



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Another Milestone for Inmate Oyster Reclamation Effort:
4,000th Spat Cage To Be Delivered to Southern Md. Waterways
Wednesday, September 16**

TOWSON, MD (September 14, 2009)---With the delivery of more than 600 oyster spat cages to Mill Creek on September 16, the DPSCS Public Safety Works oyster reclamation project will reach another milestone: 4,000 cages have now been made by inmates and delivered to Maryland shoreline homeowners, who will drop, or have dropped, them into their waterways.

The cages, made by Maryland Correctional Enterprises inmates in a Western Maryland prison at Hagerstown and at Eastern Pre-release Unit near Church Hill on the Eastern Shore, are designed to help filter the Chesapeake's waterways and give spat (young oysters) a chance to mature and, hopefully, eventually help replenish the dwindling oyster population.

Governor O'Malley's many environmental projects have included major contributions from the Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services. Inmates at the Southern Maryland Pre-release Unit in Charlotte Hall have worked at the Piney Point Aquaculture Center since May, cleaning and bagging more than 1,000 oyster shells each day. Those shells have since been injected with oyster larvae and planted into Southern Maryland waterways. Other inmates on the Eastern Shore and in Western Maryland have picked, grown in a greenhouse, harvested, and planted tens of thousands of shoreline-restoring bay grasses. And hundreds of inmates statewide have helped DPSCS plant more than a quarter-million trees (with a goal of one million trees in four years).

Under Secretary Gary Maynard's persistent efforts to have more inmates working, learning skills, and "giving back" to both society and the environment, more than 2,000 inmates are now working in Maryland Correctional Enterprises prison industry jobs alone. An average of more than 500 others daily clean Maryland highways. And hundreds more are working in municipal clean-ups, cemetery restoration, and other projects.