

COASTAL FISH & WILDLIFE HABITAT ASSESSMENT FORM

Name of Area: **Hashamomuck Pond**
Designated: **March 15, 1987**
Date Revised: **May 15, 2002**
County: **Suffolk**
Town(s): **Southold**
7½' Quadrangle(s): **Southold, NY**

Assessment Criteria

Ecosystem Rarity (ER)--the uniqueness of the plant and animal community in the area and the physical, structural, and chemical features supporting this community.

ER assessment: Relatively large brackish pond, with some undeveloped shoreline and marsh; rare on the north fork, but rarity diminished by human disturbance. 0

Species Vulnerability (SV)--the degree of vulnerability throughout its range in New York State of a species residing in the ecosystem or utilizing the ecosystem for its survival.

SV assessment: Osprey (SC) nesting. 16

Human Use (HU)-- the conduct of significant, demonstrable commercial, recreational, or educational wildlife-related human uses, either consumptive or non-consumptive, in the area or directly dependent upon the area.

HU assessment: Commercial and recreational shellfishing of town-level significance. 0

Population Level (PL)--the concentration of a species in the area during its normal, recurring period of occurrence, regardless of the length of that period of occurrence.

PL assessment: Concentrations of shellfish, especially hard clams, significant in the town. 0

Replaceability (R)--ability to replace the area, either on or off site, with an equivalent replacement for the same fish and wildlife and uses of those same fish and wildlife, for the same users of those fish and wildlife.

R assessment: Irreplaceable. 1.2

Habitat Index = [ER + SV + HU + PL] = 16.0

Significance = HI x R = 19.2

NEW YORK STATE
SIGNIFICANT COASTAL FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT
NARRATIVE

HASHAMOMUCK POND

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT:

Hashamomuck Pond is located west of Conkling Point emptying through Mill Creek into Shelter Island Sound in the Town of Southold, Suffolk County (7.5' Quadrangle: Southold, NY). The fish and wildlife habitat consists of an approximately 220 acre area consisting of a large, shallow brackish pond with a hard bottom, marsh and inlet creek (Mill Creek). There is moderate to high density residential development on the north and northwest sides of the pond and marina development at the mouth of Mill Creek. The southwest side of the pond remains largely undeveloped, and a large parcel on the eastern side of the pond (Cassidy Farm) has been preserved.

FISH AND WILDLIFE VALUES:

Hashamomuck Pond is a valuable pond/wetland on the north fork of Long Island but its value is reduced by human disturbance and water pollution. The pond still provides a valuable habitat for a variety of fish and wildlife.

Osprey (SC) nest on platforms at several locations in the pond and utilize the pond and marshes for feeding areas. A variety of waterfowl also utilize this area for feeding, including merganser, scoter, Canada goose, and oldsquaw. Several species of migratory hawks use Hashamomuck Pond. Diamondback terrapin nest at the head of Mill Creek.

The pond also serves as a habitat for finfish and shellfish including bay scallops and hard clams. The pond is one of the top areas for the harvesting of clams and scallops in Southold. Long Creek and the northwestern end of the pond are closed to shellfishing year round; Mill Creek south of the Long Island Railroad tracks is closed to shellfishing year round. All of Hashamomuck Pond and its tributaries are closed to shellfishing from May 1-November 30. Most of Long Creek at the southwest end of the pond is closed year-round. Mill Creek is also closed year-round. The pond remains the most important clamming site in the Town during the winter.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

Any activity that would further degrade the water quality in Hashamomuck Pond would adversely affect the biological productivity of this area. All species of fish and wildlife are affected by water pollution such as chemical contamination (including food chain effects resulting in bioaccumulation), oil spills, excessive turbidity, stormwater runoff, and waste

disposal, including marina and boat wastes. Hashamomuck Pond is presently polluted from several point and non-point sources of sewage and nutrient-laden runoff. Particular threats to water quality are caused by road runoff from Route 48 to the north, and from surface streets to the west (north of Long Creek). In addition, there is no sewage treatment in this area. Both point and non-point sources of pollution should be reduced or eliminated to enhance this habitat for shellfish and other fish and wildlife species.

Unrestricted use of motorized vessels including personal watercraft in the protected, shallow waters of bays, harbors, and tidal creeks can have adverse effects on aquatic vegetation and fish and wildlife populations. Use of motorized vessels should be controlled (*e.g.*, no wake zones, speed zones, zones of exclusion) in and adjacent to shallow waters and vegetated wetlands.

Alteration of tidal patterns in Hashamomuck Pond (*e.g.*, by modifying the Mill Creek inlet) could have major impacts in the fish and wildlife species present. Barriers to fish migration whether physical or chemical would have major impacts on the fisheries resources in Hashamomuck Pond. Restoration of fish populations in the pond should be considered. There is currently a marina at the mouth of Mill Creek; any alteration in the current configuration, or changes in use and activities of this marina should be carefully examined with respect to fish and wildlife habitat impacts.

Elimination of marsh and intertidal areas, through loss of tidal connection, dredging, ditching, excavation, or filling, would result in a direct loss of valuable habitat area. Control of invasive nuisance plant species, through a variety of means, may improve fish and wildlife species use of the area and enhance overall wetland values. Construction of shoreline structures, such as docks, piers, bulkheads, or revetments, in areas not previously disturbed by development, may result in the loss of productive areas which support the fish and wildlife resources of the Hashamomuck Pond area. The Town of Southold has identified acquisition of the remaining available parcels bordering the pond as a high priority.

Diamondback terrapin inhabiting the area may be vulnerable to disturbance by humans from April 1 through August 15. Recreational activities near these nesting sites, *e.g.*, boat landing, pedestrian traffic, use of off-road vehicles and personal watercraft, and picnicking, should be minimized during this period.

KNOWLEDGEABLE CONTACTS:

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Bureau of Marine Resources
NYSDEC
205 N. Belle Meade Road, Suite 1
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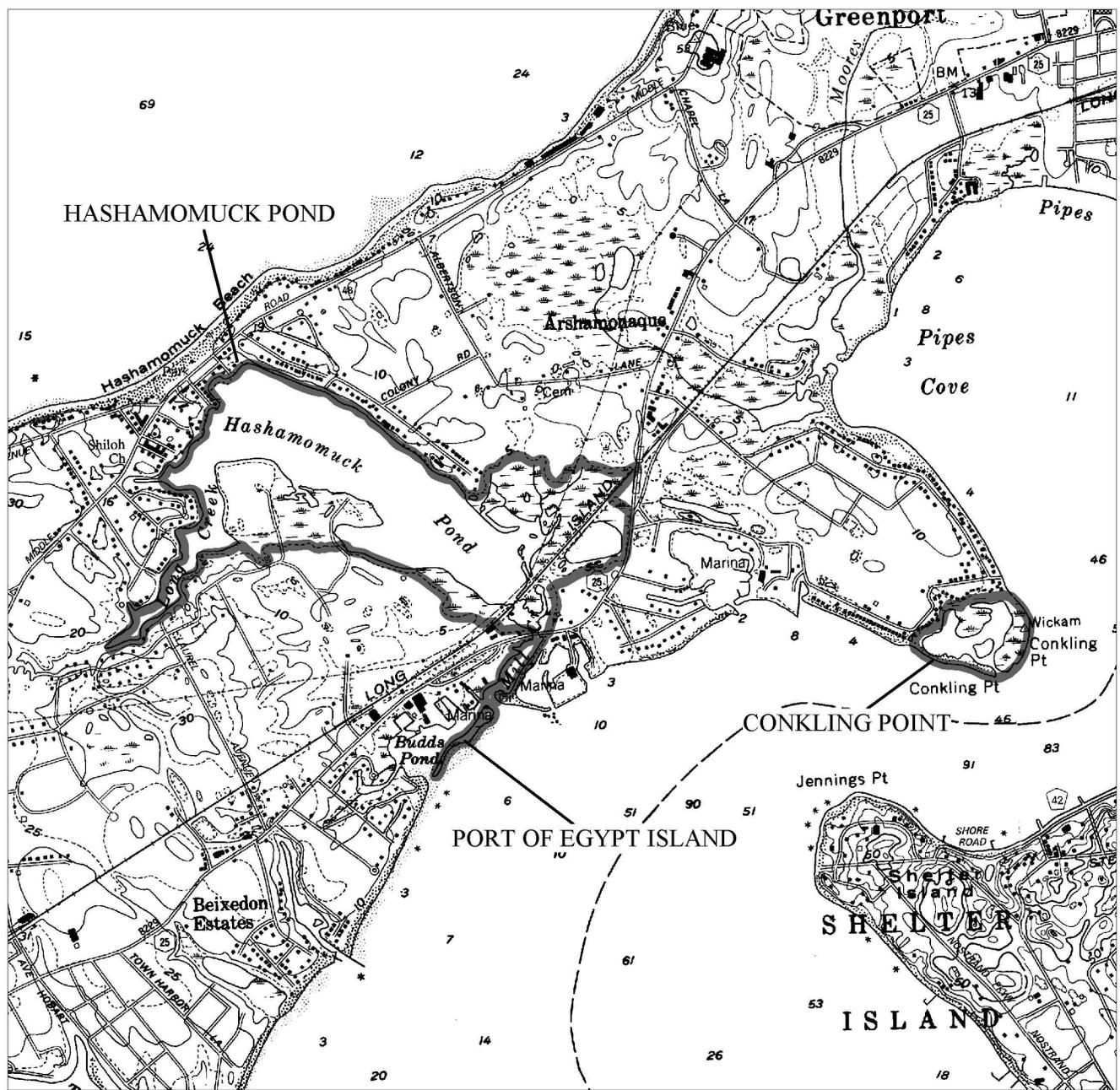
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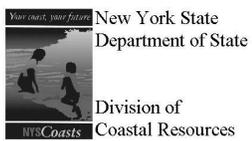
Office of Ecology
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NYS Sea Grant Extension Service
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Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats



Conkling Point
 Hashamomuck Pond
 Port of Egypt Island

