



Media Advisory

For Immediate Release
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Sink Your Shucks! Water Street Restaurants and Harte Research Institute, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Join Forces to recycle oyster shells to build new habitat for young oysters

Corpus Christi, Texas....Water Street Restaurants will kick off its new partnership with the Harte Research Institute, Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi, and the Port of Corpus Christi, to do what nature intended – use oyster shells to provide quality habitat for young oysters. The “Oyster Shell Recycling” program formally launches Tuesday, November 17, at 2:30 at the Water Street Oyster Bar.

This innovative program recycles large quantities of shells that are typically carted off to the landfill and puts them back where they are needed the most – oyster beds providing hard structures for young oysters to attach and grow.

“I am so excited about this project,” said Brad Lomax, owner of Water Street Restaurants. “We will easily recycle 60 – 70 tons annually (or about the equivalent of 20 Shamu-sized Killer Whales, give or take a couple of tons). Not only do the young oysters win, but the landfills do as well.”

An economic analysis will quantify the benefit. As part of her Masters Thesis, Gail Sutton, Assistant Director of Harte Research Institute, will identify all of the economic activities and determine a net benefit. “We’ll take what we learn from this project and share it with key stakeholders to encourage them to take advantage of recycling.”

Once collected, the shells will be transported to a storage location at the Port of Corpus Christi. The shells will stay there until the program accumulates a significant volume. The goal is to replace a minimum of an acre of habitat. While the shells are in storage, studies are being conducted to determine the best place to put them back. Areas in Copano and Aransas Bays will be reviewed. And stakeholders, including recreational users, industry, state agencies, and the scientific community, will be asked for their input on the ultimate location for the restoration project.

The Oyster Recycling Program is funded by a Texas General Land Office Coastal Management Plan Grant. Dr. Paul Montanga, Endowed Chair for Ecosystem Studies and Modeling, and Assistant Research Scientist, Dr. Jennifer Pollack, at the Harte Research Institute secured the funding and are directing the program.

MEDIA ADVISORY

Sink Your Shucks! - Oyster Shell Recycling Program

- What:** “Sink Your Shucks!”Launch - Oyster Shell Recycling Program
- Who:** Water Street Restaurants, Harte Research Institute, and Port of Corpus Christi
- When:** Tuesday, November 17, 2:30 p.m.
- Where:** Water Street Oyster Bar, 309 N. Water Street
- Photo Op:** Restaurant recycling process; Brad Lomax, owner Water Street Restaurants, Dr. Paul Montagna, Dr. Jennifer Pollack, and Gail Sutton, project participants.
- Website:** www.oysterecycling.org

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