



Eastern Bay Oyster Coalition Workgroup Habitat Uses Discussion Summary from Meeting 5

This document summarizes the discussion held at the Eastern Bay OCW Meeting 5 on September 25, 2024. The discussion focused on the following topics:

- Do you agree with the proposed uses and locations from Meeting 4?
- Are there other uses or locations to discuss?
 - Clamming
 - Alternate substrates
 - Sanctuary restoration
 - Hand tong areas
 - Areas close to shore
- Does the OCW recognize that areas identified as unproductive oyster habitat could be evaluated for other uses?

Potential or proposed locations for these activities, and revisions to the locations and activities outlined during Meeting 4, were drawn in GIS during the meeting. Annotated maps outlining these locations and potential uses follow.

Some general themes and questions emerged from this and the previous discussion:

- Most areas discussed for planting were discussed for planting spat-on-shell unless otherwise stated
- Potential areas for expanding aquaculture (bottom and water column leases) will require modifying Yates Bars, Natural Oyster Bars, and PSFA regulatory boundaries. This requires additional input from DNR.
- Potential aquaculture areas were sited in locations that:
 - Have not been harvested recently
 - Logistically feasible (e.g., protected from wind, close to land operations, etc.)
 - Have habitat scores within 0-50% range
- Potential aquaculture areas will need to be evaluated further by considering additional stakeholder uses, including crabbing and clam areas, where people hand tong, etc. to minimize conflict. Some areas previously identified as potentially available for aquaculture have been updated and are now described as “Need further evaluation”.
- There are some areas that have received bar cleaning and previous plantings that have not been productive. These areas would be better suited for areas where shell can be reclaimed and moved to other productive bars.
- The current aquaculture lease layer needs to be updated
- The extent of active clam areas, as described by the OCW members, has been updated. Note that some areas open and close to clamming depending on extent of SAV beds – this can vary from year to year

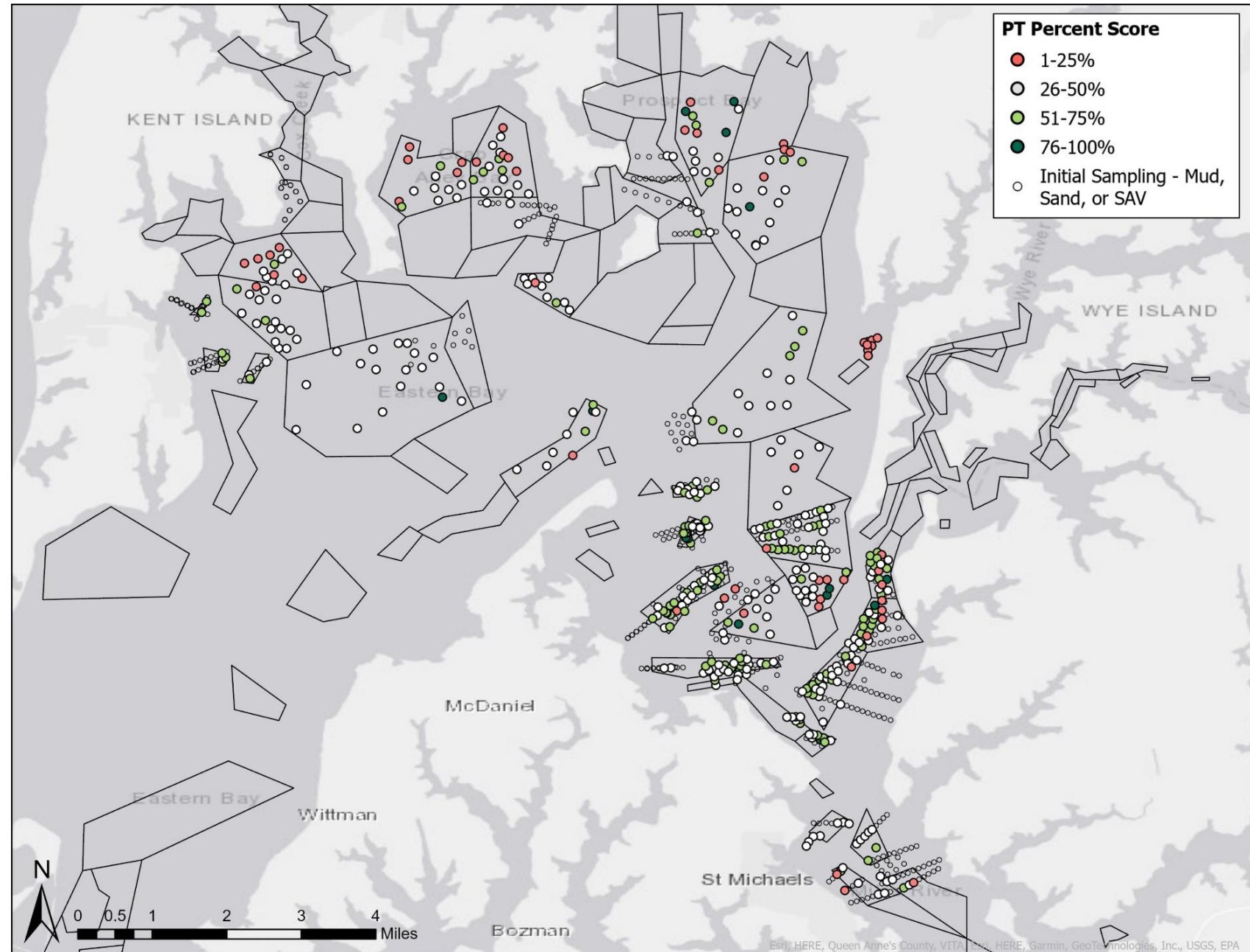
Habitat Survey Results

> 25% = Areas that can support enhancement

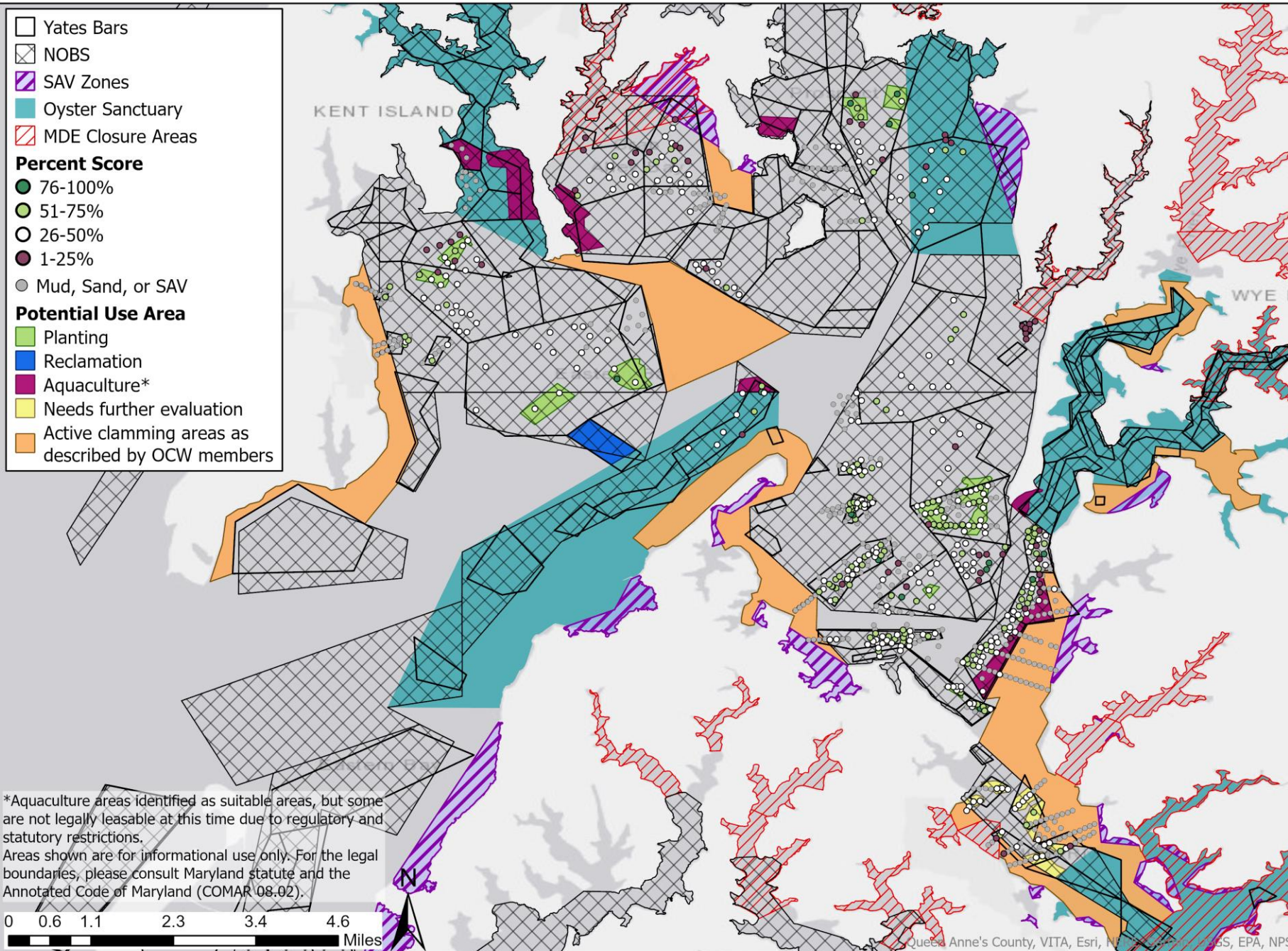
- Few oysters
- Sufficient cultch
- Some areas require more investment
- 5,800 acres (68% surveyed area)

< 25% = No existing oyster habitat

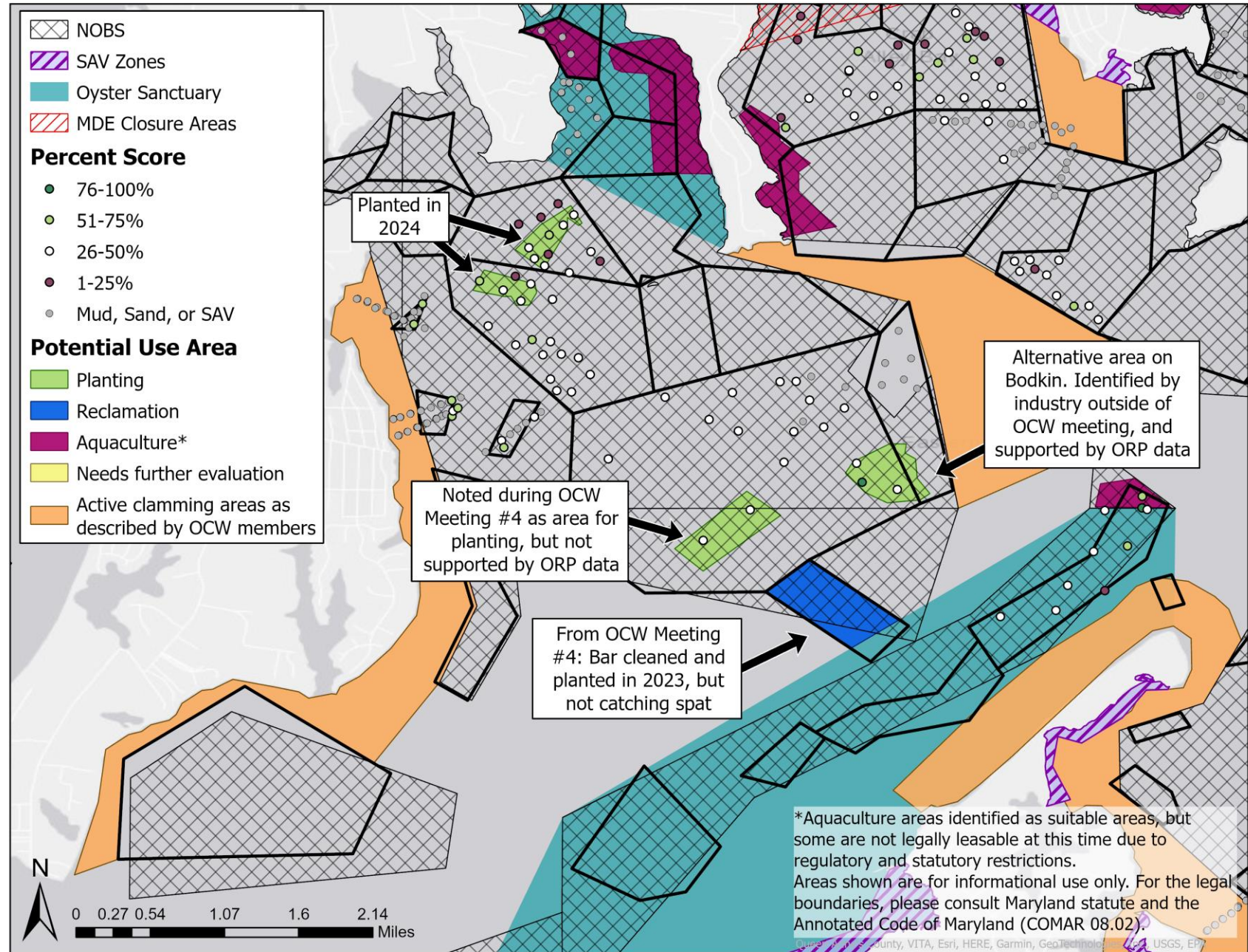
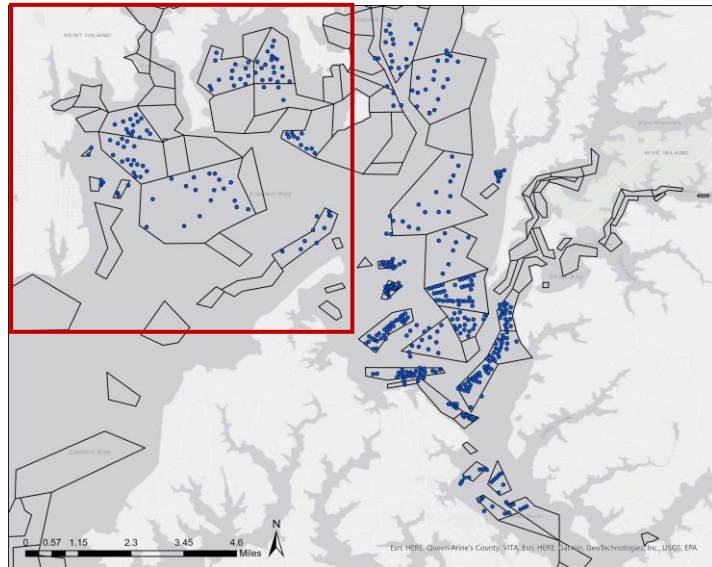
- No cultch
- 2,700 acres (32% surveyed area)



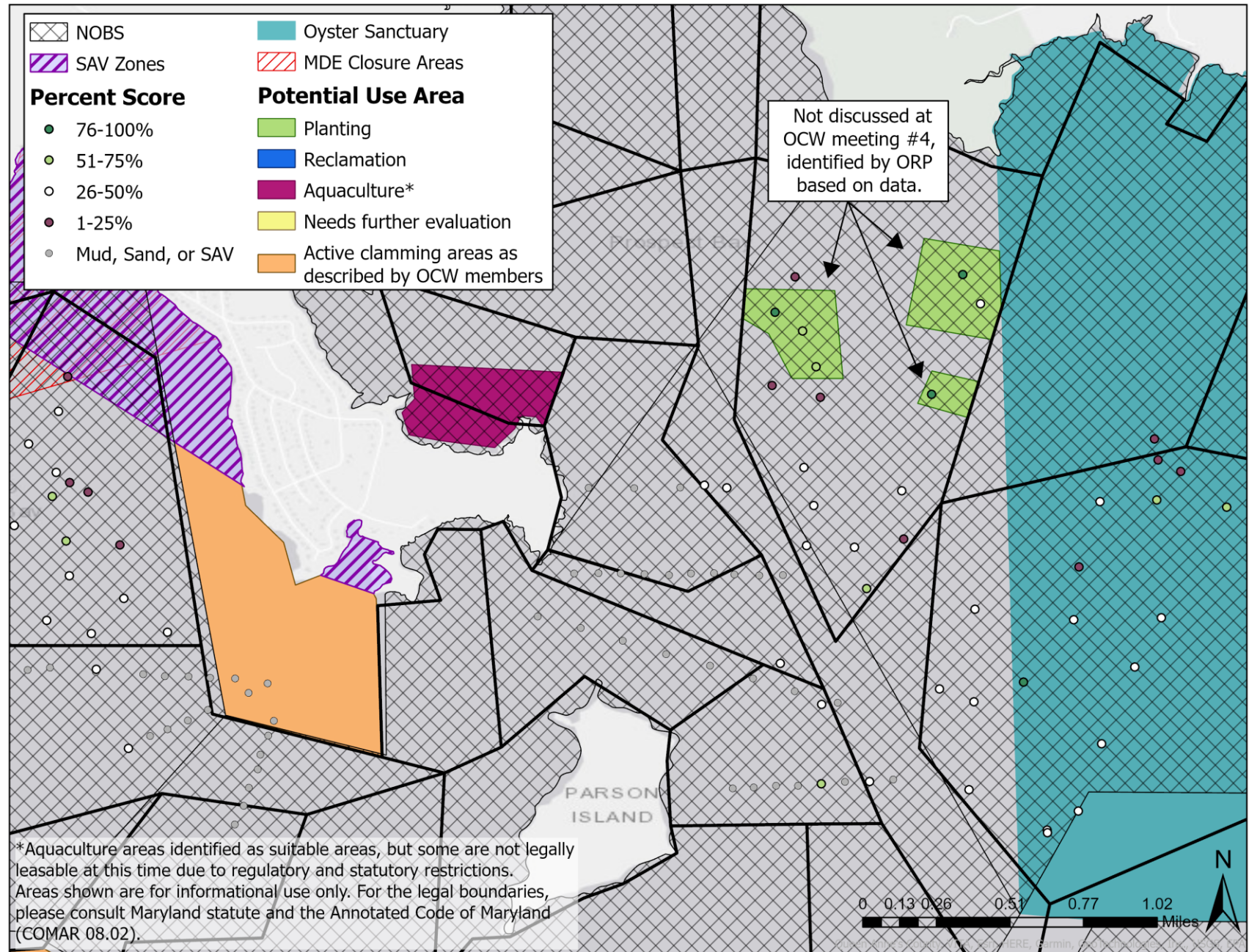
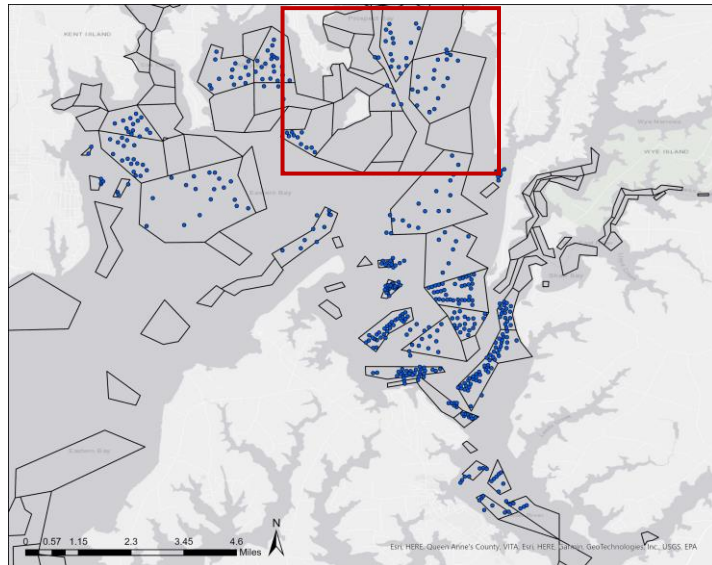
EASTERN BAY HABITAT SURVEY RESULTS & OPTIONS



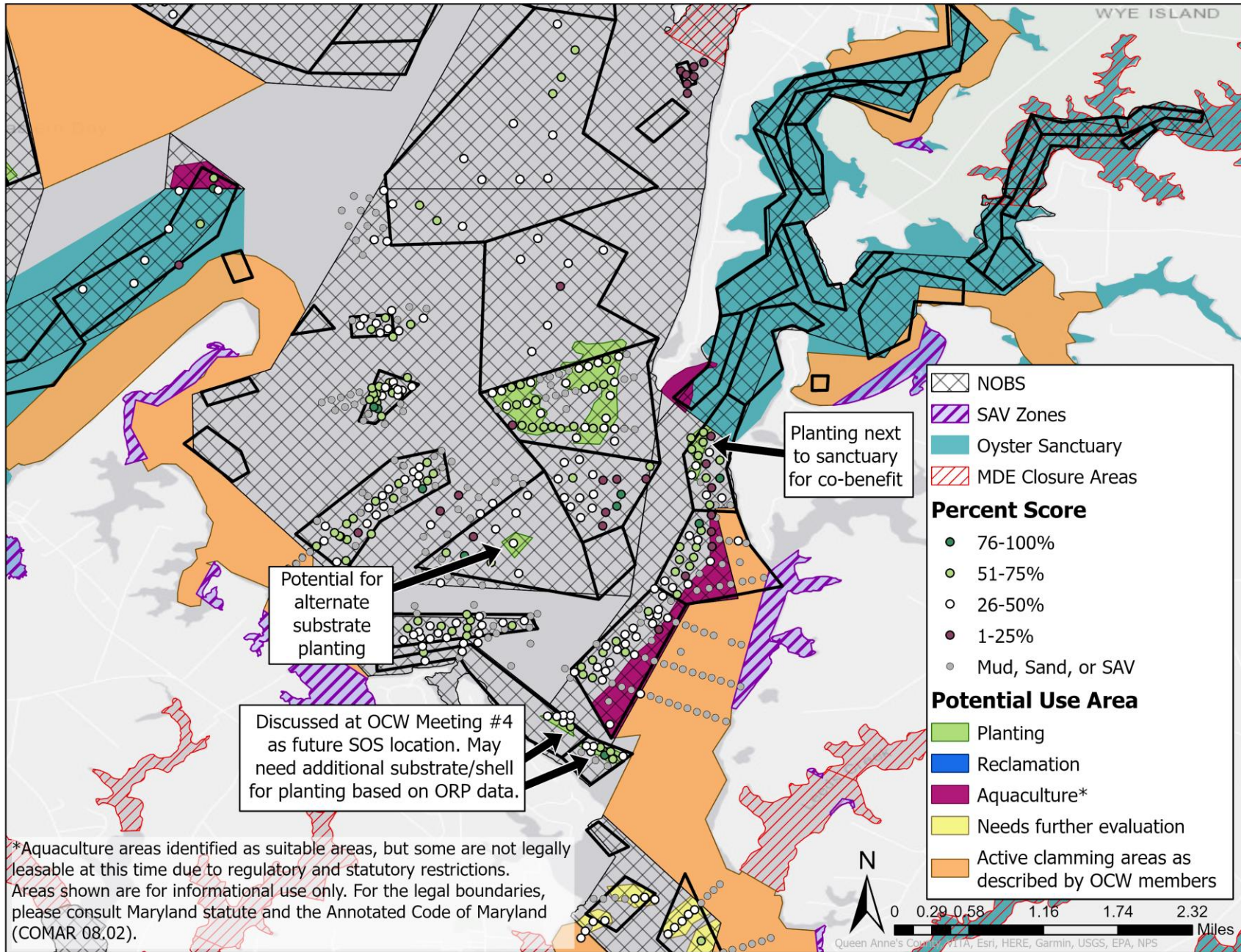
Cox Creek & Central Eastern Bay



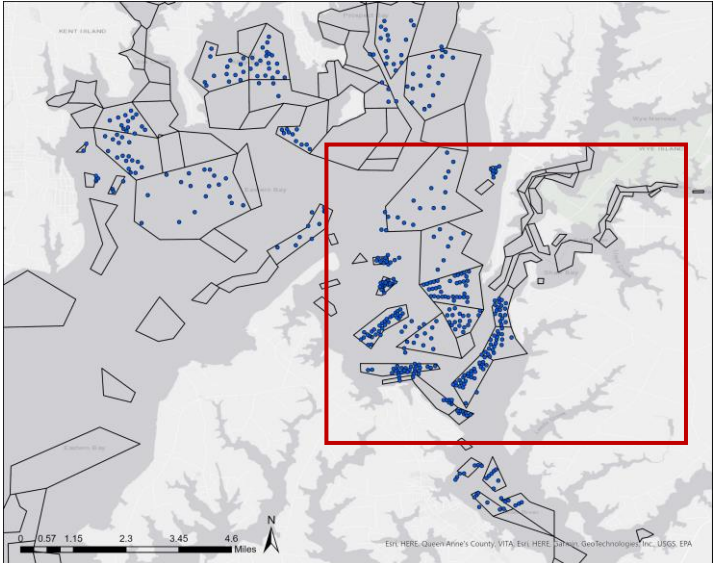
Prospect Bay



Southern Eastern Bay/ Lower Miles River



*Aquaculture areas identified as suitable areas, but some are not legally leasable at this time due to regulatory and statutory restrictions. Areas shown are for informational use only. For the legal boundaries, please consult Maryland statute and the Annotated Code of Maryland (COMAR 08.02).



Upper Miles River

