

156. The Conservation Commissioner of Maryland is hereby authorized to select and reserve for oyster conservation, as provided in this sub-title, any portion or portions of the natural beds, bars and rocks of the Chesapeake Bay in dredger's area to be replenished by transplanting of small oysters, shells or other clutch, or in other feasible manner which the Commissioner may deem best. The Commissioner shall give notice of said reservation by advertisement to be inserted once a week for three successive weeks, in a newspaper published in Baltimore City, and in the County where the reserved area is located, which advertisement shall describe the area reserved and give the date on which the reservation takes effect, and shall warn all persons not to catch or disturb oysters upon such reserved area until further notice from the Commissioner for re-opening same for public use. Whenever in the discretion of the Commissioner such reserved areas shall have been replenished, he shall fix dates for re-opening and closing same to the public, and shall give notice thereof by proper advertisement inserted as above provided. Whenever after the re-opening of the area, the Commissioner in his discretion deems it advisable to close said area before the date advertised in said notice, then the area shall be reserved against the further catching of oysters for public use. No further notice to oystermen is necessary than the notification by the Deputy Commander in charge of said area. Any person who shall catch or disturb oysters upon such reserved areas between the date reservation begins and the date fixed by the Commissioner for re-opening same, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof before any Judge or Justice of the Peace of the County having jurisdiction, or if in the Chesapeake Bay in the County most accessible or convenient shall be fined not less than \$100.00 nor more than \$200.00 or confined in jail not less than 30 days nor more than 6 months, either or both, and the said cargo confiscated and returned to the waters under the supervision of the Deputy Commander or other officer making the arrest, and the boat or vessel shall be held for the security of payment of said fine.

If any boat or vessel shall be seen sailing on such reserved areas in the same manner in which they sail to take or catch oysters with scoop, scrape, drag or dredge or similar instrument, the said boat shall be pursued by an officer authorized by this Section to make arrest and if said boat or vessel apprehended by said officer shall be found to have on board any wet oysters or dredges or dredge lines or wet deck indicating the taking of oysters at said time and properly equipped for taking or catching oysters in scoop, scrape, drag or dredge or similar instrument such fact shall be deemed prima facie evidence that said boat or vessel has been used in violation of the provisions of this