

❖ National guidelines for metrics used for monitoring oyster restoration projects

Bryan DeAngelis- The Nature Conservancy

The restoration of oyster reef and beds in the US has continued to increase in number and scale of projects in order to restore the services lost along with the oyster habitats. Despite this maturing of oyster restoration there remains a diversity of techniques and metrics chosen to demonstrate the success or failure of an individual project or technique. The diversity of techniques and metrics employed has made it difficult or impossible to regionally compare the success of the different approaches to oyster restoration around the US, or to evaluate larger regional performance or impact from multiple restoration projects. A coalition of restoration practitioners from the west, gulf and east coasts, led by members of the NOAA Restoration Center, The Nature Conservancy, the University of Southern Alabama and Florida Atlantic University has sought to overcome this difficulty by describing baseline monitoring metrics that will allow for basic comparison between projects as well as accommodate different restoration designs and site based constraints. This presentation will focus on the Universal Metrics (i.e. those prescribed for every project) and discuss the multiple factors that need to be considered when creating universal metrics. The presentation will also briefly discuss the next steps required by the restoration community to fully integrate adaptive management, and potential opportunities for accomplishing that.