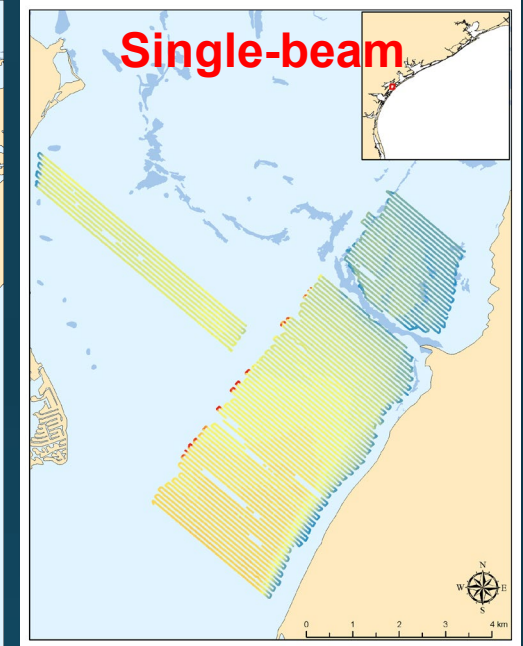
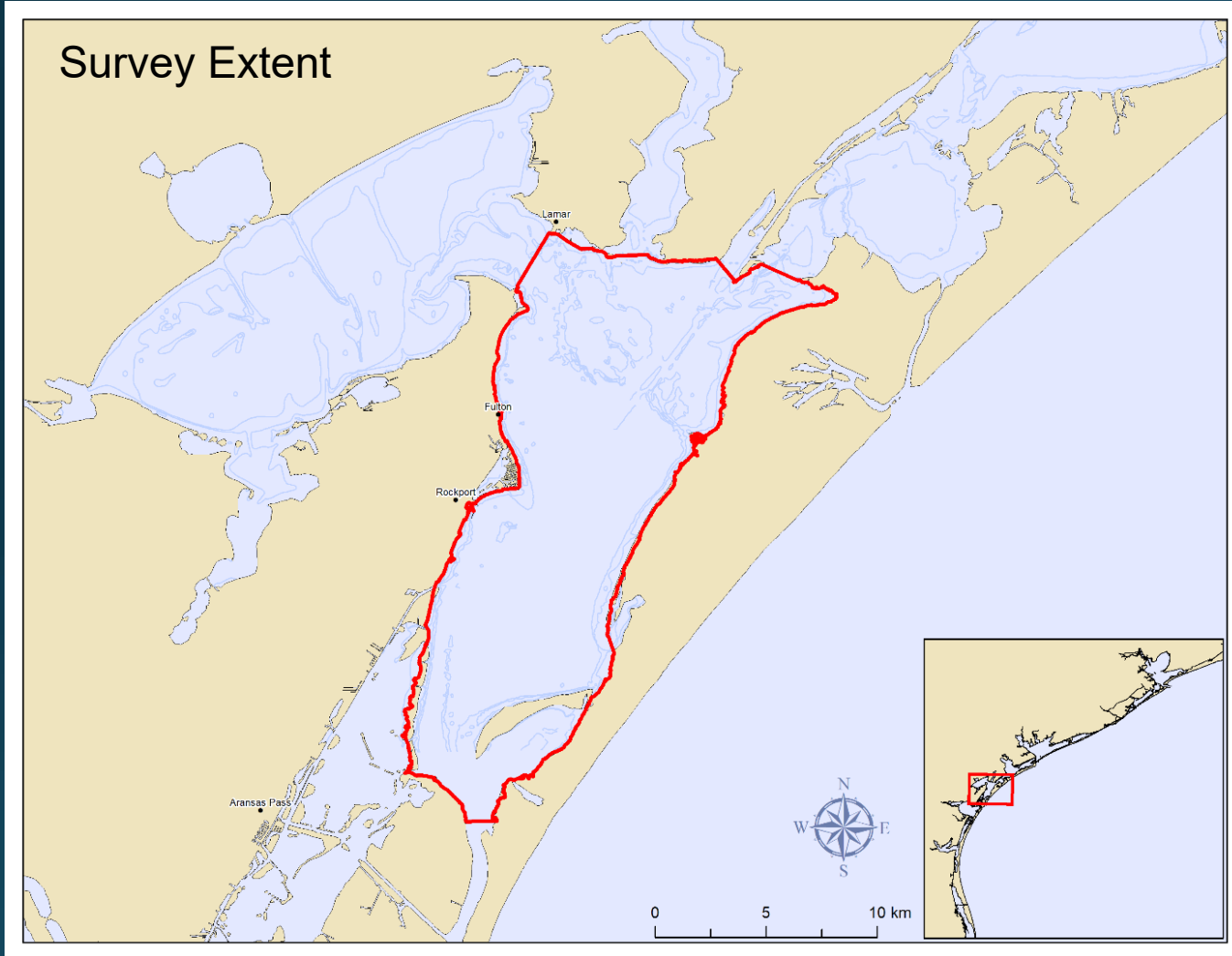


Mapping

Broad-scale sonar surveys

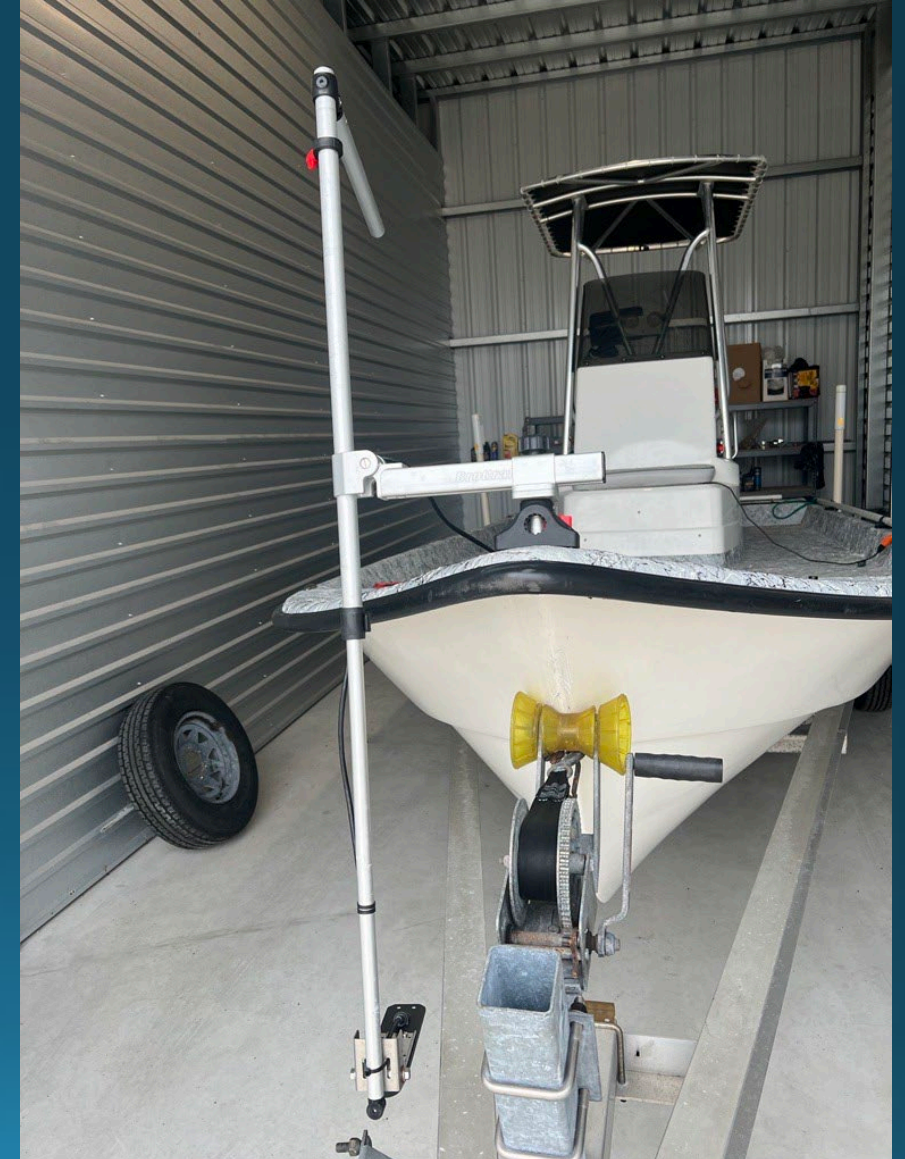


Current broad-scale survey: Aransas Bay

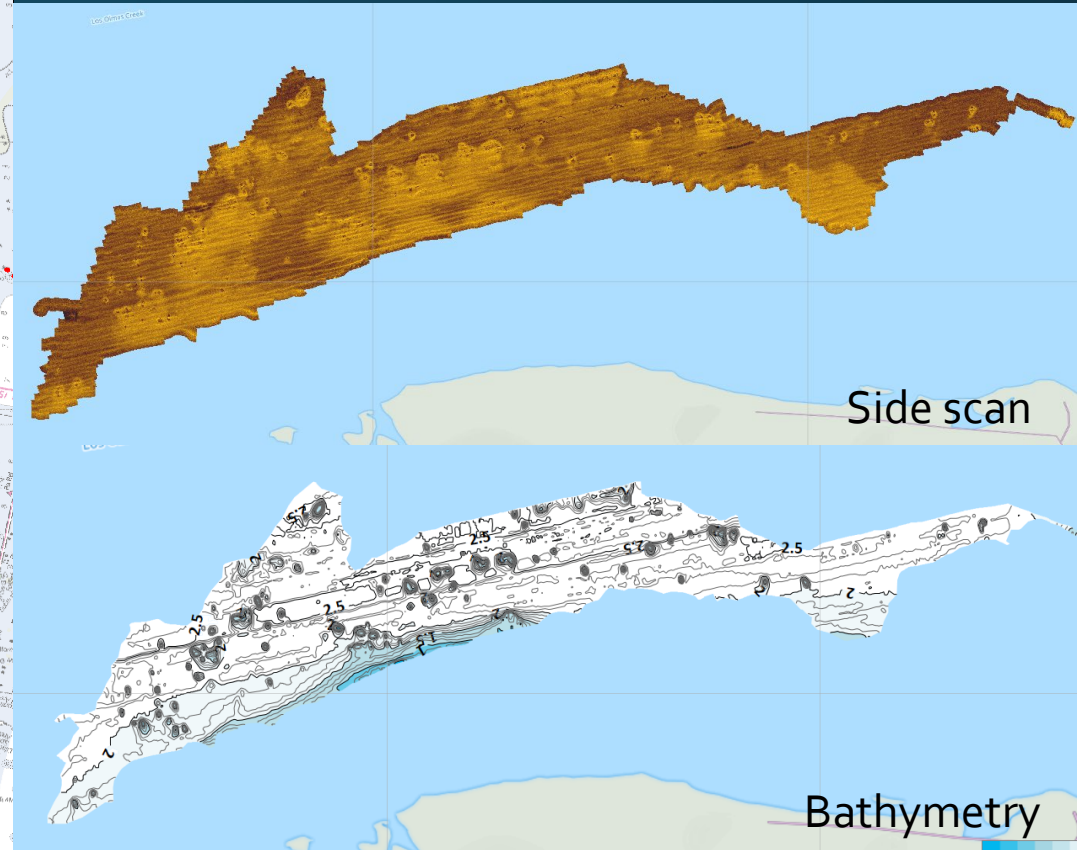
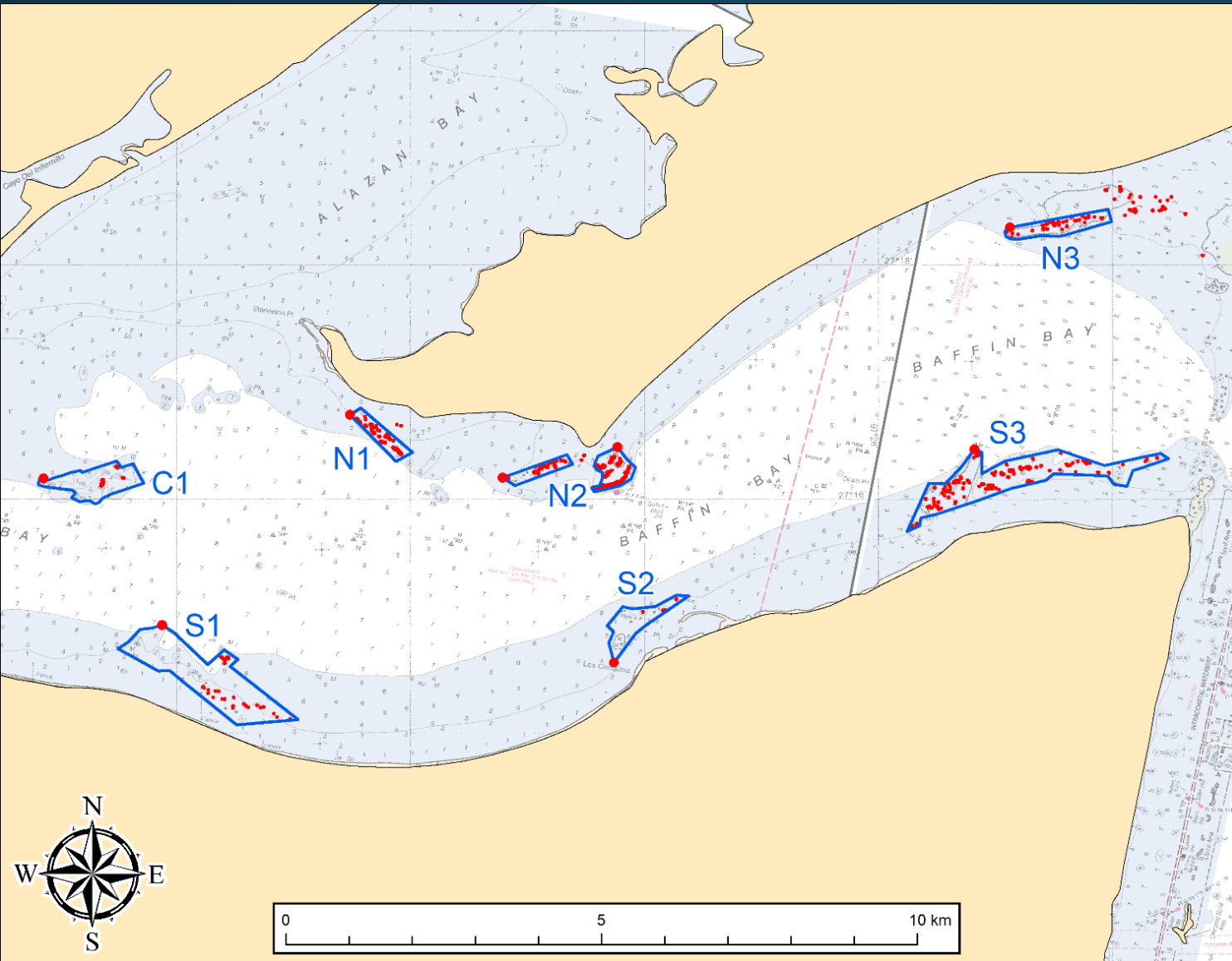


Intermediate-scale sonar surveys

- Shallow secondary/tertiary bays
 - Not accessible via scientific-grade sonar survey vessel
- Utilizing recreational-grade sonars (Humminbirds) on small skiffs
 - Capable of surveying depths >2 ft
 - High-resolution side scan imagery
 - Bathymetric (depth) data
 - Relatively cheap (~\$1500)
 - Smaller range



Current intermediate-scale survey: Baffin Bay



Small-scale sonar surveys

- TPWD currently conducting targeted, project-specific sonar surveys
 - Restoration site planning
 - Restoration monitoring
 - Physical/structural monitoring of reefs

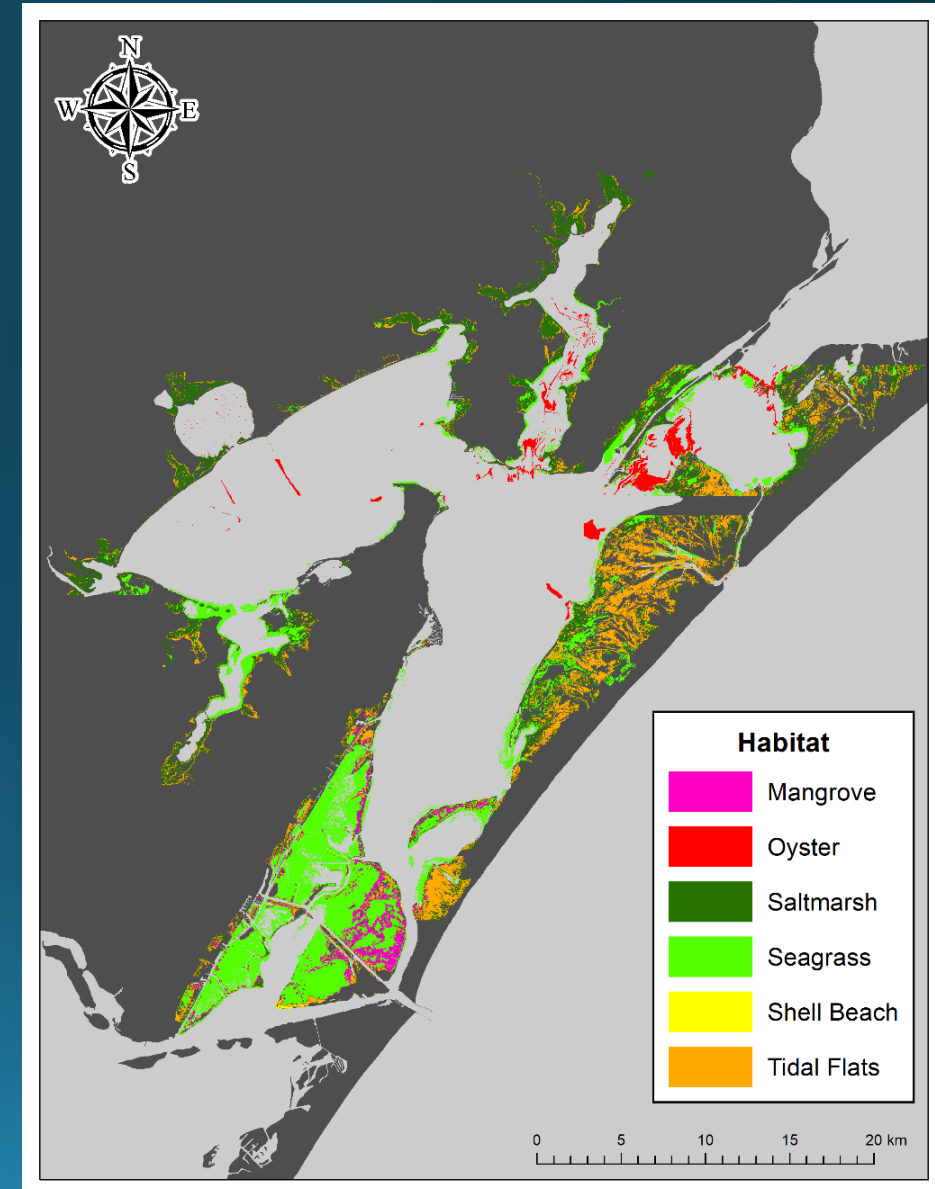
Small-scale surveys in Oyster Conservation Areas

- TPWD, TAMUCC, and TAMUG received SWG funding to monitor oysters in areas recently permanently closed to harvest
- Annual diver quadrat monitoring along fixed transects from reef crest to reef edge
- Annual sonar surveys to monitor changes in extent and vertical relief



Aerial imagery assessments

- TPWD is conducting supervised classification and delineation of shallow/intertidal coastal habitats
 - Using publicly available satellite and flyover imagery
 - Future plans to acquire drone-based imagery
- In combination with sonar-derived products, results in comprehensive habitat maps



New Oyster Advisory Committee

- Approved Jan 2024
- 1st meeting Sep 2024
- 2nd meeting Oct 2024
- Had workgroups previously, but this is an official advisory committee to TPW Commission
- Complements our Coastal Resources Advisory Committee



Questions?