

❖ Oysters in APNEP: from “identify” to “monitor” and all management in between  
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The Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Partnership (APNEP) is in the early stages of implementing an ambitious Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan (CCMP) based on ecosystem-based management, whose vision of a move toward healthier Albemarle-Pamlico Sounds by 2022 has a significant role for oysters. Specifically, oyster extent and quality has been designated as one of APNEP’s ecological indicators of aquatic habitat that contribute to estuarine health. In recognition of a substantial gap between present conditions and “good” oyster condition within the Albemarle-Pamlico sounds, this presentation will describe a strategy to address that gap, including three CCMP actions that are dedicated solely to oyster restoration. By APNEP promoting collaboration and coordinating partner efforts coast-wide in oyster assessment, protection, restoration, monitoring, and citizen engagement, there is a promising likelihood of oysters trending toward a more dominant role in ecosystem service provision.