

Shellfish Advisory Panel
February 7, 2018, 4:30PM
URI Bay Campus Coastal Institute Building
Large Conference Room
215 S Ferry Road, Narragansett, RI 02882

AGENDA

1. Introduction of New SAP Members*
2. Review of Aquaculture Applications sent to Public Notice
 - a. 2017-11-051, East Beach Farms LLC - Quonochontaug
 - b. 2017-12-086, Raso - Potter Pond
3. Fish Habitat Enhancement in the Pt. Judith Pond Shellfish Management Area*
4. Update on Timelines related to Providence River Fisheries Management*

*non-voting item

1. Introduction of New SAP Members (non-voting item)

New Members

Manuel Sousa (Commercial Bullraker)

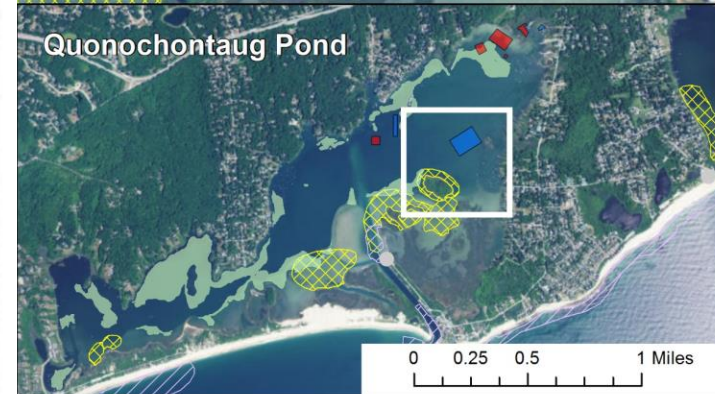
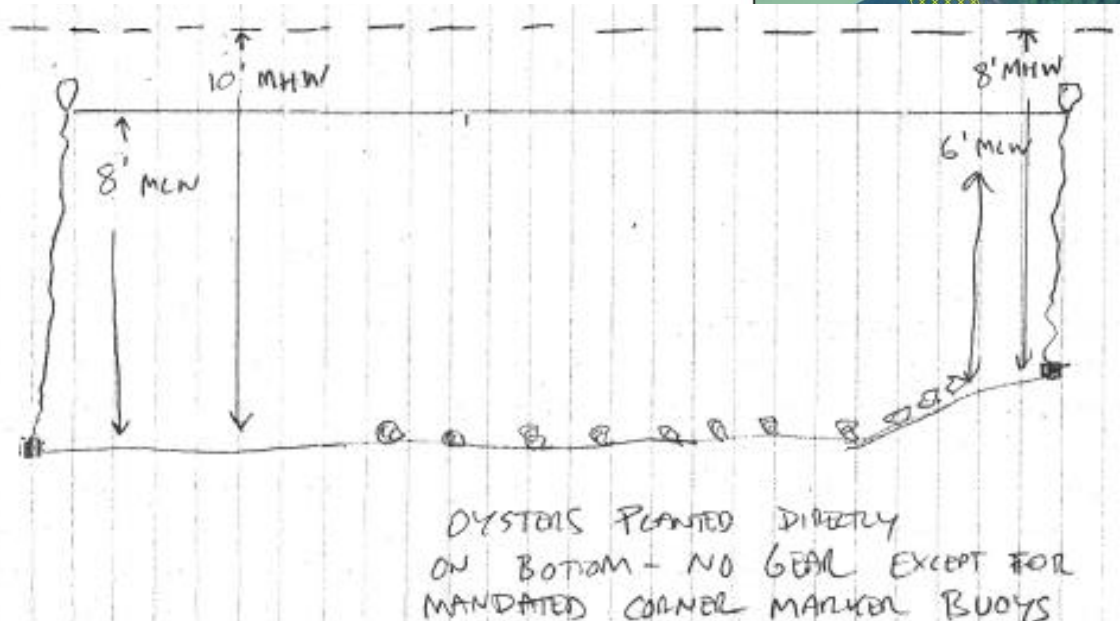
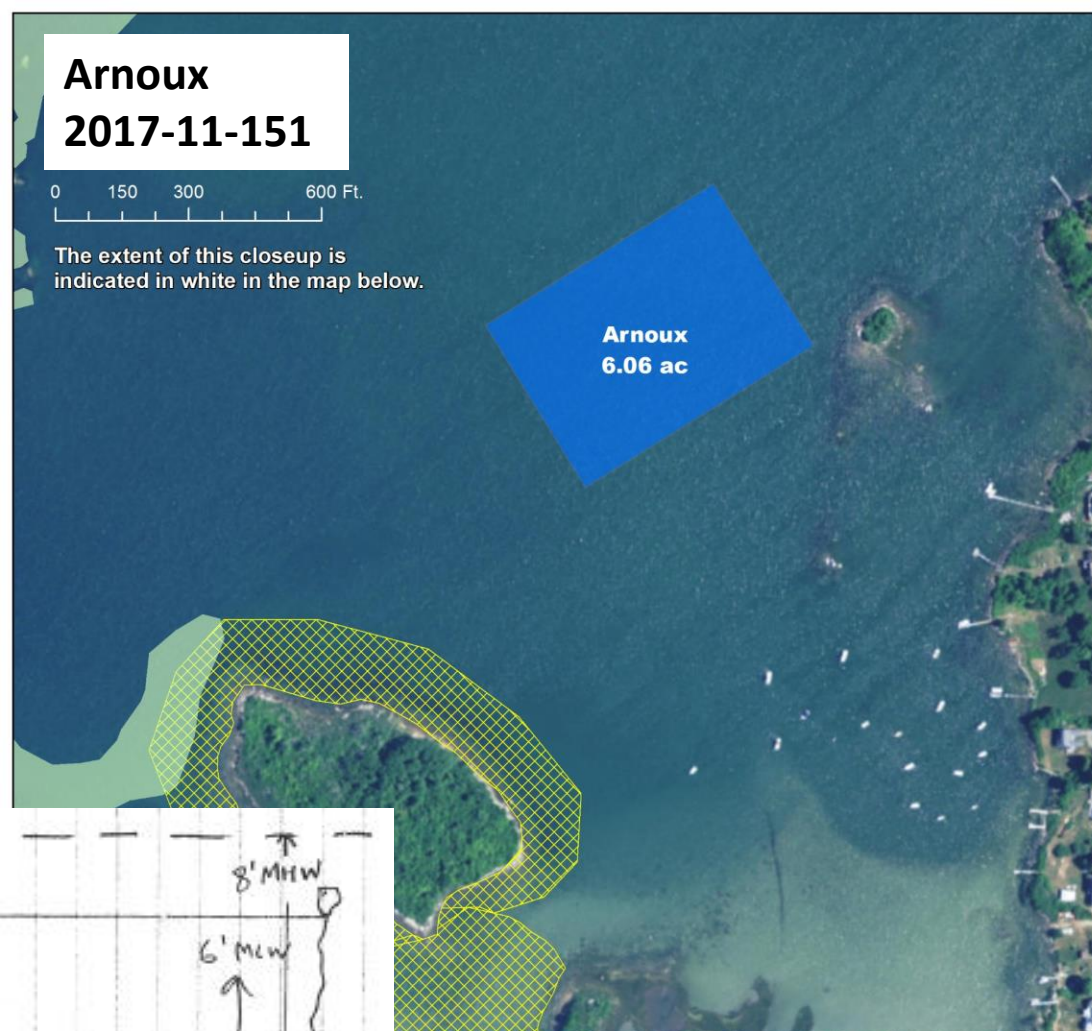
Ed Troiano (Recreational Shellfishing)

11 SAP Members (2 alternates)

2. Aquaculture Leases

2017-11-051, East Beach Farms LLC Quonochontaug

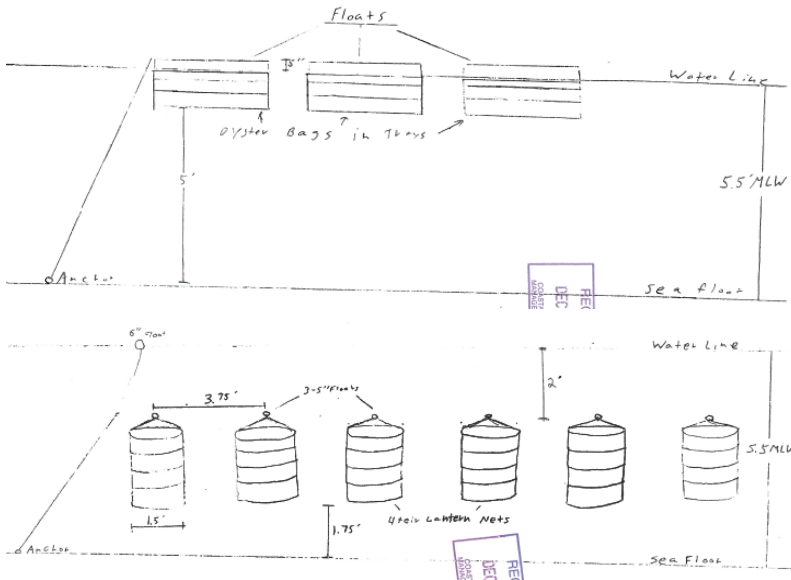
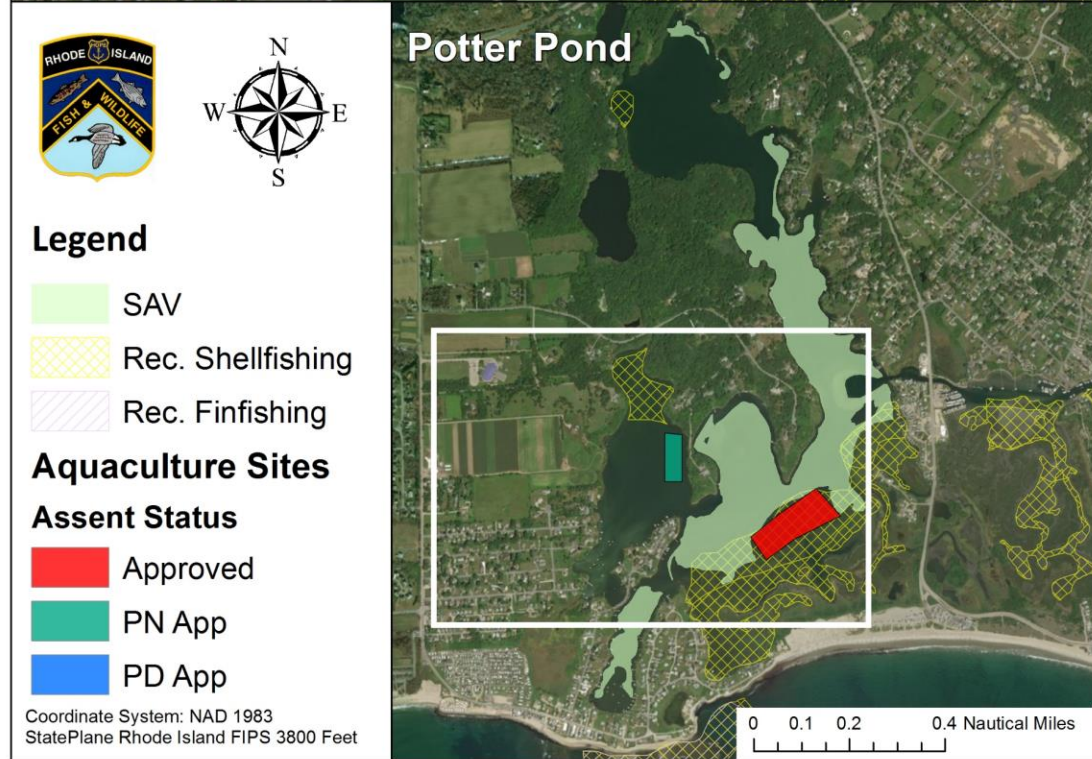
- 6 acre lease
- Oysters
- Bottom plant



2. Aquaculture Leases

2017-12-086, Raso Potter Pond

- 3 acre lease
- Oysters and bay scallops
- Floating and suspended gear
 - Floating cages
 - Submerged spat bags
 - Submerged lantern nets



3. Discussion of Fish Habitat Enhancement Sites and Oyster Reef Creation in the Pt. Judith Pond Shellfish Management Area (non-voting item)

Fish Habitat Enhancement Project

Pt Judith Pond, South Kingstown, RI



Fish Habitat Enhancement Project

Pt Judith Pond, South Kingstown, RI



- This work is part of a larger multi-year, multi-system project that aims to positively affect local fish populations by enhancing fish habitat.
 - Partnership between DEM & TNC
 - Scientific Advisers: Drs. Jon Grabowski and R. Hughes of Northeastern Univ.
 - additional support from RWU
 - US FWS Sport Fish Restoration Program (SFR) funded project
- **Primary Goal:** Evaluate if construction of oyster reefs is a viable method for improving juvenile populations of important species of sportfish
 - Previous work in the mid-Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico has shown these techniques to be successful(e.g., Grabowski et al. 2005); however, they have not yet been evaluated in a temperate region of the Atlantic.

Fish Habitat Enhancement Project

Pt Judith Pond, South Kingstown, RI



Approach

1. Determine the appropriate location for reef establishment considering a number of factors, including oyster suitability modeling, human uses (recreation, navigation, fishing, shellfishing, etc.), present habitat quality and value, and connectivity to adjacent fish habitat.
 2. Submit permit applications and conduct pre-enhancement evaluation to establish baselines
 3. Create and establish oyster reefs; and
 4. Conduct post-enhancement evaluation to determine if there are changes in abundance and species composition of early life stages of recreationally important fish.
- Oyster monitoring 2 x annually
 - Fish monitoring monthly (May-Oct)



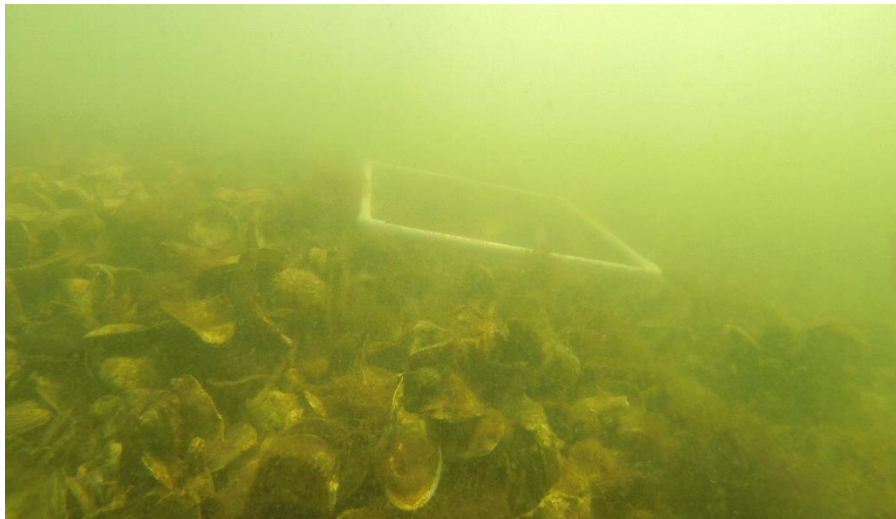
Fish Habitat Enhancement Project

Pt Judith Pond, South Kingstown, RI



• Status

- To date, we've conducted baseline monitoring, constructed reefs, and continue post-construction fish and oyster monitoring in Ninigret and Quonochontaug Ponds.
- Pt Judith represents the final phase of this work.
- We're about to begin the permitting process and wanted to provide the SAP on update prior to submission.



Fish Habitat Enhancement Project

Pt Judith Pond, South Kingstown, RI



General Siting Info

- Reefs will be located in upper Pt Judith Pond, which is:
 - a duly promulgated Shellfish Management Area (RI General Law § 20-3-4, RI Marine Regs 4.12.2-K), and
 - unapproved for shellfishing;
 - thus, there will not be conflicts with com/rec shellfishing or aquaculture.
 - In turn, the harvest prohibition allows for oyster propagation and growth, protecting the oyster reefs and the fish habitat they provide.
- Based on our analysis and discussions with stakeholders, we believe there are no conflicts with current uses at these locations.

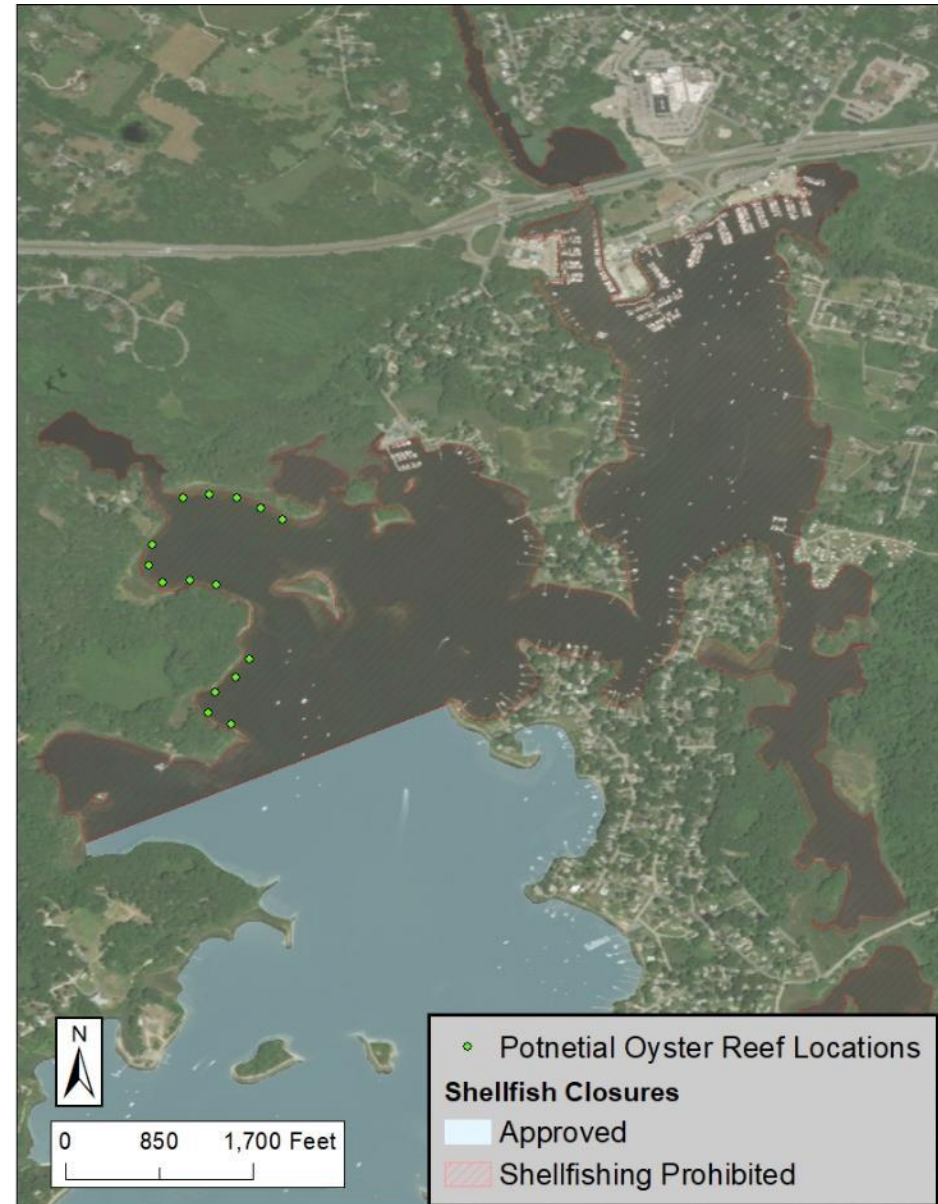
Fish Habitat Enhancement Project

Pt Judith Pond, South Kingstown, RI



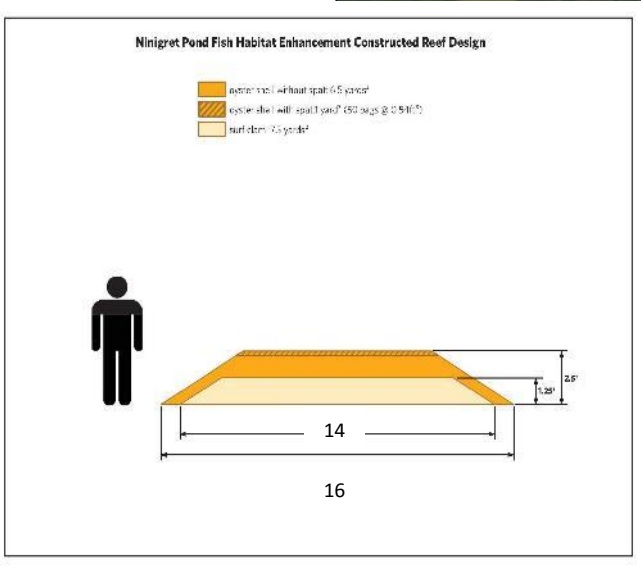
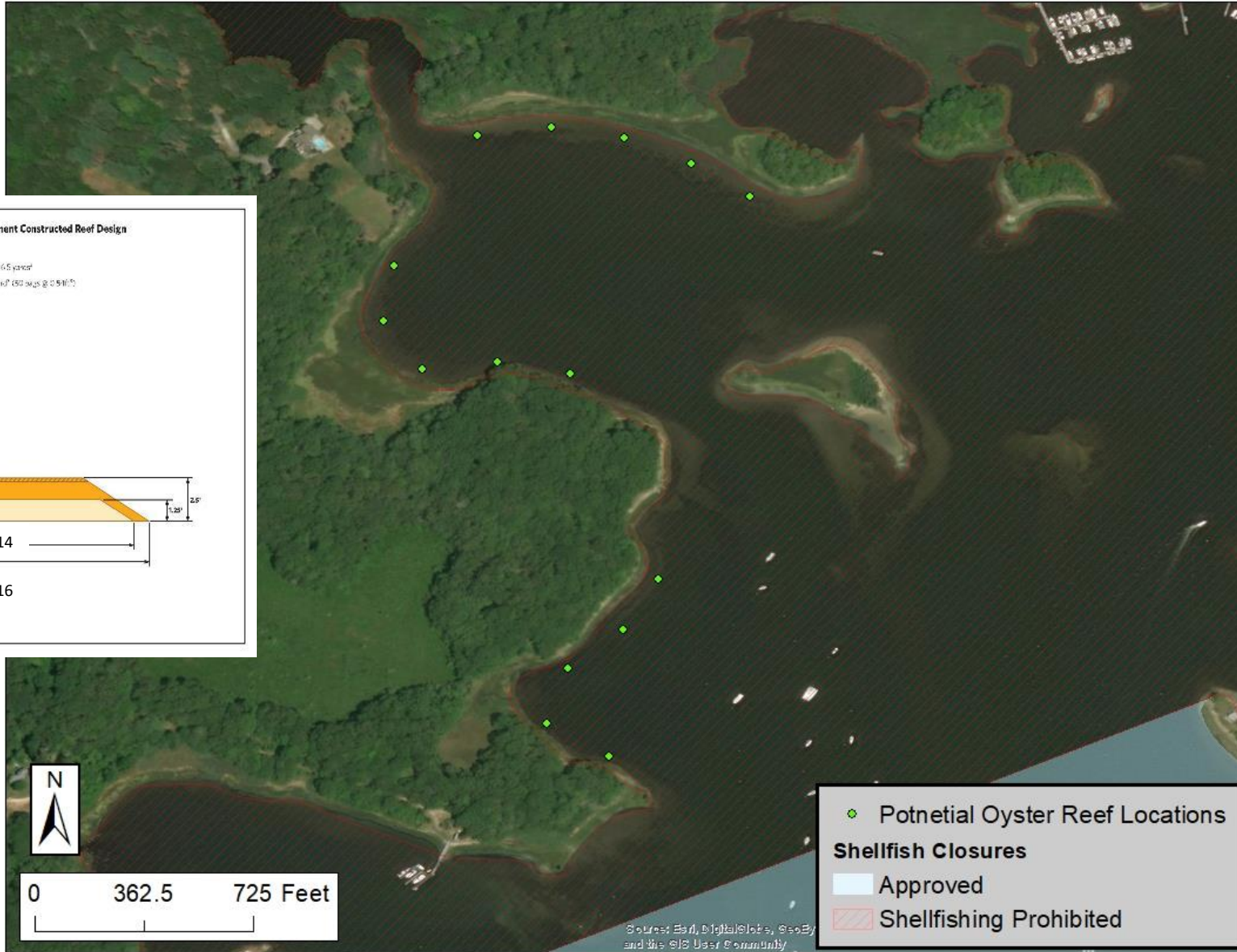
Experimental Design

- 3 replicates, each containing:
 - 5 potential reef sites
 - (4 treatments (reefs) + 1 control)
 - Treatments are:
 - ARC,
 - Green Hill,
 - Narrow River, and
 - Poly, (e.g., a mix of all 3)
- 12 reefs and 3 controls in all



Fish Habitat Enhancement Project

Pt Judith Pond, South Kingstown, RI



- ◆ Potential Oyster Reef Locations
- Shellfish Closures
 - Approved
 - Shellfishing Prohibited

Sources: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, and the GIS User Community