

State of North Carolina

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

NORTH CAROLINA OYSTER MONTH

2024

BY THE GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, North Carolina is home to a valuable and productive coastal ecosystem with many champions who work together to protect it and the keystone species that benefit the state's marine and coastal environments with food provision, water filtering capacity, and fish habitat; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina oysters have been the focus of restoration and protection efforts in the state since 1915, resulting in the creation of thousands of acres of harvestable reefs and nearly 400 acres of oyster sanctuary as part of the Senator Jean Preston Oyster Sanctuary Network, with support from the North Carolina General Assembly, the North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries, and numerous partners; and

WHEREAS, North Carolina's shellfish industry has set a goal to provide over \$100 million in economic impact and 1,000 jobs in the state by 2030, supporting the livelihoods of N.C. watermen and women and sustaining traditional working waterfront communities; and

WHEREAS, partners statewide support the growing oyster industry's workforce development with university and community college technical training programs, entrepreneurship mentoring, marketing strategies, and more; and

WHEREAS, over 20 stakeholders, including state and federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, universities, growers, harvesters, and independent businesses comprise the North Carolina Oyster Steering Committee, which works to develop and implement the Oyster Restoration and Protection Plan for North Carolina: A Blueprint for Action, now in its Fourth Edition; and

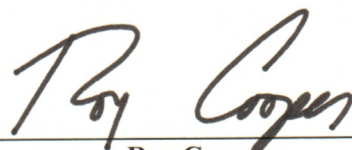
WHEREAS, in 2018 the North Carolina General Assembly commissioned the *North Carolina Strategic Plan for Shellfish Mariculture: A Vision to 2030*, aimed at advancing efforts to bolster North Carolina's shellfish industry; in 2018, North Carolina became the first state in the Southeast and sixth in the nation to join the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Shellfish Initiative and launch the N.C. Shellfish Initiative; and

WHEREAS, in 2020, the NC Oyster Trail launched across the coast to provide oyster tourism experiences that help sustain and grow our state's oyster supply and demand; and

WHEREAS, the oyster will be celebrated by NC Oyster Trail members, including oyster growers and harvesters, seafood restaurants, seafood retail markets, recreational outfitters, coastal conservation and education organizations, and seafood festivals in partnership with North Carolina Sea Grant, North Carolina Coastal Federation, and the North Carolina Department of Cultural and Natural Resources;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, ROY COOPER, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim October, 2024, as "NORTH CAROLINA OYSTER MONTH" in North Carolina, and commend its observance to all citizens.





Roy Cooper
Governor

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Great Seal of the State of North Carolina at the Capitol in Raleigh this twenty-fifth day of September in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-four and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and forty-ninth.