

CSX contributes to Oyster Reef restoration in the Chesapeake Bay with Delivery of Fossilized Shells

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CSX participated in a public private partnership with Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to benefit the Chesapeake Bay and efforts to restore native oyster populations. Viable oyster reefs, as well as the ecosystems they support, act as a natural filter for sediment, silt and nitrates in the water and can improve the overall water quality in the Chesapeake Bay. Oyster populations are at one percent of historic levels and Maryland is committed to restoring habitat for oysters to return and thrive. CSX helped to restore these populations by providing \$2.4 million in-kind investment to transport about 100,000 tons of fossilized oyster shell from Florida. While oysters can grow on any hard substrate, data has shown that the use of natural oyster shells significantly increases recruitment and success of replanting efforts. With a lack of natural, affordable shell available to support restoration efforts, Maryland DNR and its partners found the next best thing - fossilized shell - from Carrabelle, Florida. Twenty-two unit trains of shells from Florida to Baltimore will contribute to oyster reef restoration by supplying critical oyster shell supplies that will serve as the foundation of restored reefs. With the shells delivered, the University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science and the Oyster Recovery Partnership are working together to produce young oysters and place them in the newly developed reefs. CSX is continually working to be a good neighbor and environmental steward in the communities in which we operate, and we are proud to have been a part of this initiative to improve the health of the Chesapeake Bay's ecosystem.