



A Review of Oyster Shell Recycling Programs Across the Country

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Figure 1. CRCL Oyster Bagging Event.

Introduction

- CRCL launched its Oyster Shell Recycling Program in 2014 and has since recycled over 5,000 tons of shell.
- In a national review of OSRPs, 15 programs were surveyed and data from the top 5 in terms of annual volume recycled is presented here.

Overview of Top Programs

Table 1. Overview of Top Oyster Shell Recycling Programs

	Billion Oyster Project- NY	Chesapeake Bay Foundation-VA/MD	Galveston Bay Foundation's Oyster Shell Recycling Program- TX	North Carolina Coastal Federation- NC	Gulf Coast Oyster Recycling and Renewal Program- FL
Scale	144 tons/year	VA- 83 tons/year, MD- 41 tons/year	105 tons/year	75 tons/ year	60-90 tons/ year
Shell Sources	Collected from restaurants by contractor.	Collected from restaurants, 11 public drop offs, and events. Volunteers pickup at restaurants, staff picks up at events.	Collected from restaurants by staff.	Collected from public drop-off by volunteers or contractor.	Collected from restaurants by contractor.
Program Cost	\$250,000/year; \$1,736/ton	\$18,200/ year; \$146/ton	~\$100,000/year; \$952/ton	~\$50,000; \$400/ton	\$23,000; \$306/ton
Funding Sources	Private grants, corporate sponsorship, donations	Private grants, federal grants, donations for supplies	Private grants, federal grants, private sponsorships	Private grants and federal grants. Used to be funded by the state.	Restaurants pay
Use of Shell	Reef restoration, has restored 15 reef sites.	Reef restoration, grows spat on shell prior. Oyster gardening.	Reef restoration and oyster gardening.	Reef restoration	Shell stored by county for future reef projects.

Shell Collection/ Program Cost

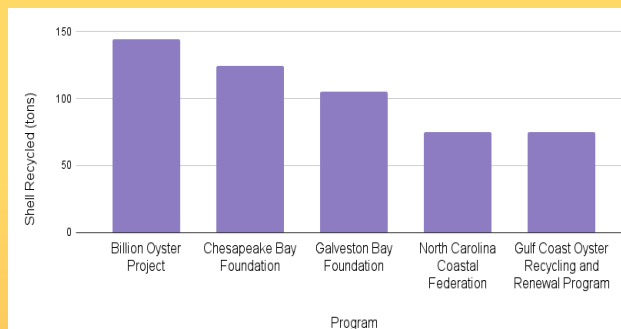


Figure 2. Shell Collected in tons by OSRPs.

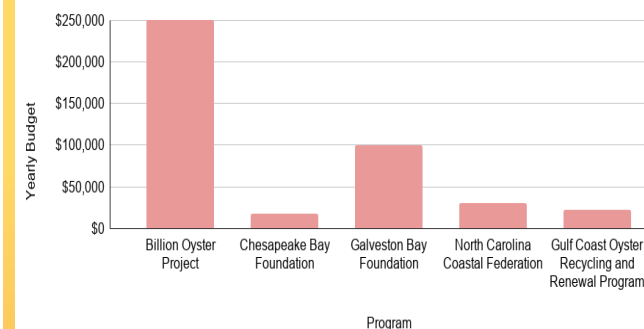


Figure 3. Annual Budgets of OSRPs.

Policy

- North Carolina: It is illegal to dispose of oyster shells in landfills, but there is no official infrastructure, and the policy is not regularly enforced. NCCF is filling in the gap.
- New York: Tax credit of \$0.10 per pound of recycled shell, up to \$1,000 a year.

Next Steps

Major goals of this project is to discover and share best practices for oyster shell recycling in order to optimize existing and new programs, and to open lines of communication with even more programs. Therefore, CRCL will be collaborating with Restore America's Estuaries to host an OSRP Panel at 2021 Living Shorelines Tech Transfer Workshop.



Figure 4. Volunteer Event (Billion Oyster Project).



Figure 5. Shell Collection (Chesapeake Bay Foundation).



Figure 6. Reef Construction (Galveston Bay Foundation).



Figure 7. Public Drop off (North Carolina Coastal Federation).

