

Aquaculture on Martha's Vineyard

**“Us vs. Them” Conflicts
that Shaped the Industry**

**Rick Karney
Martha's Vineyard Shellfish Group**

Geographic isolation creates **“Island vs Off- Island”** attitude



Local control and 6 Towns leads to **“Town vs Town”** conflicts

Resolution: Aquaculture operations are small and local and limited to 3 of the 6 towns

Private Aquaculture vs the Wild Fishery



Historically,

- Strong tradition of the public common
- Few private leases
 - In the 1950's, privately managed oyster beds taken back and "returned to the public"
 - In the 1960's private aquaculture proponents forced to move Off-Island to pursue venture

Resolution: "Public Aquaculture"

- In the 1970's Towns begin hatchery seeding to enhance wild stocks

Private Aquaculture vs the Wild Fishery

**Resolution: In 1995, the Martha's Vineyard
“Private Aquaculture Initiative”
retrained displaced fishermen in
shellfish aquaculture
- aquaculture leases available only to
local fishermen; who “evolve” into
oyster farmers**



Oyster Farmers vs the Predators



**Rack &
Bag
Grow-out**

Tidal- Powered Nurseries

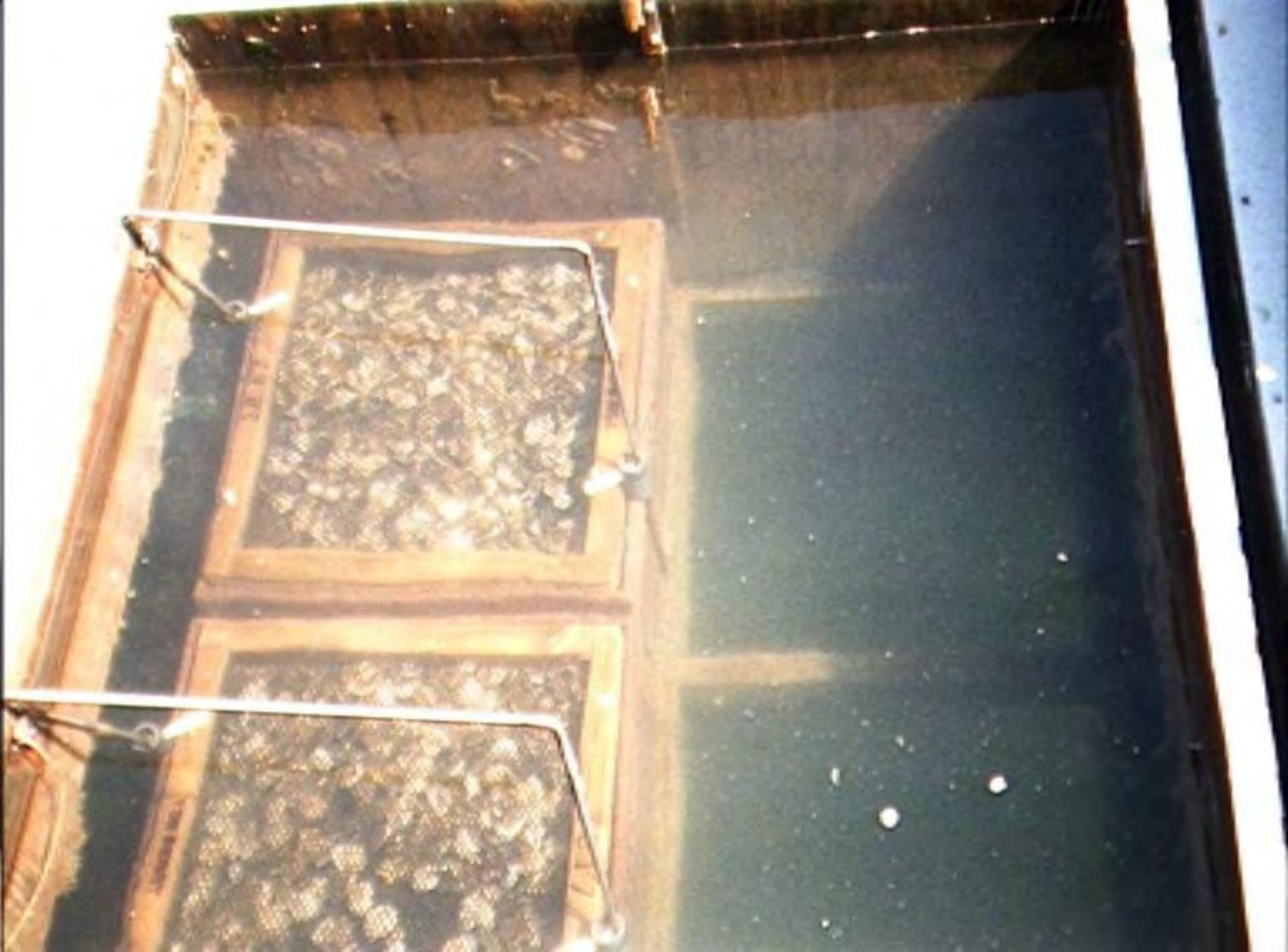
FLUPSY



Tidal- Powered FLUPSY









Rack & Bag Grow-out



Grow-out in Suspended Trays



Oyster Farmers vs Biofouling



Resolution: Pressure-treated lumber, bottom paints



Resolution: Air drying; brine dips



**Resolution:
Tumbling**



Resolution: Floating bags

Oyster Farmers vs Waterfront Homeowners

Resolution:

**- Be a good
neighbor**

And.....





A public relations campaign !!!

“Taste of the Vineyard” Raw bar





JACK BLAKE AND TOM BERRY ON MR. BLAKE'S FLOATING PLATFORM.

Photos by Mark Lovess

Oysters from Katama Yield Sweet Profits As New Vineyard Industry Hits Its Stride

From Page One

willing to pay \$20 for just a dozen of their shellfish.

Mr. Berry said a number of factors contribute to the flavorful success. "The oysters feed on a sweet plankton, and they are always in saltwater." That sweet and salty flavor and a high meat to shell ratio make the shellfish attractive.

There is a lot more meat to a shellfish from Katama Bay than a Nova Scotia oyster.

Out in the environment, a natural setting oyster takes up to four years to reach the harvestable size of three inches. With this new technology, Mr. Berry said, they can cut that growing period in half. A key ingredient to helping an oyster grow involves availability of food. The fishermen devised a floating platform, a device they call a tidal upweller, which allows the tidal currents to send a continuous stream of fresh, algae-rich seawater over the oysters. Katama Bay has all the right algae growing in it. Unlike oysters residing on the bottom, these bivalves are continuously fed every time there is a change in tide.

In coastal ponds like Edgartown Great Pond and Tisbury Great Pond, there is not that much water movement.

These oyster-growing fishermen treat their product a lot differently than nature. For one thing, they clean their oysters with high-pressure water. Mr. Blake also takes his oysters and runs them in a spinning metal basket. This combination of techniques removes



FRESH OYSTERS ON THEIR WAY TO MARKET.

FIRST VINEYARD CROP GOES TO MARKET

Oysters from the Farm

By Tom Dunlop

Photographs by Peter Simon

YOU DECIDE AT THE LAST second to take a chance. Nobody at your table remembers ever seeing one — an authentic Vineyard-grown oyster listed on an Island menu in the summertime.

Not for a generation, anyway; the inland ponds in the hot seasons are too brackish and bacterial. This word "cultured" makes you suspicious, and the price (a dime or two shy of two dollars per oyster) makes you blanch. The way the waiter's raving, you'd think they'd been raised by hand.

Actually, he says, they were.

It was human hands that put these oysters in the places where they could grow best. Twice each day their whole

lives long, deep green seawater, loaded with oceanic nutrients, had come shouldering through the entrance to Edgartown harbor, rushed through the narrows off the mouth of Caleb's Pond and washed over the underwater hills

and gullies sweeping across the shallows of Katama Bay. There the oysters had hung in bags from rafts, literally suspended in the current, swallowing this microbial soup as it filled and darkened the bay. Warmed and sweetened in the shallow water, this broth had

poured back out after the turning of the tide. Fortifying and pure as the concoction was to the crop on the flood, it was just a tad more potent and fattening on the ebb.



Paul Willoughby, opposite page, displays his first crop of farm-raised oysters. Above, Vineyard oysters in the hatchery spawn the seed that will develop into marketable crops.

Did you know?
**Shellfish
Aquaculture
is GOOD
for the
Environment !**



- *Filter-feeding shellfish improve water quality.*
- *Shellfish farming provides habitat for fish and improves species diversity.*
- *Shellfish aquaculture is sustainable and good for the environment.*

Shellfish Aquaculture on Cape Cod

A Traditional and Sustainable
Industry for Barnstable County



Brochures



The result? The finest oysters money can buy!

Do Something Good for the Environment,
Eat a Cultured Oyster and Support a new
“Green” Industry for Martha’s Vineyard!

- As they graze on their diet of natural microscopic plant life, filter-feeding shellfish, like the oyster, play a crucial role in maintaining a balanced marine environment and help keep our coastal waters sparkling clean.
- As nature’s own water filtration system, oysters reduce algal blooms, clean turbid water, remove nitrogen, enhance water clarity, promote eel-grass survival and provide habitat for other sea life.
- Every 100,000 rapidly growing cultured oysters eliminate the nitrogen pollution from about 27 people living in the watershed.
- Our oysters are produced with earth-friendly technologies. The seeds are produced in the nation’s first Solar Shellfish Hatchery. Nursery systems use natural tidal energies to pump water to the growing shellfish. Local farmers employ Best Management Practices to protect the environment.

SHELLFISH

Marine Fisheries Council
1000 North Washington Street
Washington, DC 20004

THE SHELLFISH SOLUTION

By Dr. David S. Swenson

The availability of shellfish along the coast is a natural phenomenon. It is a result of the ocean's ability to produce shellfish in abundance. The ocean's ability to produce shellfish is a natural phenomenon. It is a result of the ocean's ability to produce shellfish in abundance.

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THE SHELLFISH SOLUTION TO POLLUTION

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CLEAN AQUACULTURE COASTAL WATER



Over 500,000 oysters are being cultured by shellfish farmers in Katama Bay, Edgartown.



SUSTAINS

Shellfish aquaculture is a sustainable industry that provides a source of clean, safe food. It is a natural phenomenon. It is a result of the ocean's ability to produce shellfish in abundance. The ocean's ability to produce shellfish is a natural phenomenon. It is a result of the ocean's ability to produce shellfish in abundance.

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Shellfish Remain Crucial to Ecological Balance

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Bumper stickers



Do Something
Good For The
Environment,
Eat More
Aquacultured
Shellfish!











RI

MA

CAPE COD

SWF

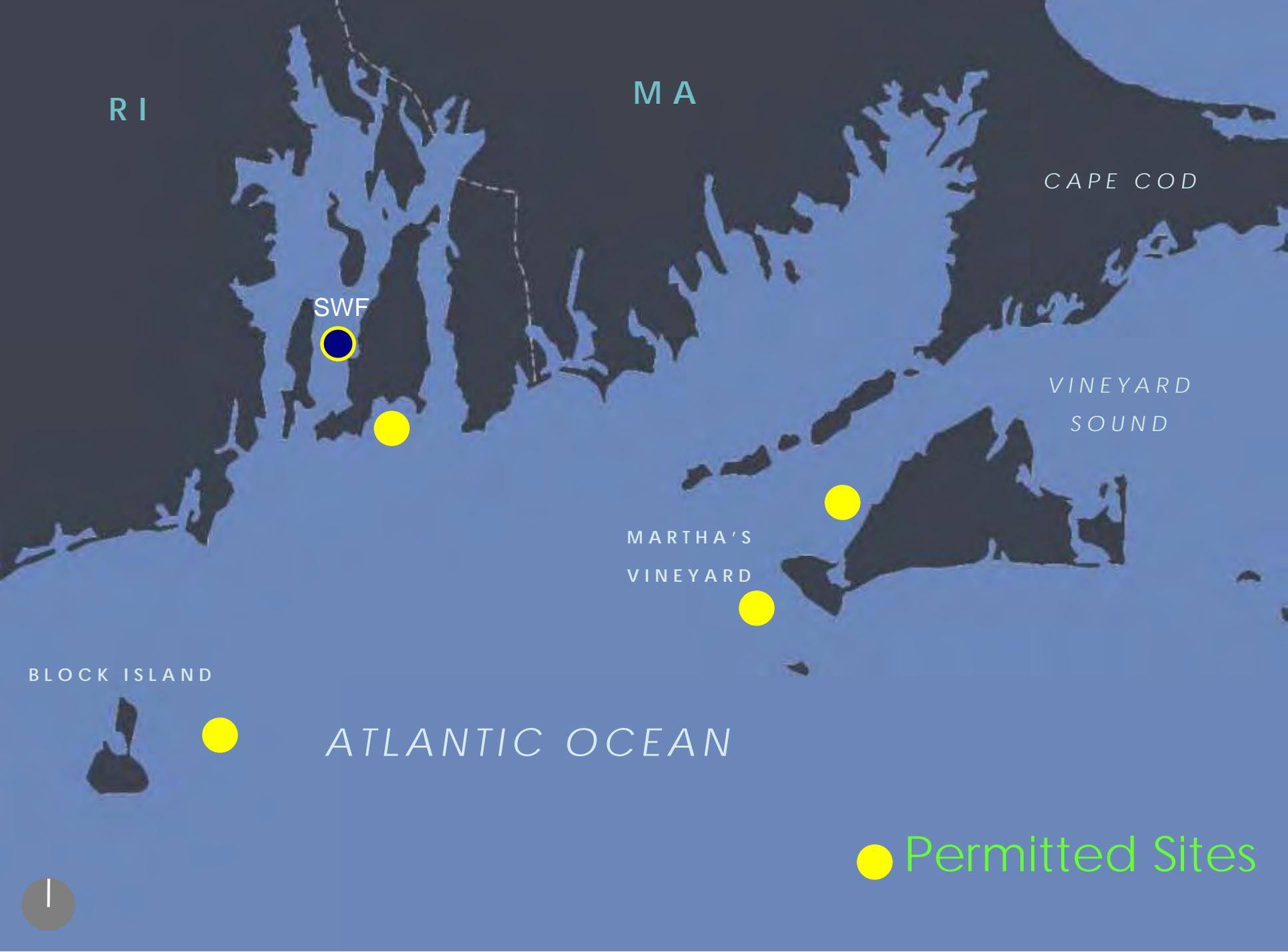
VINEYARD
SOUND

MARTHA'S
VINEYARD

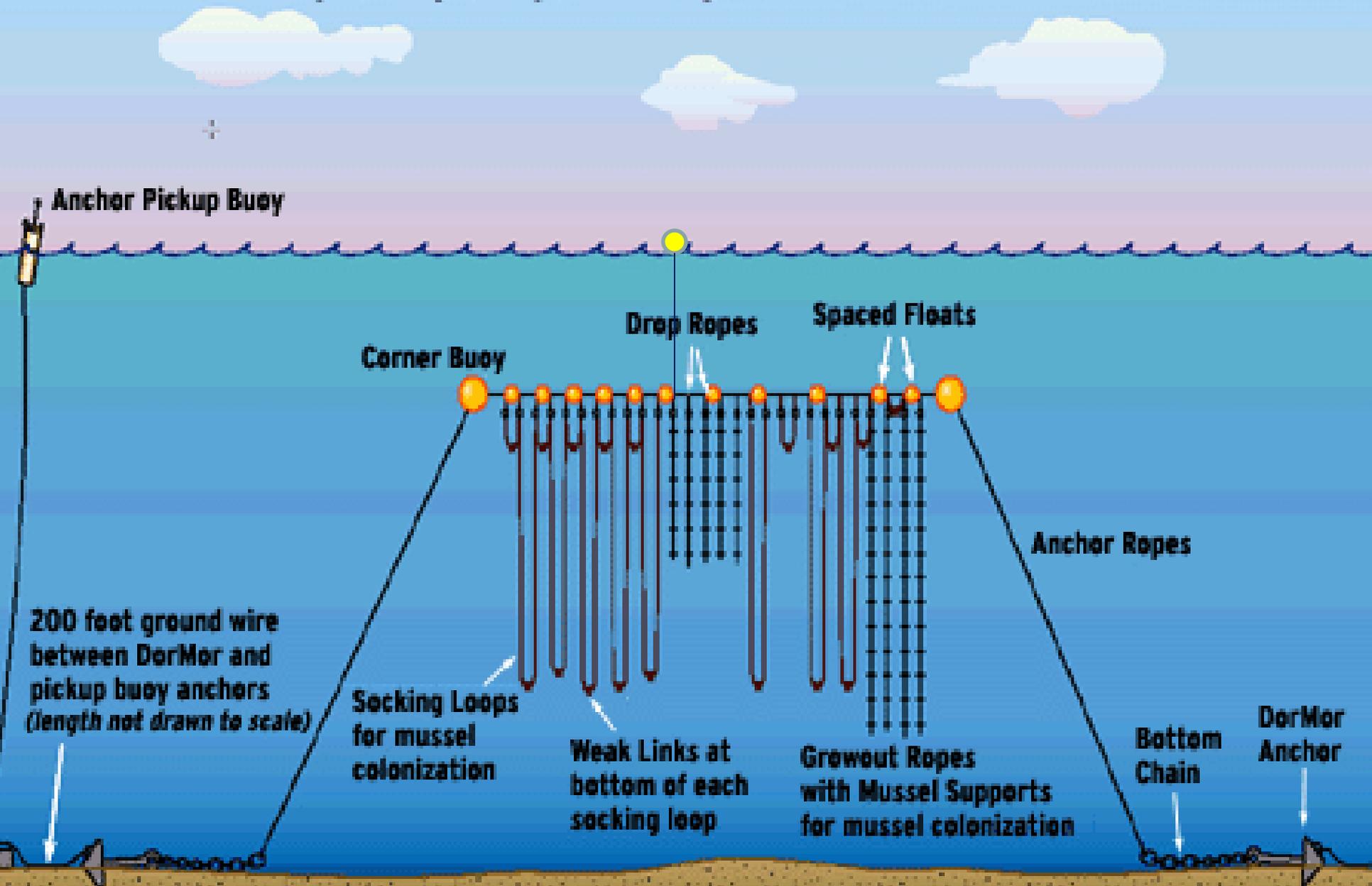
BLOCK ISLAND

ATLANTIC OCEAN

● Permitted Sites



Submerged Longline System Design with Mussel Growout Harness



Aquaculture vs Regulators



**Resolution: Political pressure? Legislation?
Education of regulators?
Other ???**