

Blue Crabs and Oysters

Overview:

The Mid-Atlantic Power Pathway (MAPP) is part of the solution to provide reliable, cost-effective electricity to the Mid-Atlantic region. Pepco and Delmarva Power plan to build the line from northern Virginia, across southern Maryland, under the Chesapeake Bay and Choptank River, ending in Delaware.

Delmarva Power and Pepco understand that there will be questions about the measures taken to protect the environment during the construction of this new line and are taking a comprehensive approach to planning. Before construction begins, environmental and archeological studies in the Bay, wetlands and other sensitive areas will be completed.

Studies:

Of particular importance in the Chesapeake Bay and Choptank River are the blue crab and eastern oyster, which are important recreational and commercial resources. Both species are found year-round in the project area.

Shellfish surveys were conducted within a 300 foot wide study area along the route in the Bay and River. The data collected was used to minimize the project impacts to shellfish and other bottom-dwelling invertebrates.



A patent tong is used for sampling potential hard bottom areas of the Chesapeake Bay and Choptank River

Several thousand patent tong samples were collected.



Samples are deposited on a tray and sorted to document bottom conditions, shell deposits, and quantity of live oysters and spat



Key Facts

- The submarine cable route was laid out to avoid impacts to shellfish population and harvest
- 2.8 acres of the 300 foot wide study area were designated "viable oyster bars"
- 0.2% of the route crosses viable oyster bars, which will be mitigated
- There will not be a negative impact on the eastern oyster or blue crab populations

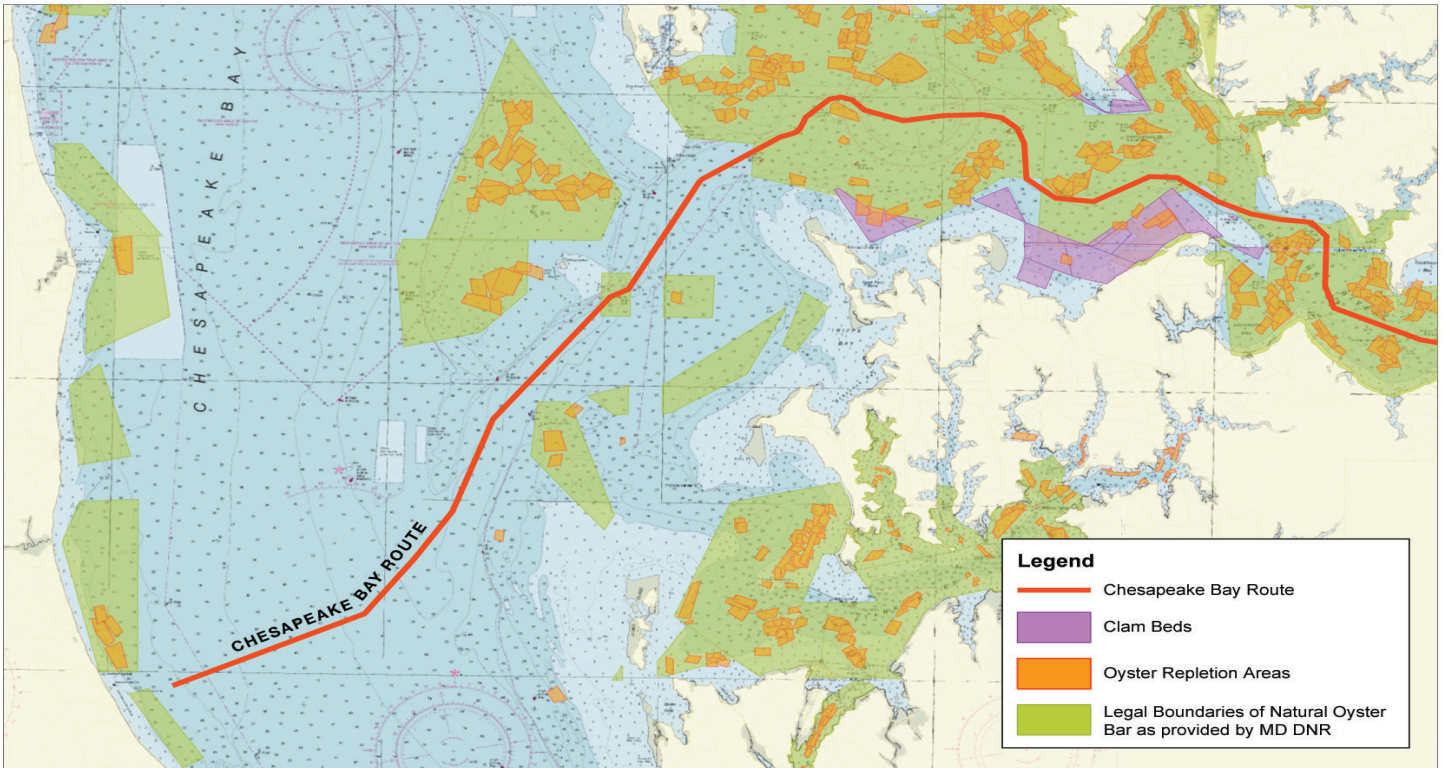
To Minimize Impacts:

- The route avoids crossing weedy shallows that blue crabs prefer
- All but 0.2% of the route avoids productive oyster bars, with mitigation for any that are disturbed¹
- Construction is planned for winter months to avoid the primary spawning season for the crabs and oysters

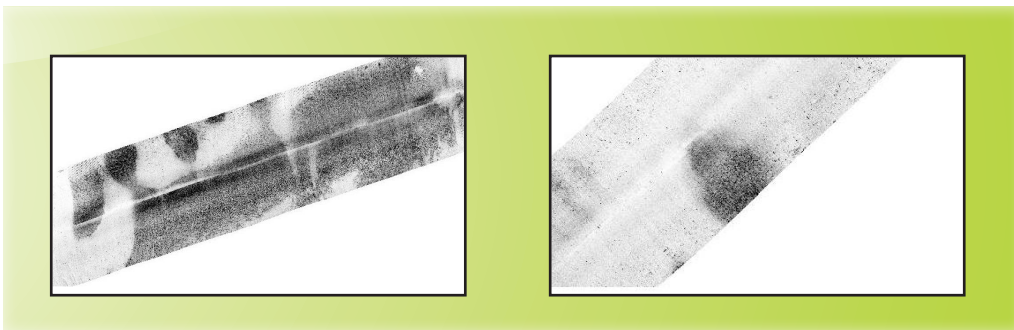
¹ Mitigation acreages will be determined in coordination with agencies, watermen, and other stakeholders

The complete Oyster and Blue Crab studies are in Section V, Appendices E9 and E11 of the Environmental Resource Document (ERD). The ERD can be viewed at the Maryland Public Service Commission website, www.psc.state.md.us

MAPP is case number 9179; The ERD is entry 180



Delmarva Power and Pepco are taking a cautious and thoughtful approach to the underwater route. Above is a map showing how the proposed route avoids most of the clam and oyster beds.



Sonar surveys of the waterways were used to identify potential oyster beds. Above are results from the surveys. Darker areas represent coarser sediments and/or shell.