

# **SHELLFISH MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**for**  
**The Town of Freeport**

The Town of Freeport submits the following information as required by DMR Regulations Chapter 7.20, which states that the Shellfish Management Plan shall consist of:

- A. A written statement of goals and objectives the municipality plans to achieve as a result of its conservation program
- B. A description of the various conservation measures the municipality intends to employ to reach those goals.

## **Statement of Management Goals and Objectives:**

**To establish a Shellfish Conservation Program for the Town of Freeport that will sustain and enhance the production of shellfish (Soft-shell Clam, Quahogs, Razor Clam).**

## **The Town of Freeport will achieve our objective through:**

- 1. **Licensing**
- 2. **Determining the number of shellfish harvesters.**
- 3. **Restricting the time and area where harvesting is permitted**
- 4. **Limiting the minimum size of shellfish taken**
- 5. **Enhancing the clam resources by the various recognized means, reseeding.**
- 6. **Identifying and addressing water quality issues.**
- 7. **Supporting and actively participating in applied marine research.**
- 8. **Any other activity reasonably related to the purpose of sustaining and enhancing the production of Freeport's shellfish resource.**

## **Details of Conservation Measures:**

- 1. (1,2 listed above) Licensing: We will maximize individual harvest through licensing which will determine the number of shellfish harvesters. The Town of Freeport will utilize Landings data provided by DMR. Freeport will also take into consideration individual harvester feedback and landings observations made by the Marine Resource Conservation Officer.
- 2. (3) Freeports flats are currently under a conservation closure which limits license holders to harvest Monday-Saturday day time hours only(for soft-shell, Mya Arenaria). The conservation closure specifically states: Freeport town line Cousins River, to the Freeport town line Flying Point, all areas currently managed by the town of freeport are closed for soft-shell clam harvesting Sundays; and all nights ½ hour past sunset to ½ hour before sunrise.
- 3. (4) Limiting the minimum size of shellfish taken. All minimum size requirements and tolerance percentages are consistent with the DMR's current laws and regulation.
- 4. (5) Freeport will enhance shell stock in areas determined by the Shellfish Commission to enhance shellfish population stock.

5. (6) The Town of Freeport has requested to collect all water quality stations (determined by DMR) by boat within the boundaries of Freeport. The Shellfish Commission was made aware of degrading water quality in the "Recompense Bay" area. To ensure this quality decline is not a result of poor testing protocols, starting in the spring of 2024 Freeport town staff will collect all stations by boat. The Shellfish Commission will also conduct additional testing as needed (throughout 2024) to locate any pollution sources to maintain and maximize approved harvesting areas.
6. (7) Looking forward into 2024, the shellfish commission will continue to work with RSU5, and apply and support applied marine research into the its conservation program.