

the activities of the six agencies represented on the Board; maintains the boundaries of the State (Code 1957, Art. 66C, secs. 31-32); administers certain mineral resources under the Chesapeake Bay (Code 1957, Art. 66C, secs. 22-30); administers artificial islands in Sinepuxent Bay (Code 1957, Art. 66C, sec. 33); and approves or disapproves of certain fishery regulations (Code 1957, Art. 66C, secs. 294, 329).

Appropriations	1961	1962
General Funds	\$20,400	\$21,446
Staff: 3.		

DEPARTMENT OF TIDEWATER FISHERIES

The Commission

Chairman: Dr. Harry C. Byrd, 1963

Dr. George J. Weems, 1962; Jeremiah Valliant, 1964; Albert Baker, 1965; Jesse A. Fisher, 1966.

Joseph H. Manning, Director

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The Department of Tidewater Fisheries, created by Chapter 508, Acts of 1941, is the State agency responsible for the conservation and development of the natural resources of tidewater Maryland. The Department is managed by a Commission composed of five members appointed by the Governor for five-year terms, with overlapping tenure of office. The Commission elects its own Chairman.

The Commission formulates basic policy for the Department, subject to the laws governing various aspects of the tidewater resources. It is undertaking, on a large scale, a "farming" operation designed to increase the supply of oysters. It is also charged with the responsibility for other operations in the seafood industry, such as clamming, fishing, crabbing, etc.

All of the fishery industries are subject to certain legal regulatory restrictions. The Department is charged by law with the responsibility for enforcement of all such regulations.

The Commission has discovered a large supply of shells beneath the bottom of the Chesapeake Bay and is now engaged in a dredging operation to obtain these shells for planting purposes. About 3,340,000 bushels of these dredged shells were planted in 1960, and it is expected that about 5,000,000 bushels will be dredged in 1961, which, with shells obtained from packers, will make a total planting of more than 6,000,000 bushels.

The present Tidewater Fisheries Commission and the laws under which it operates are the outcome of efforts begun in 1785 when the people of Maryland and Virginia made a compact for the use of the Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac River. However, it was not until 1830, with the passage of the first fishery laws, that Maryland became conscious of the possibility of depleting its water resources. In 1865, the General Assembly passed an oyster license law, and in 1868 it created the State Oyster Police. The oyster police force was simply an enforcement agency; it did not undertake any constructive program. In 1874, the Legislature created a new agency, the Commission of Fisheries. This Commission undertook the first positive efforts to develop the fisheries.

In the early twentieth century, oyster production declined to such an extent that in 1906 the Haman Act provided for a complete survey