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116 HAMPTON ROAD
SOUTHAMPTON, NEW YORK 11968
PHONE: 631 287-5717 FAX: 631 287-5723

Threatened and Endangered Species

Management and Protection Program



2008

Program Manager:
Coastal Stewards:

Dawn Ver Hague
Elyssa Hopkins
Barry Udelson
Ashley Lowig

Introduction

Established in 1686, the Southampton Town Board of Trustees has long supported the need to protect the town's various natural resources. Located on the eastern end of Long Island, Southampton is home to an extensive coastline of ocean and bay beaches. Within this sensitive coastal habitat resides three federally and state listed threatened and endangered (T&E) species. These include two bird species; the piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*) and least tern (*Sterna antillarum*) and the plant seaside amaranth (*Amaranthus pumilus*). In addition, the town is also home to seaside knotweed (*Polygonum glaucum*), a rare plant in New York State.

Prior to 1998, T&E species recovery in the Southampton area was undertaken by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). However, due to a decrease in staffing and resources provided by the NYSDEC and TNC, the Southampton Trustees initiated their own program. To date, this includes the sole management of approximately 13 miles of ocean beach from Shinnecock County Park East to the East Hampton Town border, and 16 bay sites located throughout the town. Still a vital part of the program, TNC monitors the ocean sites west of the Shinnecock Inlet in addition to two bay sites, while the NYSDEC and US Fish and Wildlife Service monitor the shoreline of Westhampton Beach Dunes. Monitoring is also provided by the Suffolk County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation at public beaches in county ownership.

Listed as federally threatened and state endangered, the piping plover (PIPL) constitutes the largest portion of the T&E Species Program. Arriving from mid to late March, the piping plover breeding season lasts until late August to early September. Prior to their arrival, pre fencing is erected in areas that have historically been used by nesting plovers. The purpose of this fencing is to preserve the habitat from foot and vehicular traffic. Piping plovers are territorial, in that they will not nest within the direct vicinity of another mating pair. Consequently, the first month is often spent defending a territory and nesting doesn't officially begin until this is complete; usually late April to early May. Once the female lays one egg, she will continue to do so every other day until four eggs are laid. From this point on, both the male and female will share incubating duties for the next 25-28 days. Additional string fencing is erected for any nests not located in the previously installed areas in order to protect the incubating adult from being disturbed and flushed from the nest. If the site is suitable, a ten foot diameter wire mesh enclosure is erected and nylon netting is placed on top. The enclosure is put up so that the plovers can get in and out but predators such as crows, gulls, raccoons, and fox can not. If a nest is not successful and it is still early enough in the season, the pair will reneest, often in close proximity of the previous nest. Failure can occur as a result of abandonment, predation, washout, unhatched eggs or loss of chicks at a young age. During a reneest the number of eggs laid begins to decrease consecutively.

Right before the chicks are due to hatch, snow fencing is erected to close off the area to vehicular traffic. This fencing is erected within approximately 1000 meters on each side of the nest and extends from the toe of the dune to the water's edge. The reason for this structure is, that upon hatching, piping plover chicks are extremely small, camouflage and unable to fly until they are 25-35 days old. In addition, the chicks are precocial; meaning that they are not fed by their parents but must find their own food and begin

doing so within the first few hours after hatching. As a result, chicks often run back and forth along the beach, putting them at risk. Once a plover chick is observed flying at least 50 feet it is considered a success and counted toward the management goals.

In order to remove the Atlantic Coast piping plover populations from the Federal List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants, the USFWS has developed a recovery criterion that must be met. Delisting will occur when there are 2,000 breeding pairs, maintained over five years. Of the two thousand, 575 of those must be located within New York and New Jersey. Other important delisting criteria include achieving a five year average productivity of 1.5 fledged chicks per pair and instituting long term agreements among cooperating agencies, landowners, and conservation organizations in order to maintain populations and productivity (USFWS, 1995). For the 2007 season, there were a total of 1890 pairs along the Atlantic Coast in which 586 were located in the NY-NJ unit. This is the first time since listing that the recovery goal of 575 has been reached, nonetheless exceeded.

Listed as a threatened species in New York State, the least tern (LETE) shares some similarities with the piping plover in terms of breeding and nesting behavior. As a result, beachgoers often mistake the identities of these two species. Arriving to their breeding grounds by late April to mid May, eggs are normally laid from late May through June. Frequently found within the same habitat as the piping plovers, nests are incubated for approximately 21 days. However, unlike the plover, terns nest in colonies and can have anywhere from 1 to 3 eggs per nest, making the use of exclosures impractical. In order to protect their nests, adult terns will actively defend them by dive bombing or defecating on any perceived threat. These birds are also different in that they are semi-social. Chicks are capable of moving about shortly after birth but remain in or around the nest and are fed by the adults. Often times the chicks stay within the string fence and hide amongst vegetation until they are nearly ready to fly or have already fledged. Although this is beneficial in regard to safety from vehicular or foot traffic, it makes exact counts more difficult. As a result, least tern counts are estimated. Around 19-20 days after hatching, the least tern chicks are able to fly and most have left for wintering grounds by the end of August to early September.

Seabeach amaranth is an annual low growing plant once abundant in coastal environments from Massachusetts to South Carolina. Believed to have been extirpated for over three decades from the state of New York, small populations were discovered on Long Island in 1990. This is believed to be the result of seeds being transported via storms and hurricanes. Recognized as both state and federally endangered, the population of seabeach amaranth has steadily increased and is now found in seven states, the majority of which are located in the mid Atlantic region. Found along sandy beaches, amaranth is often located between the toe of the dune and the high tide mark. The plants begin sprouting from their seeds between June and July and can grow as large as three feet in diameter. Upon their arrival, string fence is erected to protect the plants and they are individually counted. Seed production begins in August, peaks in September and last until the plant dies, sometimes occurring as late as November.

The main threat facing the future of seabeach amaranth is the loss of suitable habitat. This is often caused by the increased rate of erosion as a result of the use of bulkheads, seawalls, and other artificial dune construction as a means of beach stabilization. Additional threats include off road vehicles and natural factors, such as predators.

Seabeach amaranth facilitates beach growth by trapping wind blown sand and assisting in the production of dunes. It has been recorded that in a few months, a cluster of amaranth plants can build a dune 18" high and 12' across. As with the federally protected piping plover, seabeach amaranth does need to meet certain criteria prior to delisting. This will occur when seventy five percent of the sites with suitable habitat within at least six of the nine historically occupied states are occupied by seabeach amaranth populations for ten consecutive years (USFWS, 1996).

The Town of Southampton is also home to seabeach knotweed. Sharing several similarities with seabeach amaranth, knotweed is faced with many of the same threats. As a result, populations within its range are beginning to decline. Considered a rare plant in New York State the presence of this species bares significance in terms of its current status. Present from July to as late as November on both the ocean and bay sites, seabeach knotweed plants are identified and counted. The number of plants observed is estimated when plants are found in large clusters.

In total, the 2008 Threatened and Endangered Species Program confirmed the fledging of 28 piping plovers from the 53 nests and re-nests managed by the Southampton Town Trustees. The 36 total nesting pairs of piping plovers produced a final productivity of 0.78 for the 2008 season. Least tern pairs were estimated at 413 and produced approximately 183 fledges, the most ever recorded. A total of 68 seabeach amaranth plants were also counted along with an estimated 5715 seabeach knotweed plants.

Ocean Sites: (See attached maps for nesting locations)

Southampton Beach contains three sub-sites based on the location of road accesses. At approximately 3.5 miles, this is the largest site monitored by the Trustees and is located within the Village of Southampton. Southampton Beach also provides some of the widest beach located within the Town and supplies suitable habitat to all the T&E Species present. Off road vehicle traffic and beach raking are the largest concerns at this site.

Overall PIPL Site Productivity: 0.38

Shinnecock East County Park to Road D: Two piping plover nests were located within this area of Southampton Beach. The first nest was washed out as a result of a storm that occurred on May 13th. Upon re-nesting, the nest was predated only two days before it was due to hatch. A second pair was located to the most western portion of this site between Roads F and G. This area is currently known as the picnic area; as it is open to ORV access every day year round. Prior to being lost to predation, the future of this nest was of grave concern as those individuals whom use the picnic area were not supportive of any future closure due to the arrival of chicks.

No least tern activity, seabeach amaranth or seabeach knotweed were present within this sub-site.

PIPL Site Activity: 2 Pairs, 0 Fledges

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 0.0

Road D to Halsey Neck Lane: This sub-site was the most productive for Southampton Beach. However, it was one of the most difficult to manage. Although

there is minimal public access, residents often walk dogs in this area with disregard to the string fencing. In addition, this sub-site lost an unfledged chick at 16 days old when it was run over by someone illegally entering the restricted area. This occurred late at night after an annual fireworks fundraising event in an attempt to avoid traffic. Driving was a constant issue at this site and fencing needed repair on almost all visits. Of the 4 pairs present only 2 successfully hatched with a total of 3 reaching fledgling status.

There were 39 least tern nests located within the same fencing as the plovers. Over half of the colony was wiped out in late June and only 5 chicks fledged from the remaining nests. This sub-site also had the largest number of seabeach amaranth found throughout the whole town with 52 plants, 30 of which were in once large cluster. Three seabeach knotweed plants were also recorded.

PIPL Site Activity: 4 Pairs, 3 Fledges

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 0.75

Halsey Neck Lane to South Main St: The beach that lies within this area includes the very popular Coopers Beach and the Southampton Bathing Corp. This area is a high use site and as a result struggles with an increase in predators. In addition, beach raking is also used to maintain the beach, which removes food sources and shelter for both the piping plovers and least terns. There were two pairs of plovers located within this sub-site. The pair closest to Coopers Beach lost its first two nesting attempts due to predation while the third nest was lost to unknown causes. The use of exclosures in this area was not possible due to the large amount of patrons. Unfortunately, although they protect against predators they also attract the attention of beachgoers. If disturbed too often the adults will abandon the nest. In some situations, exclosures get vandalized and eggs are stolen or destroyed. The second pair of plovers were further east in an area where erosion had occurred and was predated. Neither of the pairs had a successful nesting attempt.

A small colony of terns did show up at this site later in the season. With only 5 nests, there were a total of five fledges. Three amaranth plants were also located in this sub-site.

PIPL Site Activity: 2 Pairs, 0 Fledges

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 0.0

Gin Lane Beach is located within the Village of Southampton. Many areas of this beach were eroded as a result of a large storm in May and never fully built back up. The one pair located here nested high on the dune next to a walkway. This nest was lost to unknown causes just three days before it was due to hatch. There was no LETE activity or seabeach knotweed at this site, but one seabeach amaranth plant was located and recorded.

PIPL Site Activity: 1 Pair, 0 Fledges

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Old Town Beach is the easternmost site located within the Village of Southampton. The beach profile at this site makes it excellent habitat for all T&E Species located within the Town. Although eroded to the extreme west and east ends, the beach located in the middle is wide with sparse vegetation throughout. The erosion is beneficial as it limits the amount of vehicles that access the site. Unfortunately, this site was not successful in fledging any chicks out of the 3 pairs that were present. Two nests

were found early in the season and exclosed due to the presence of cats. Only two days before one of the nests was due to hatch, both of the nests were destroyed by humans. Using sticks someone kneeled down next to the exclosure and dragged the eggs out and some were found lying around the vicinity of the exclosures. A total of 7 eggs were destroyed at this time. Both pairs renested and another pair arrived later on. As the use of exclosures was no longer possible all nests were predated.

A large least tern colony of approximately 56 nests was located at this site but a majority were also lost to predation and only 3 terns chicks fledged. One seabeach amaranth plant was counted.

PIPL Site Activity: 3 Pairs, 0 Fledges

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Watermill Beach is located within the Town of Southampton and is broken up into three separate sub-sites based on the names of the town run beaches.

Fowlers, Flying Point, and Scott Cameron (Mecox) compromise a total of five access points, four of which are designated public beaches with lifeguards on duty. As a result, this is a high use site and struggles with unleashed dogs, predators, and ORV access.

Overall PIPL Site Productivity: 1.0

Fowlers Beach: This site was home to one pair of plovers who nested early in the season. During the storm on May 13th, this nest was abandoned and the eggs were buried under the sand. The storm also caused erosion, limiting the amount of suitable habitat available and the birds did not reneest. The presence of dogs at this site was the largest threat. A resident was observed walking five large unleashed dogs on multiple occasions. The dogs would often times frighten fellow beachgoers as well as run within fencing.

No least tern activity was recorded at this site. One small amaranth plant was recorded within the area that nest was located.

PIPL Site Activity: 1 Pair, 0 Fledges

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 0.0

Flying Point Beach: Flying Point did not have any nesting plovers this year. Although birds have nested here historically, fledge success had slowly decreased over the past decade to zero. In 2007 six pairs were recorded and no chicks reached fledge status. This may be a contributing factor limiting successful nesting at this site. The Mecox mudflats are also located within this site and are very popular to beachgoers. The increased human activity attracts predators which pose a threat to the nesting shorebirds. No tern activity or plants were recorded at this site.

PIPL Site Activity: 0 Pairs

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 0.0

Scott Cameron Beach: The westernmost and easternmost boundaries of this site are Town Parks and Recreation managed beach areas, and therefore high in human activity. As a result, the birds often nest in a .4 mile stretch between these sections. The residents who live in this area are extremely supportive and understanding considering the extent of fencing erected. Within this small section there were a total of six nesting pairs of piping plovers. One of the nests located at this sub-site incubated for 38 days prior to hatching all four eggs. Upon hatching one chick only made it to the edge of the

enclosure before it was found dead. Another chick took 43 days before it was able to fly although the two other fledges from this brood flew after 35 days. These two fledges remained in the area until the third was able to fly. Snow fencing remained up until the bird could fly to close the area to ORV traffic. Unfortunately as it was the end of the season there was little respect for the closure and beach driving occurred on a daily basis. On Aug. 12th a least tern chick was found run over inside tire tracks. Pictures were taken and an incident report was submitted to USFWS and the NYSDEC.

Scott Cameron was home to the largest least tern colony this season. With approximately 92 nests, they was an estimated 48 fledges. Nine seabeach amaranth and 7 seabeach knotweed plants were also recorded.

PIPL Site Activity: 6 Pairs, 7 Fledges

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 1.2

Sam's Creek Beach is a small .6 mile site located between Jobs Lane and Ocean Rd. This site was home to one pair of nesting piping plovers. The first nest was washed out by a storm in early May, but the pair renested and successfully fledged three chicks. Located within this site is the Bridgehampton Club. Employees of this establishment were extremely helpful and assisted in the digging up and repairing fencing. No least tern activity, seabeach amaranth or seabeach knotweed was present at this site.

PIPL Site Activity: 1 Pair, 3 Fledges

PIPL Site Productivity: 3.0

Sagaponack Lake Beach is separated into two sub-sites with the lake acting as the divider. As the lake cut is not maintained (opened) during the breeding/germination season this site offers excellent habitat and a convenient food source. On any given day a number of different shorebird species can be observed. Washovers do result when nests are located too close to the lake and heavy rain or storm events occur. While the western portion of this site provided a decent amount of suitable habitat, the portion east of Sagaponack Main St struggled with erosion. More so after the storm that occurred in the beginning of May.

Overall PIPL Site Productivity: 1.5

Sagaponack Lake West: This sub-site had two pairs of nesting plovers. Both nests were located on the same day within a couple hundred feet of each other and were predated right before the May storm. The original area was eroded afterwards and both pairs moved some distance in order to find suitable habitat to renest. One of the nests was predated while the other one hatched and fledged two chicks. This brood moved large distances and was often found outside of protected ORV restrictive snow fencing in the area of Sagaponack Lake. No least tern activity, seabeach amaranth or seabeach knotweed was present at this sub-site.

PIPL Site Activity: 2 Pairs, 2 Fledges

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 1.0

Sagaponack Lake East: This site offers two very different beach profiles. While the westernmost section offers some of the best habitat within the town, the easternmost section is severely eroded with large escarpments throughout. Two pairs of piping plovers nested at this sub-site. The first nest was located to the east, high up on the dunes in an eroded area of beach. The nest was predated ten days after the May storm and the

pair never re-nested. As a result of the storm, this already eroded area suffered greatly and never fully built back up. The second nest was in the area of sand built up by the lake. Although the habitat can be unstable, this was the only nest to fledge all four chicks.

Sagaponack Lake also produced the largest number of successful tern fledges within the town. There was an estimated 65 nests producing 55 fledges, all within the fencing by the lake. One seabeach amaranth was also located within the same fencing and a seabeach knotweed was found by the public beach access.

PIPL Site Activity: 2 Pairs, 4 Fledges

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 2.0

Fairfield Pond Lane Beach has produced some of the highest piping plover fledge numbers throughout the history of the program. However, the site was extremely eroded this year leaving very little suitable habitat.

Overall PIPL Site Productivity: 0.00

Fairfield Pond Lane Beach West: This site had no activity of any T&E species otherwise located in the Town of Southampton

PIPL Site Activity: 0 Pairs

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 0.0

Fairfield Pond Lane Beach East: One pair of piping plovers nested at the very westernmost portion of this sub-site. The first nest was located extremely close to the high tide mark and was eventually washed out. The re-nest only had one egg before it was predated.

Three tern nests were located within the same fencing as the piping plover re-nest. These produced a total of 5 fledges. One knotweed plant was recorded in this area as well.

PIPL Site Activity: 1 Pair, 0 Fledges

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 0.0

Bay Sites: (See attached maps for nesting locations)

Red Cedar Point is located on a private residence in which the homeowner has given the Trustees permission to access the property and manage any T&E species present. This site is closed to driving and is not open to the public. Unfortunately, due to some construction being done on the residence, the homeowners were not present and the site was being accessed by both beachgoers and kite surfers. In addition, a fish kill in the area resulted in a number of dead carcasses on the site which attracted predators. Of the three nesting plover pairs, only one re-nest successfully hatched any eggs and produced 2 fledges. The original nest was predated, while the remaining two were abandoned and washed out.

A large tern colony of approximately 75 nests was located at this site and completely wiped out by the end of June. No least terns even remained on the property to re-nest. Seabeach amaranth and seabeach knotweed were not present at this site.

PIPL Site Activity: 3 Pairs, 2 Fledges

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.67

Red Creek Pond had the first piping plover nest ever recorded at this site. Located within a private residence this community often struggles with illegal beach driving and bonfires. Trash is usually left behind and attracts predators. This may be a contributing factor to the loss of this nest to predation. No least tern activity, seabeach amaranth or seabeach knotweed was found at this site.

PIPL Site Activity: 1 Pair, 0 Fledges

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Squires Pond had one nesting piping plover pair. Prior to predation the nest had hatched two eggs and an adult was incubating the remaining two. It is unknown whether these two eggs hatched or were predated after. This site has a very serious issue with dogs off leashes. Upon return to check on the status of the remaining two eggs, a dog was witnessed chasing the adult who was frantically vocalizing while flying to escape. It is presumed that the chicks' predation may have occurred just prior to our arrival. Squires Pond is separated by the inlet and the dog swam across before we could reach it. Another issue is the use of this site for horseback riding. No least tern activity, seabeach amaranth or seabeach knotweed was found at this site.

PIPL Site Activity: 1 Pair, 0 Fledges

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Meschutt Beach East did not have any T&E species present this season. This site does not have any suitable habitat as most of it is bulkheaded. In addition, it is very heavily used for recreational purposes. This includes boating activity and beachgoers to the Peconic Beach Club.

PIPL Site Activity: 0 Pairs

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Canoe Place Beach had never been monitored prior to this year. Although there is some suitable habitat, it is limited. The area is also heavily used by the residents of the private community the beach borders. No birds have ever nested here in the past and no vegetative species were recorded as well.

PIPL Site Activity: 0 Pairs

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Fish Cove/North Sea Harbor is two separate sites within the same vicinity. Fish Cove is located along Noyack Rd and is very small. This site is used extensively by ORV's and the sand is very firm and not suitable. The North Sea Harbor site is a small island located within the harbor. There is currently no suitable habitat at this site.

PIPL Site Activity: 0 Pairs

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Towd Neck is the largest bay site monitored by the Southampton Trustees and is broken up into two sub-sites with the inlet into North Sea Harbor as the divider. Both sub-sites are high use areas but vary in regard to beach profile. The greatest threat facing Towd is the use of recreational vehicles.

Overall PIPL Site Productivity: 1.7

Towd Neck West: No T&E species were present at this site. Two immediate threats to successful nesting at this sub-site are human activity and a lack of suitable

habitat. Approximately ¼ of this site is bulk headed with the tide reaching the bulkhead, while the remainder is heavily used by ORV traffic.

PIPL Site Activity: 0

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 0.0

Towd Neck East: This site is different from the western sub-site in that most of the habitat here is suitable for nesting plovers and terns. Of the three nesting pairs of piping plovers, one was located to the easternmost section while the other two were further to the west. Because the birds are spread out throughout the site, there is a sizeable amount of fencing erected. Fencing here is often a challenge as Towd Neck East is buffered by residences, all of which have individual access to the beach. All string fencing is put up in an attempt to leave every walkway open. Although this is not always possible, residents' access to the beach is never blocked off completely.

A least tern colony was also located at this site with an estimated 50 nests, producing 38 fledges. In addition, an astounding amount of seabeach knotweed was found throughout the entire stretch of Town Neck East. Individual counts were not possible and the total was estimated at 5052 plants. No seabeach amaranth was found.

PIPL Site Activity: 3 Pairs, 5 Fledges

PIPL Sub-Site Productivity: 1.7

Wooley Pond is separated into two sites due to the inlet into the Pond. Both sub-sites have limited suitable habitat and therefore no piping plovers or least terns have ever been recorded nesting here. In addition, the site to the east was not accessible. Forty six seabeach knotweed plants were located at the western sub-site.

PIPL Site Activity: 0 Pairs

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Roses Grove and Fresh Pond both have a lack of suitable habitat for piping plover and least tern nesting. This may be a result of the extensive use of bulkheading and steep slope of the beach profile. No seabeach amaranth or seabeach knotweed were recorded either.

PIPL Site Activity: 0 Pairs

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Pine Neck had one pair of nesting piping plovers this year. The pairs first nest was abandoned while their second attempt was lost to predation. This site is a peninsula and therefore a high use area for recreational boaters. Beach driving is also an issue of concern and ORV restrictive fencing was erected early in the season. Unfortunately it was not respected and either driven around (ATV) or altogether removed. It is suggested that a more sturdy fencing structure be erected at this site to discourage such behavior.

Seven seabeach knotweed plants were located at Pine Neck. No least tern activity or seabeach amaranth was recorded.

PIPL Site Activity: 1 Pair, 0 Fledges

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Long Beach is one of the more difficult sites to manage. Approximately one mile long, the site is a public beach run by the town's Department of Parks and Recreation. The high level of human activity is a major threat to the nesting shorebirds at this site.

Long Beach is particularly crowded on weekends and holidays. Another threat to nesting at this location is predators such as gulls, crows and unleashed dogs. The parking lot also runs parallel to the beach, making it difficult to prohibit beach driving due to the arrival of chicks. The one pair of piping plovers present this year nested to the east where heavy brush helps deter beach driving. Unfortunately, the chicks moved some distance to the west and were no longer protected by ORV restrictive snow fencing. At this time, one of the chicks was lost only ten days before it was due to fledge.

A least tern colony also nested in the string fencing to the easternmost area. There was an estimated 28 nests in which 24 chicks fledged. Although no seabeach amaranth was located at this site, 411 seabeach knotweed plants were counted.

PIPL Site Activity: 1 Pair, 2 Fledges

PIPL Site Productivity: 2.0

Short Beach does not contend with a lot of the problems faced by Long Beach. Although relatively close, few beachgoers are found here and the use of recreational vehicles is not a concern as the access is blocked by pilings. In addition, there are limited homes located here. Unfortunately, the presence of crows is an extremely large issue. The one pair of piping plovers that nested lost their first nest to predation prior to getting the enclosure up. They did renest and an enclosure was erected. Throughout the incubation period, multiple crows at a time were witnessed harassing the adults. Once the chicks hatched the crows began picking them off. All four had been predated within the first 48 hours of hatching.

Although least terns started to arrive at Short Beach in the beginning of their breeding season, they did not settle and no nesting occurred. No seabeach amaranth was counted but there were 197 seabeach knotweed plants.

PIPL Site Activity: 1 Pair, 0 Fledges

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Genet Creek had never been monitored prior to this year. Although the site does offer some suitable habitat, no T&E species were recorded.

PIPL Site Activity: 0 Pairs

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

Middle Pond is the only site located along the Shinnecock Bay System. It is a narrow, secluded beach that is not highly trafficked by people and there is no access for ORV's. Although this site once produced fledges on a consistent basis, there has been no breeding plovers or terns since 2004. This is thought to be the result of an increase in predators and the overgrowth of vegetation where suitable habitat existed. With the dumping of dredge on the site this year it was hoped that the shorebirds might return. Unfortunately this was not the case and no piping plovers or least terns were observed. In addition, there was no seabeach amaranth or seabeach knotweed.

PIPL Site Activity: 0 Pairs

PIPL Site Productivity: 0.0

PIPL Nests and Chicks:

For the 2008 season, 36 breeding piping plover pairs produced 53 nests (including renests). Within those nests were 194 eggs, out of which only 57 (29%) successfully hatched. Of the remaining 137 eggs, 92 (67.2%) were lost to predation, 15 (10.9%) were abandoned, 13 (9.5%) were washed out, 8 (5.8%) were lost to unknown causes, 7 (5.1%) were intentionally destroyed by humans and 2 (1.5%) failed to hatch. Overall, only 16 (30%) of the 53 nests hatched any eggs. (See Table 2)

This year predation of nests was a very large problem and the use of exclosures is often the solution. Unfortunately, after destruction of nests by humans, exclosures were no longer possible at some sites. Of the 7 nests that were exclosed, 4 (57%) of them successfully hatched, one was abandoned, and the eggs were stolen out of two. Although not all nests were located in an area where exclosures were feasible, it is assumed that if more could have been utilized the predation rate would have decreased dramatically and more eggs would have successfully hatched.

Out of the 57 eggs that successfully hatched, 29 (51%) of them did not reach fledge status while the remaining 28 (49%) did. The overall productivity of the 36 pairs was then 0.78. Compared to previous years (See Graph 2) this number is substantially lower. Although the number of pairs remains consistent over the years, the number of chicks that successfully fledge has been decreasing within the past 5 years. There are many factors that can contribute to this, which can include lack of habitat, increase in predators and a lack of understanding by beachgoers. It is the goal of the Southampton Town Board of Trustees Threatened and Endangered Species Program to work with participating agencies and the residents to recover all T&E species located within the town.

Acknowledgements

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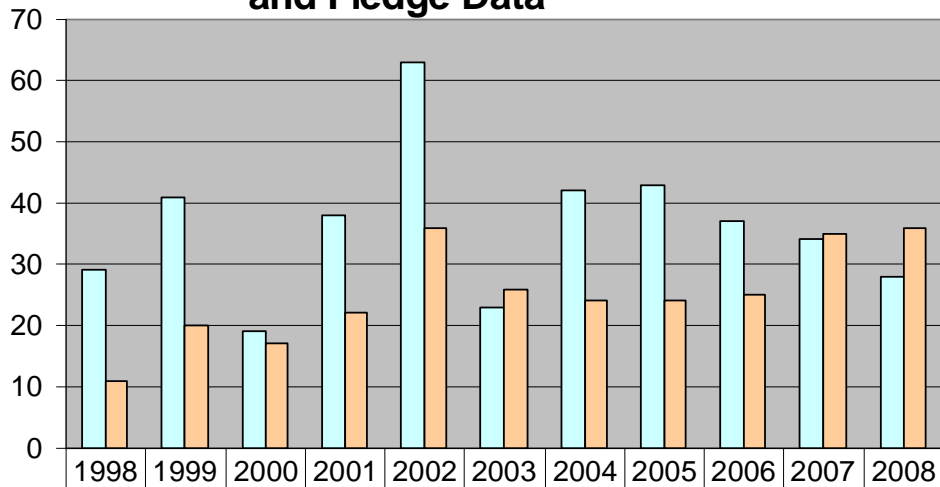
Table 1. Piping Plover Pairs and Productivity for 2008

Site Name/ Location	No. Nesting Pairs	No. Nests	No. Eggs	No. Chicks	Hatch Rate (Chicks/ Eggs)	No. Fledges	Fledge Rate (Fledges/ Chicks)	Productivity (Fledges/ Pairs)	No. Times Site Visited
<u>Atlantic Ocean Nesting Sites</u>									
Village Beaches									
1. Southampton Beach	8	11	40	7	0.18	3	0.43	0.38	35
a) County Park Boundary to Rd D	2	3	12	0	0	0	0	0	24
b) Rd D to Halsey Neck Ln	4	4	14	7	0.5	3	0.43	0.75	35
c) Halsey Neck Ln to S. Main St	2	4	14	0	0	0	0	0	23
2. Gin Lane Beach <i>S. Main St to Old Town Rd</i>	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	16
3. Old Town Rd Beach <i>Old Town Rd to Fowlers St</i>	3	6	19	0	0	0	0	0	22
Town Beaches									
4. Watermill Beach	7	9	34	14	0.41	7	0.50	1.0	59
a) Fowlers Beach <i>Fowlers St to Flying Pt Rd</i>	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	18
b) Flying Point Beach <i>Flying Pt Rd to Dune Rd</i>									14
c) Scott Cameron Beach <i>Dune Rd to Jobs Ln</i>	6	8	30	14	0.47	7	0.50	1.2	59
5. Sam's Creek <i>Jobs Ln to Ocean Rd</i>	1	2	8	4	0.50	3	0.75	3.0	33
6. Sagaponack Lake Beach <i>Ocean Rd to Gibson Ln</i>	4	6	23	8	0.35	6	0.75	1.5	36
7. Fairfield Pond Lane Beach <i>Gibson Ln to Town Line Rd</i>	1	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	12
Total for Ocean Nesting Sites	25	37	133	33	0.25	19	0.58	0.76	213
<u>Peconic Bay Nesting Sites</u>									
8. Red Cedar Pt	3	4	13	3	0.23	2	0.67	0.7	17
9. Red Creek Pond	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	13
10. Squires Pond	1	1	4	2	0.50	0	0	0	16
11. Meschutt Beach East									
12. Canoe Place Beach									
13. Fish Cove/N. Sea Harbor									
14. Towd Neck	3	5	20	11	0.55	5	0.45	1.7	35
15. Wooley Pond									
16. Roses Grove									
17. Fresh Pond									
18. Pine Neck/Mill Creek	1	2	8	0	0	0	0	0	17
19. Long Beach	1	1	4	4	1.0	2	0.50	2	47
20. Short Beach	1	2	8	4	4.0	0	0	0	43
21. Genet Creek									
<u>Shinnecock Bay Nesting Sites</u>									
22. Middle Pond									
Total for Bay Nesting Sites	11	16	61	24	0.39	9	0.38	0.82	188
Totals for All Sites	36	53	194	57	0.29	28	0.51	0.78	401

Table 2 Outcome of All Laid Piping Plover Eggs

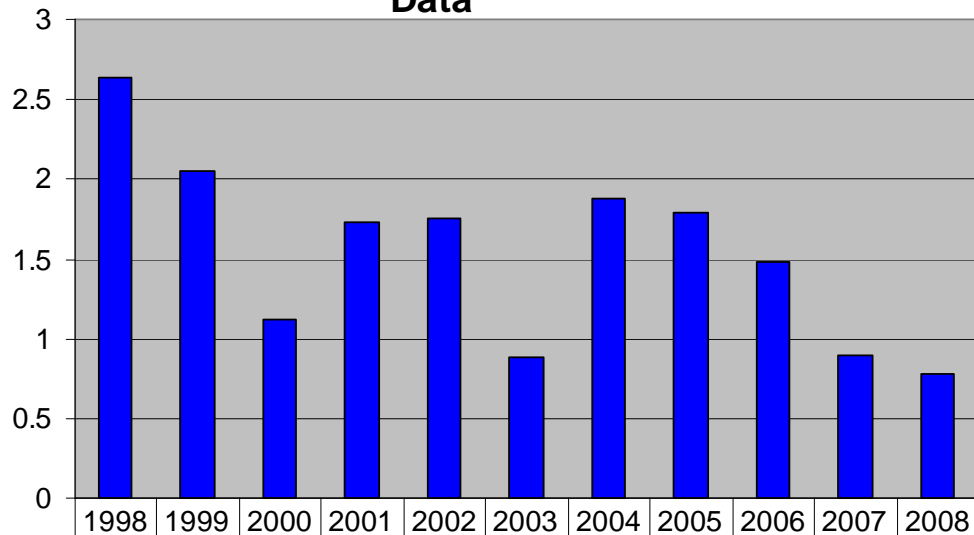
36 Nesting Pairs			
	Laid 53 total nests		
		W/a total of 194 eggs	
		137 unhatched (70.6% of all eggs didn't hatch)	
			92 eggs predated (67.2% of all eggs predated)
			15 eggs abandoned (10.9%)
			13 eggs overwashed (9.5%)
			8 unknown (5.8%)
			7 destroyed (human) (5.1%)
			2 failed (1.5%)
		57 eggs hatched from 16 nests (29.2% of all eggs hatched)	
		28 Fledged (29 lost)	

Graph 1: Historical Piping Plover Nesting Pairs and Fledge Data



Fledges	29	41	19	38	63	23	42	43	37	34	28
Nesting Pairs	11	20	17	22	36	26	24	24	25	35	36

Graph 2: Historical Piping Plover Productivity Data

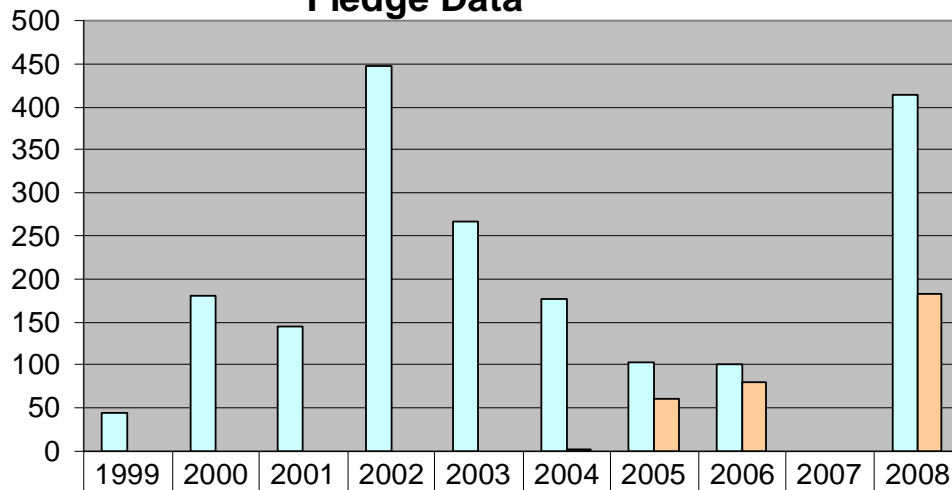


Productivity	2.64	2.05	1.12	1.73	1.75	0.88	1.88	1.79	1.48	0.89	0.78
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Table 3 Least Tern Pairs and Productivity 2008

Site Name/ Location	No. Nesting Pairs	No. Fledges	Productivity (Fledges/Pair)
<u>Atlantic Ocean Nesting Sites</u>			
Village Beaches			
1. Southampton Beach	44	10	0.23
a) County Park Boundary to Rd D			
b) Rd D to Halsey Neck Ln	39	5	0.13
c) Halsey Neck Ln to S. Main St	5	5	1.00
2. Gin Lane Beach <i>S. Main St to Old Town Rd</i>			
3. Old Town Rd Beach <i>Old Town Rd to Fowlers St</i>	56	3	0.05
Town Beaches			
4. Watermill Beach	92	48	0.52
a) Fowlers Beach <i>Fowlers St to Flying Pt Rd</i>			
b) Flying Point Beach <i>Flying Pt Rd to Dune Rd</i>			
c) Scott Cameron Beach <i>Dune Rd to Jobs Ln</i>	92	48	0.52
5. Sam's Creek <i>Jobs Ln to Ocean Rd</i>			
6. Sagaponack Lake Beach <i>Ocean Rd to Gibson Ln</i>	65	55	0.85
7. Fairfield Pond Lane Beach <i>Gibson Ln to Town Line Rd</i>	3	5	1.67
Total for Ocean Nesting Sites	260	121	0.47
<u>Peconic Bay Nesting Sites</u>			
8. Red Cedar Pt	75	0	0.00
9. Red Creek Pond			
10. Squires Pond			
11. Meschutt Beach East			
12. Canoe Place Beach			
13. Fish Cove/N. Sea Harbor			
14. Towd Neck	50	38	0.76
15. Wooley Pond			
16. Roses Grove			
17. Fresh Pond			
18. Pine Neck/Mill Creek			
19. Long Beach	28	24	0.86
20. Short Beach			
21. Genet Creek			
<u>Shinnecock Bay Nesting Sites</u>			
22. Middle Pond			
Total for Bay Nesting Sites	153	62	0.34
Totals for All Sites	413	183	0.44

Graph 3: Historical Least Tern Nesting Pair and Fledge Data



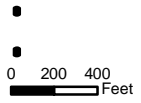
□ Nesting Pairs	45	181	145	447	267	177	102	101		413
□ Fledges						2	60	80		183

P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

SOUTHAMPTON BEACH (VILLAGE) SHINNECOCK EAST TO ROAD D



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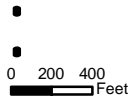


P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

SOUTHAMPTON BEACH (VILLAGE) ROAD D TO HALSEY NECK LANE



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P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

SOUTHAMPTON BEACH (VILLAGE) HALSEY NECK LANE TO S MAIN ST



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0 200 400 Feet

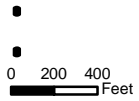


P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

SOUTHAMPTON BEACH (VILLAGE) SHINNECOCK EAST TO ROAD D



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Least Tern Colony

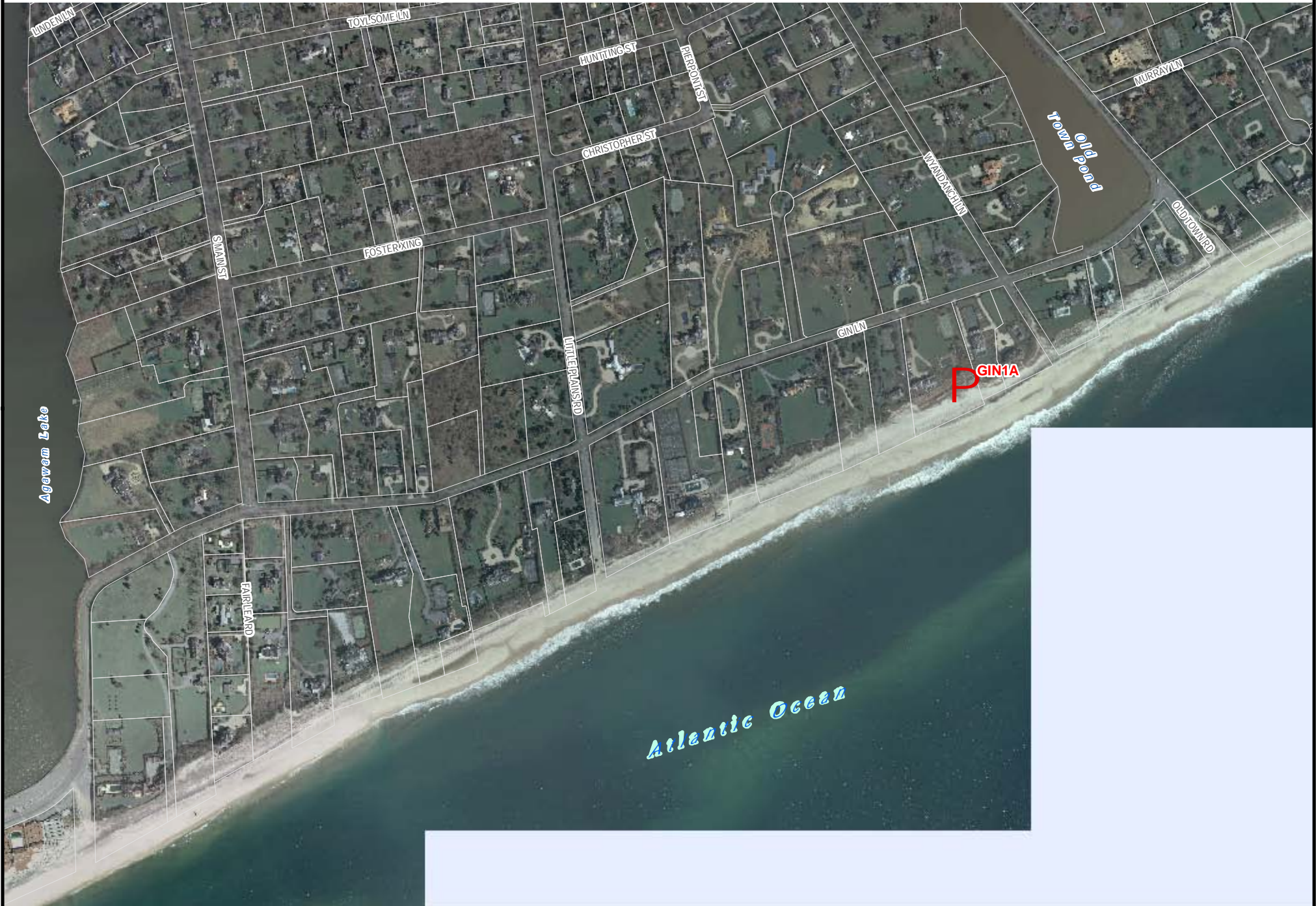
GIN LANE BEACH (VILLAGE) SOUTH MAIN ST TO OLD TOWN RD



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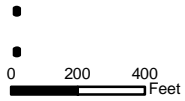


P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

OLD TOWN ROAD (VILLAGE) OLD TOWN RD TO FOWLERS ST



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P Plover Nests
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0 200 400 Feet

WATER MILL BEACH FOWLERS ST TO FLYING PT RD



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Mecox Bay

Flying Pt Rd

Channel Pond

Jule Pond

Little Jule Pond

Phillips Pond


Fowlers St

Atlantic Ocean

P WMB1A



0 200 400 Feet

 Plover Nests
 Least Tern Colony

WATER MILL BEACH FLYING POINT RD TO DUNE RD



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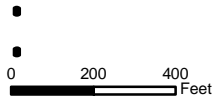


P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

WATER MILL BEACH DUNE RD TO JOBS LN





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0 200 400 Feet

 Plover Nests
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SAM'S CREEK / MECOX BEACH

JOBS LANE TO OCEAN RD




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0 200 400 Feet

 Plover Nests

 Least Tern Colony

SAGAPONACK LAKE (WEST)

OCEAN RD TO SURFSIDE DR



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P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

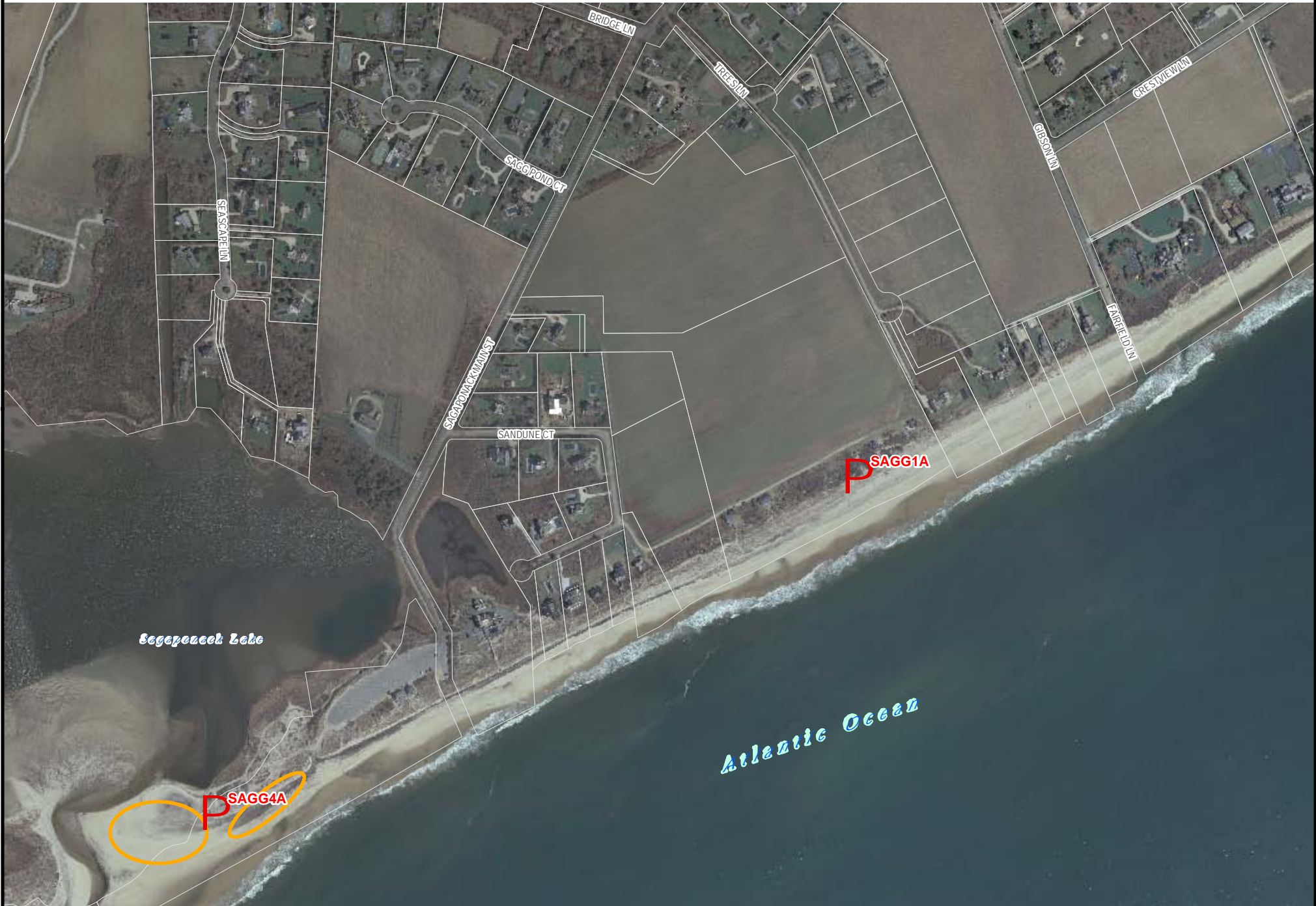
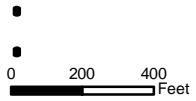
SAGAPONACK LAKE (EAST)

SAGG MAIN ST TO GIBSON LN




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 Plover Nests

 Least Tern Colony

0 200 400 Feet

FAIRFIELD POND LANE BEACH (WEST) GIBSON LN TO PETER'S POND



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P Plover Nests
□ Least Tern Colony

FAIRFIELD POND LANE BEACH (EAST)

PETER'S POND LN TO TOWN LINE RD



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0 200 400 Feet





Plover Nests



Least Tern Colony

0 200 400 Feet

RED CEDAR POINT FLANDERS



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 Plover Nests

 Least Tern Colony

0 200 400 Feet

RED CREEK POND HAMPTON BAYS



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P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

0 200 400 Feet

SQUIRES POND HAMPTON BAYS



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Plover Nests



Least Tern Colony

0 200 400 Feet

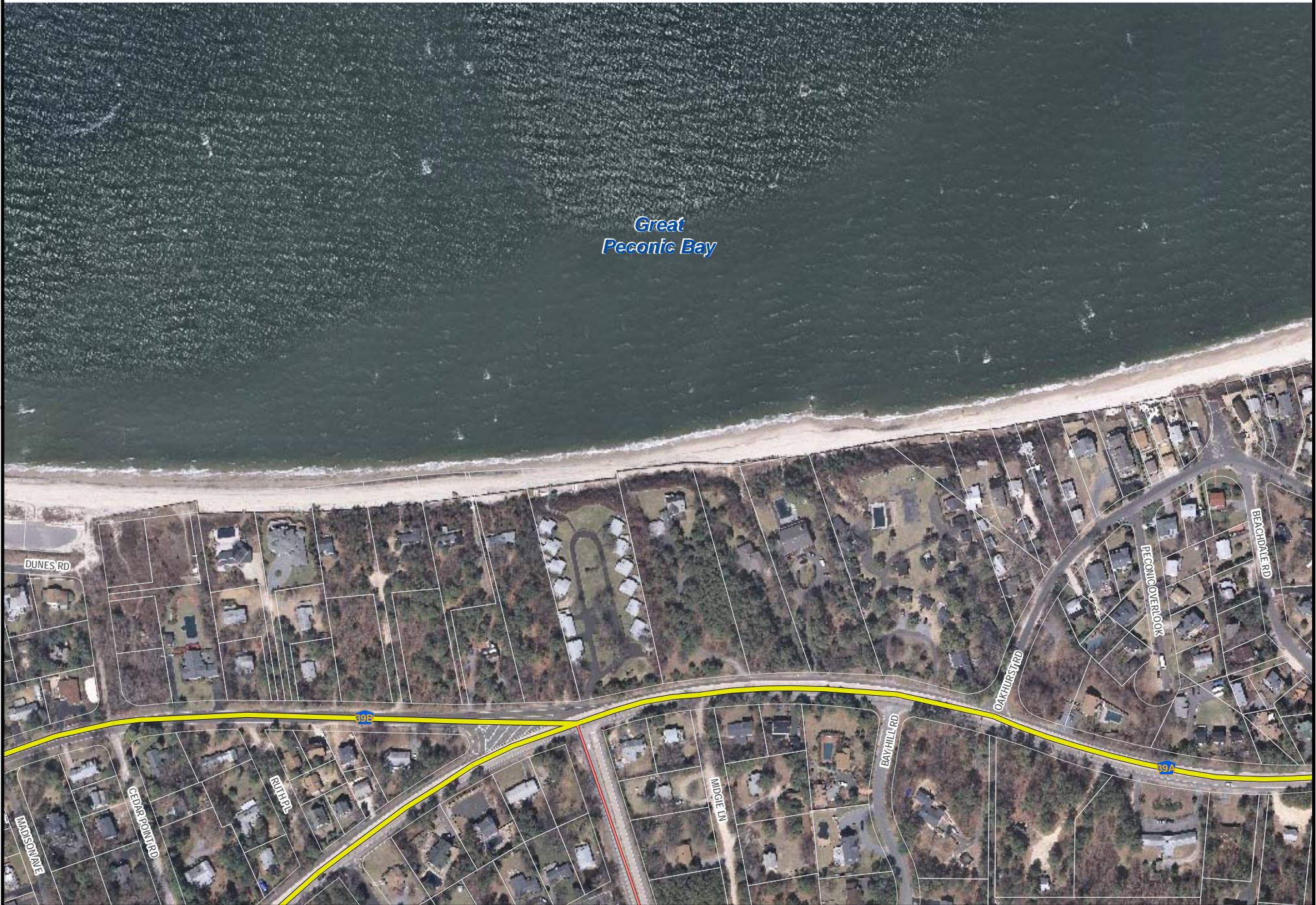
MESCHUTT BEACH HAMPTON BAYS



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*Great
Peconic Bay*



P Plover Nests

Least Tern Colony

0 200

400

Feet


CANOE PLACE BEACH HAMPTON BAYS



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P Plover Nests
 Least Tern Colony

FISH COVE / NORTH SEA HARBOR

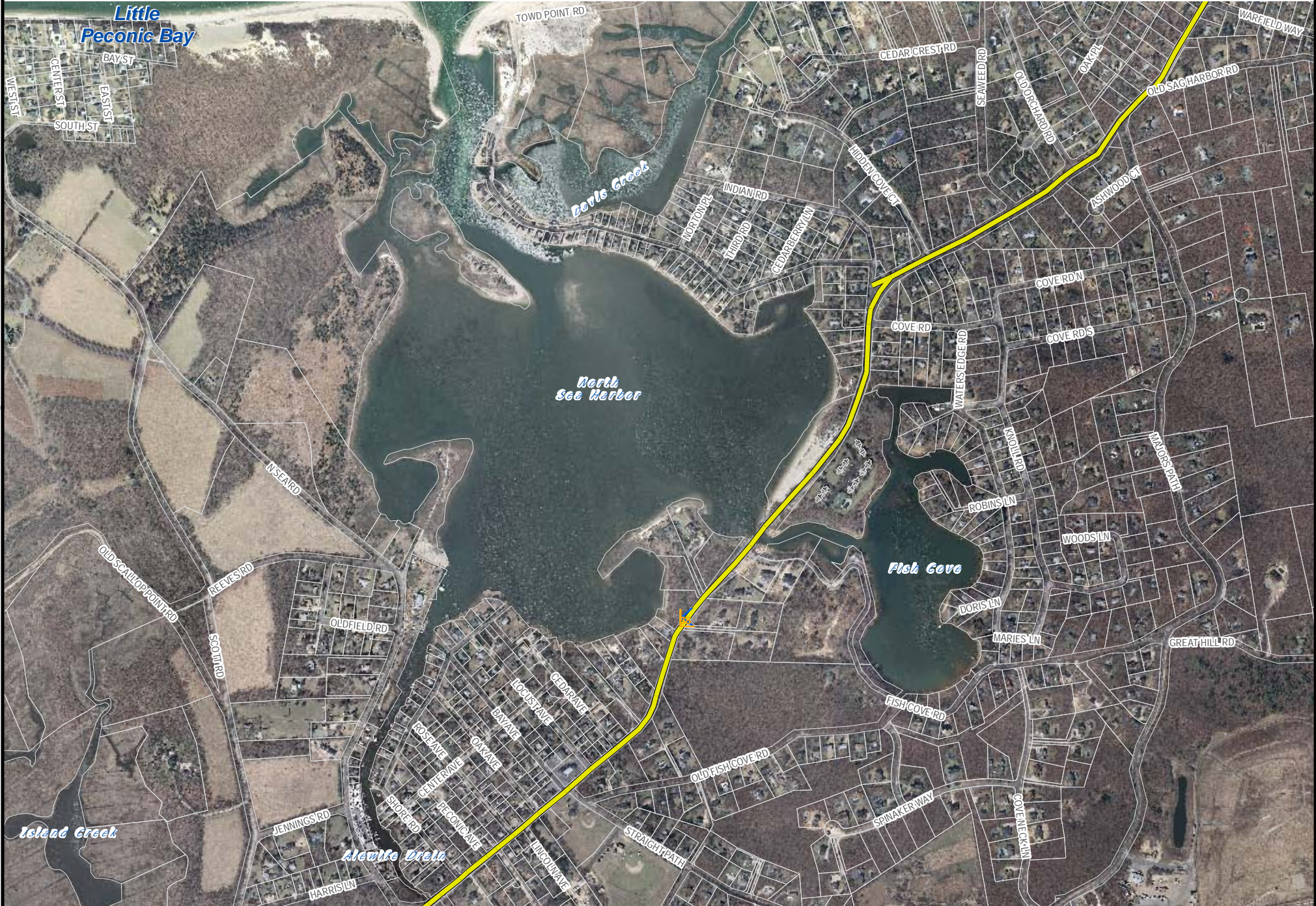
NORTH SEA



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0 200 400 Feet



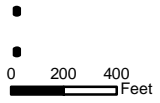
P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

TOWD NECK (WEST)

WEST COW NECK POINT TO TOWD POINT



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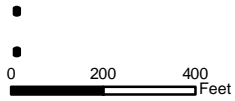
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Least Tern Colony

TOWD NECK (EAST)

EAST TOWD POINT (INLET) TO SCOTTS LANDING RD



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WOOLEY POND (WEST) WEST SCOTTS LANDING TO BULKHEAD



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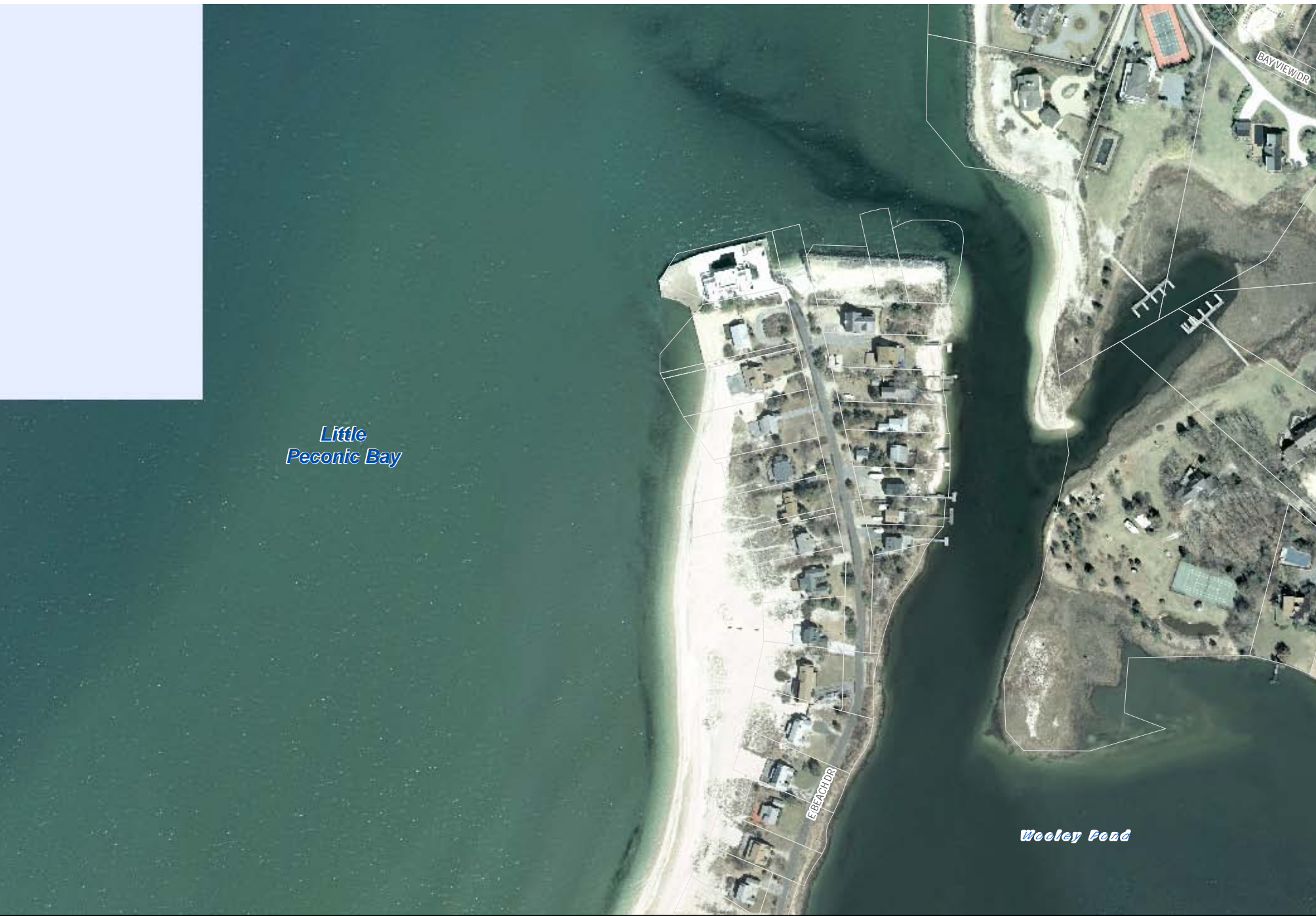
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P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

0 200 400 Feet

*Little
Peconic Bay*

Wooley Pond



P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

0 200 400 Feet

WOOLEY POND (EAST) EAST/NORTH POINT TO PECONIC BAY AVE



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*Little
Peconic Bay*

Wooley Pond





Plover Nests



Least Tern Colony

0 200 400 Feet

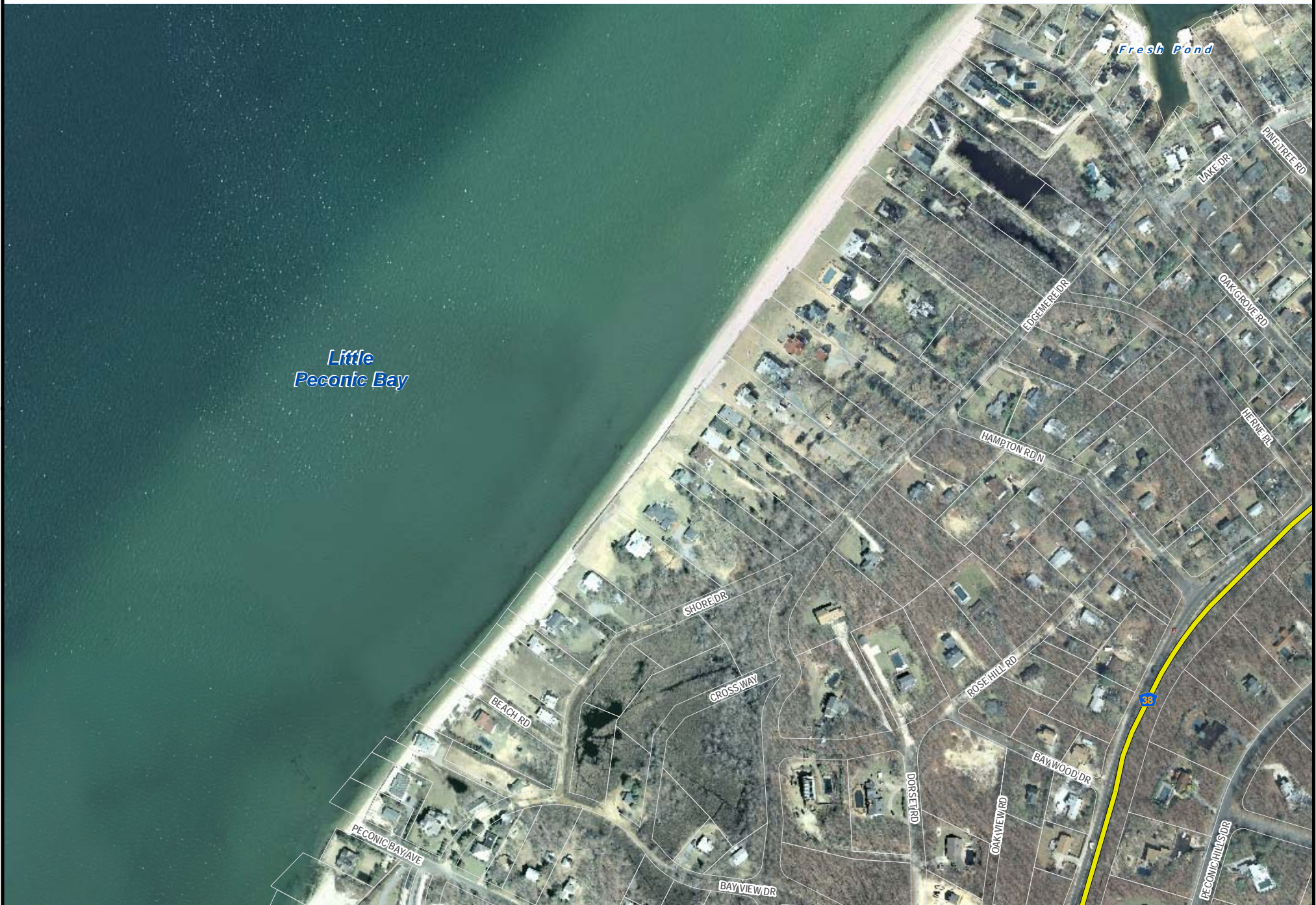
ROSES GROVE

PECONIC BAY AVE TO OAK GROVE RD



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P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

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FRESH POND BULKHEAD TO LAKE DR.



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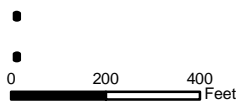
PINE NECK / MILL CREEK NOYAC

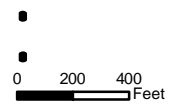


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 Least Tern Colony



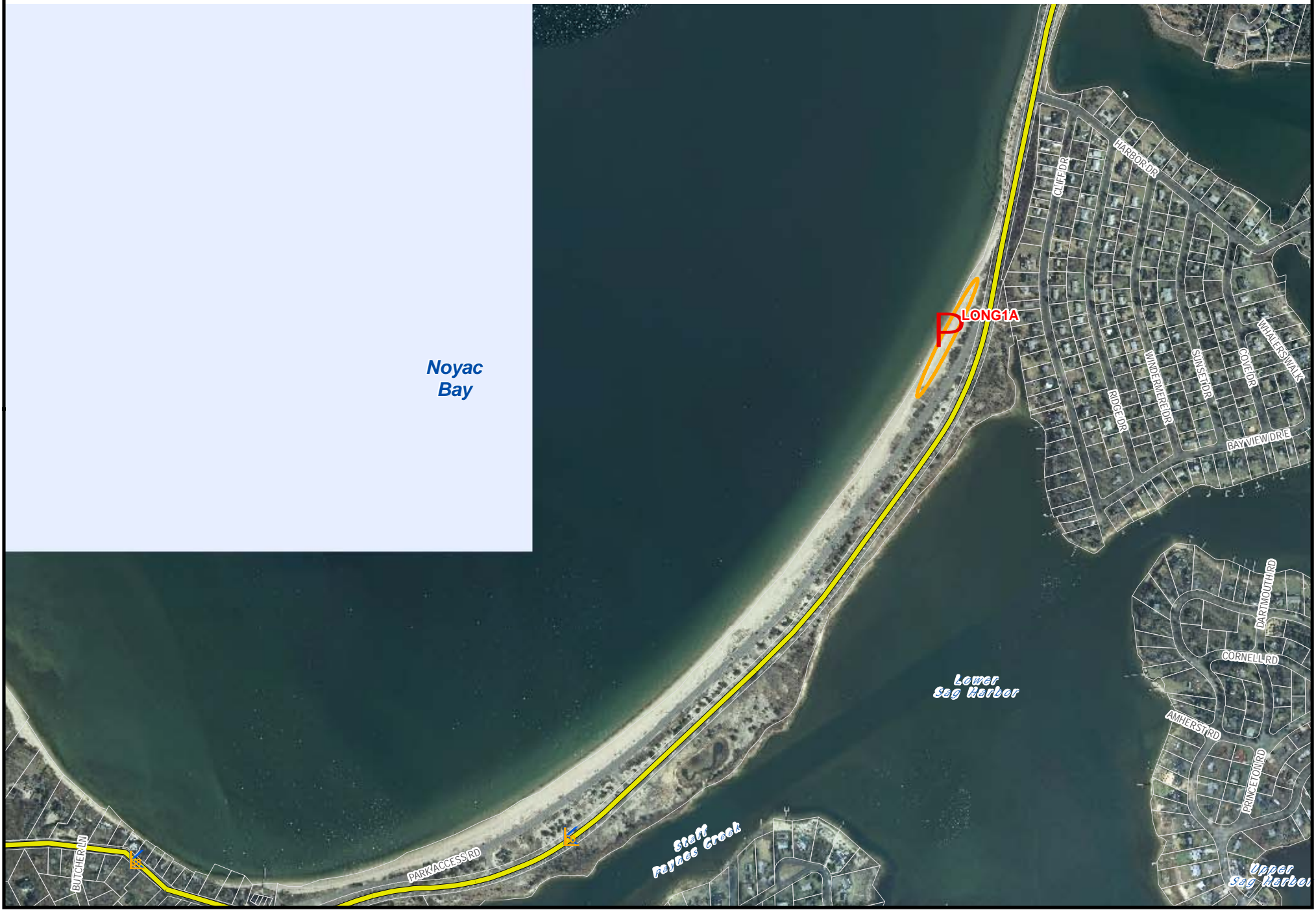


P Plover Nests
Least Tern Colony

LONG BEACH NOYAC / SAG HARBOR



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Plover Nests



Least Tern Colony

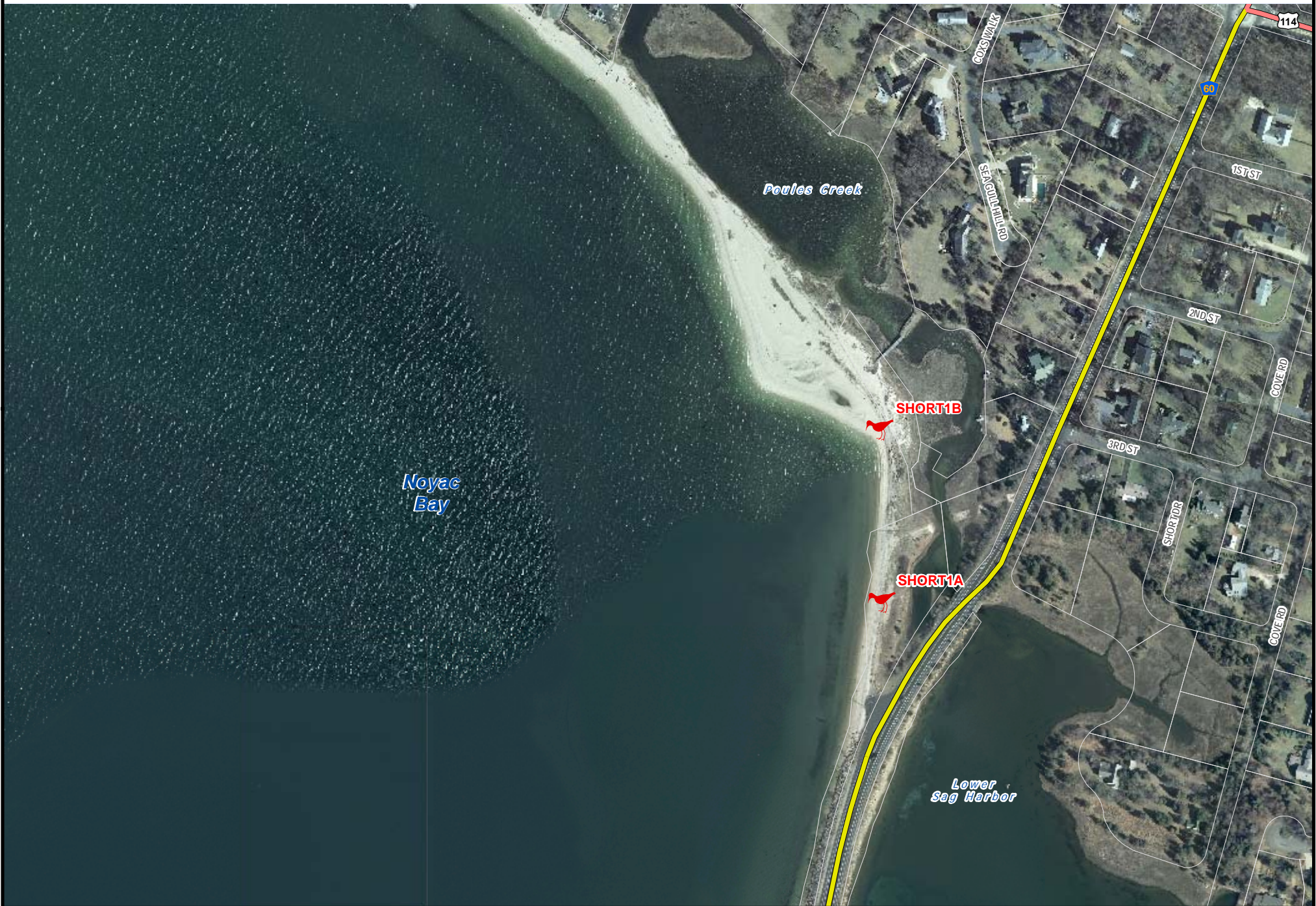
0 200 400 Feet

SHORT BEACH NORTH HAVEN \ NOYAC



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Plover Nests



Least Tern Colony

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GENET CREEK NORTH HAVEN



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P Plover Nests
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MIDDLE POND SHINNECOCK HILLS



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