Oyster Reef Restoration at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, VA

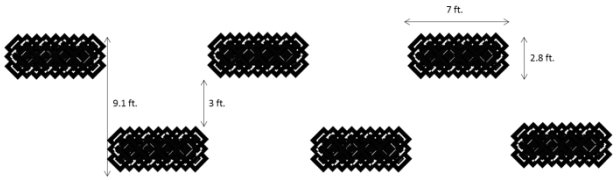
Kevin S. Holcomb[1] & Bowdoin W. Lusk[2]

[1]U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service; [2]The Nature Conservancy

Project Overview:
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and The Nature Conservancy, in partnership with the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, plan to construct two living shoreline projects and two acres of oyster reef on the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge that will help restore and rebuild the Refuge from impacts associated with Hurricane Sandy.

Project Goals:
1) to construct 900 linear feet of living shoreline along the Tom's Cove section of the Beach Access Road,
2) to construct two acres of oyster reef composed of dredged fossil oyster shell in Tom's Cove offshore of the Beach Access Road,
3) to construct 2150 linear feet of living shoreline above the low water mark across a cove of Assateague Bay.

Oyster Castle Layout Design:
Each site will consist of two staggered rows of 7 foot long arrays of oyster castles separated by seven feet of bottom. Each array will be three feet wide and 17 inches high and each row of staggered arrays will be 3.5 feet apart.



Expected Outcomes:
The two living shorelines and the oyster reefs proposed for construction under this project are intended to increase the resiliency and capacity of the Beach Road and the Service Road to withstand future storms with reduced damage. In addition, the restored oysters associated with the living shorelines and the oyster reefs will provide ecosystem services such as nutrient removal, uptake of sediments, water filtration, increased water quality and increased biomass in the two coves, and habitat for other marine organisms.

Acknowledgements: