

EXECUTIVE, AND LEGISLATIVE REVIEW A NOTICE OF INTENT TO CLOSE AN AREA OF A NATURAL OYSTER BAR, INCLUDING ALL APPLICABLE REASONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT'S ACT, AND publish a THE notice of intent to close any area of a natural oyster bar not less than 30 days prior to the proposed closing date in one or more newspapers of general circulation in [each county of the State] THE STATE, IN ONE OR MORE NEWSPAPERS OF GENERAL CIRCULATION IN EACH COUNTY IN WHICH THE AFFECTED WATERS ARE LOCATED, AND ON THE WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT. The Department shall schedule a public hearing on the proposal not less than 15 days before the proposed closing date. The hearing shall be held at the county seat of the county in which the affected waters are located. If the affected waters are located in more than one county then the hearing shall be held in that county seat closest to the affected waters. If the area affected is totally within State waters, then the hearing shall be held in Annapolis.

(c) The Department may reopen an area if it determines reopening is advisable. An area shall be reopened by notice of reopening published in the same newspapers that published any closing notices. However, an area may not be reopened until a lapse of 48 hours from the publication of the notice of reopening.

(d) The Department may select and reserve for its own use areas, to be known as seed areas, within the waters of the State for the propagation of seed oysters. The number, size, and location of these areas shall be determined from time to time by the Department. However, no more than 5 percent of the natural oyster bars of the State shall be designated as seed areas. The first million bushels of seed oysters produced in seed areas shall be planted on the natural oyster bars of the State. The Department shall, BEFORE PUBLICATION, DELIVER A NOTICE OF RESERVATION, INCLUDING ALL APPLICABLE REASONS FOR THE DEPARTMENT'S ACT, TO THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON ADMINISTRATIVE, EXECUTIVE, AND LEGISLATIVE REVIEW AND publish a THE notice of reservation not less than 30 days before the closing date of any seed area in one newspaper of general circulation in the State and at least one newspaper of general circulation in each county ~~of the State~~ IN WHICH THE AFFECTED WATERS ARE LOCATED, AND ON THE WEBSITE OF THE DEPARTMENT. The Department shall schedule a public hearing on the proposal not less than 15 days before the proposed closing date. The hearing shall be held at the county seat of the county in which the affected waters are located. If the affected waters are located in more than one county, the hearing shall be held in that county seat closest to the affected waters, but if the area affected is totally within State waters, the hearing shall be held in Annapolis.

(e) Except as provided in subsection (f) of this section, the State may sell no more than 50 percent of seed oysters in excess of one million bushels produced annually in seed areas to citizens who hold valid leases under the provisions of this subtitle for no less than the prevailing price of seed oysters of similar quality in nearby states. Conditions of sale may be prescribed by rule or regulation of the Department. The proceeds from these sales shall be credited by the Comptroller to the Fisheries Research and Development Fund.

(f) (1) In addition to the provisions of subsections (d) and (e) of this section concerning the establishment of oyster seed areas and the sale of seed oysters to a leaseholder, the Department may: