



US Army Corps of Engineers

Norfolk District

News Release

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Norfolk District announces scoping meetings for non-native oyster EIS

Norfolk, Va. – The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District, has announced its intent to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a proposed introduction of the *Crassostrea ariakensis* (non-native) oyster into the Chesapeake Bay.

Together with the lead state agencies, the Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), the Corps will hold Scoping Meetings on January 26 and January 28, 2004, to receive public input on the range of issues to be addressed in the EIS.

On Monday, January 26, a scoping meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Radisson Hotel Annapolis, 210 Holiday Court, Annapolis, Md. On Wednesday, January 28, a second scoping meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. at Warwick High School, 51 Copeland Lane, Newport News, Va.

Anyone wishing to attend either meeting is asked to pre-register online at http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/Regulatory/PN/Oyster/Oyster_EIS_Preregistration.doc or by calling Tracy Dotolo at 757/441-7678 or e-mailing tracy.c.dotolo@usace.army.mil.

Both meetings will begin with a briefing on the state of the native oyster in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, the status of restoration efforts, preliminary programmatic EIS alternatives and the proposed action of the EIS. Attendees will then be given an opportunity to identify and define specific issues to be addressed in the EIS.

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Federal, state and local agency officials as well as private individuals, organizations and groups are invited to attend the meeting. The record will remain open until February 20, 2004.

The public notice and a link to the relevant Federal Register notice are available at http://www.nao.usace.army.mil/Regulatory/PN/Oyster/Oyster_noi.htm.

Written comments on the scope of the programmatic EIS or requests for information should be sent to Peter Kube at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch, 803 Front Street, Norfolk, VA 23510 or sent via e-mail at peter.r.kube@usace.army.mil

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