

The Commission acts in an advisory capacity to the Director, considers the need for resource development from the points of view of the economic and social interests of the citizens of the State, approves long-range plans and programs of the Department, and reviews the annual budget request. The Commission exercises regulatory authority as conferred upon the Department by Articles 14B (State Boat Act) and 66C (Natural Resources).

The Director is also appointed by the Governor by and with the advice and consent of the Senate. He holds office at the pleasure of the Governor. He serves as a departmental member of the Board of Natural Resources and serves as the administrative head of the Department.

All of the fishery industries are subject to certain legal regulatory restrictions. The Department is charged by law with the responsibility for the enforcement of all such regulations. In recent years, the phenomenal growth of recreational boating has thrust heavy responsibilities for boating law enforcement and public safety upon the Marine Police Division, whose members assist more boatmen each year, logging 1,363 assists in the 1964 calendar year.

Since 1960, the Department has dredged over 26,000,000 bushels of buried oyster shells from the bottom of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries; these "reef" shells were planted on natural oyster bars and seed areas, a part of the oyster propagation program. Thirteen seed areas in five counties have been established pursuant to legislation enacted in 1964. Annual production has increased from 212,497 bushels in 1960-1961 to 1,192,338 bushels in 1965, averaging 1,105,140 bushels during the past three years.

The present department and the laws under which it operates are the outcome of efforts begun in 1785 when the people of Maryland and Virginia made a compact for the use of the Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River. However, it was not until 1830, with the passage of the first fishery laws, that Maryland became conscious of the possibility of depleting its water resources. In 1865, the General Assembly passed an oyster license law, and in 1868 it created the State Oyster Police. The oyster police force was simply an enforcement agency; it did not undertake any constructive program. In 1874, the Legislature created a new agency, the Commissioners of Fisheries. This Commission undertook the first positive efforts to develop the fisheries.

By the early twentieth century, oyster production declined to such an extent that in 1906 the Haman Act provided for a complete survey of the bottoms of the bay and its tributaries. This survey, completed in 1912, is the basis of present-day Acts.

The Department of Chesapeake Bay Affairs has a close relationship with the Board of Natural Resources, which is composed of the heads of the various departments relating to the resources of the State and eight members appointed by the Governor (Code 1957, Art. 66C).

Appropriations	1965	1966
General Funds	\$2,675,504	\$3,021,014
Special Funds	208,216	347,333
Federal Funds	5,000
Totals.....	\$2,888,720	\$3,368,347

Staff: 178.