

COASTAL FISH & WILDLIFE HABITAT ASSESSMENT FORM

Name of Area: **Jamesport Town Beach**
Designated: **March 15, 1987**
Date Revised: **May 15, 2002**
County: **Suffolk**
Town(s): **Riverhead**
7½' Quadrangle(s): **Mattituck, 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: Unvegetated dredged material disposal site and undeveloped tidal creek; not a rare ecosystem type. 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: Least tern (T) and piping plover (E, T-Fed) nesting.
Calculation: $36 + (25/2) =$ 48.5

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: No significant human uses of the area's fish and wildlife resources. 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: No unusual concentrations of fish and wildlife species in this area. 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: Uncertain of ability to replace population. 1.0

Habitat Index = [ER + SV + HU + PL] = 48.5

Significance = HI x R = 48.5

NEW YORK STATE
SIGNIFICANT COASTAL FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT
NARRATIVE

JAMESPORT TOWN BEACH

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF HABITAT:

Jamesport Town Beach is located approximately one-half mile east of the hamlet of South Jamesport, in the Town of Riverhead, Suffolk County (7.5' Quadrangle: Mattituck, NY). The fish and wildlife habitat is an approximate 4 acre dredged material disposal site and a dredged tidal creek channel (East Creek). This area is within a Town-owned park (South Jamesport Park), which includes a public marina and a Town-managed beach. The central portion of the habitat area has been fenced and posted as a nesting area, but has still received some disturbance by pedestrians and off-road vehicles.

FISH AND WILDLIFE VALUES:

Jamesport Town Beach is a very disturbed coastal habitat, consisting of dredged material deposits, a public bathing beach, a dredged tidal creek, and a marina. The area is typical of many developed areas around the Peconic Bays, and does not represent a rare ecosystem type.

Despite considerable human disturbance of the area, Jamesport Town Beach has served as a nesting site for least terns (T) since at least 1982 and piping plover (E, T-Fed) since at least 1983. The concentration of terns nesting at Jamesport Town Beach was the second largest on the north fork of Long Island in 1984 and the largest in 1985, of county-level significance. In the early 1980s, up to 112 breeding pairs of least tern were observed on the beach each year. From 1987-1996, an average of 38 pairs of this species occurred at Jamesport Town Beach annually, with a range of zero to 108 pairs. During the same period, an average of 1 pair of piping plover were observed at this site annually.

The tidal creek channel at Jamesport Town Beach was the site of an aquaculture demonstration project in 1984. The site is now a Riverhead Town Aquaculture Site using rafts as a growout site for hard clams permitted by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. East Creek is currently closed to shellfishing from May 1 through November 30 each year.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

Nesting shorebirds inhabiting Jamesport Town Beach are highly vulnerable to disturbance by humans, especially during the nesting and fledging period (March 15 through August 15). Significant pedestrian traffic or recreational vehicle use of the beach could easily eliminate the use of this site as a breeding area and should be minimized during this period. Recreational activities (*e.g.*, boat and personal watercraft landing, off-road vehicle use, picnicking) in the vicinity of bird nesting areas should be minimized during this period. Predation of chicks and

destruction of eggs or nests by unleashed pets (*e.g.*, dogs, cats) and natural predators may also occur, and predator control should be implemented where feasible. Fencing and/or continued annual posting of shorebird nesting areas should be provided to help protect these species. Control of vegetative succession, through beneficial use of dredged material or other means may improve the availability of nesting habitat in this area.

Any activities affecting East Creek should be reviewed for compatibility with the aquaculture demonstration project in the area, especially during April 15- November 15. Increased turbidity, or water pollution by chemicals or sewage effluent, may have an adverse effect on survival, growth, or marketability of clams growing in the area during this period.

KNOWLEDGEABLE CONTACTS:

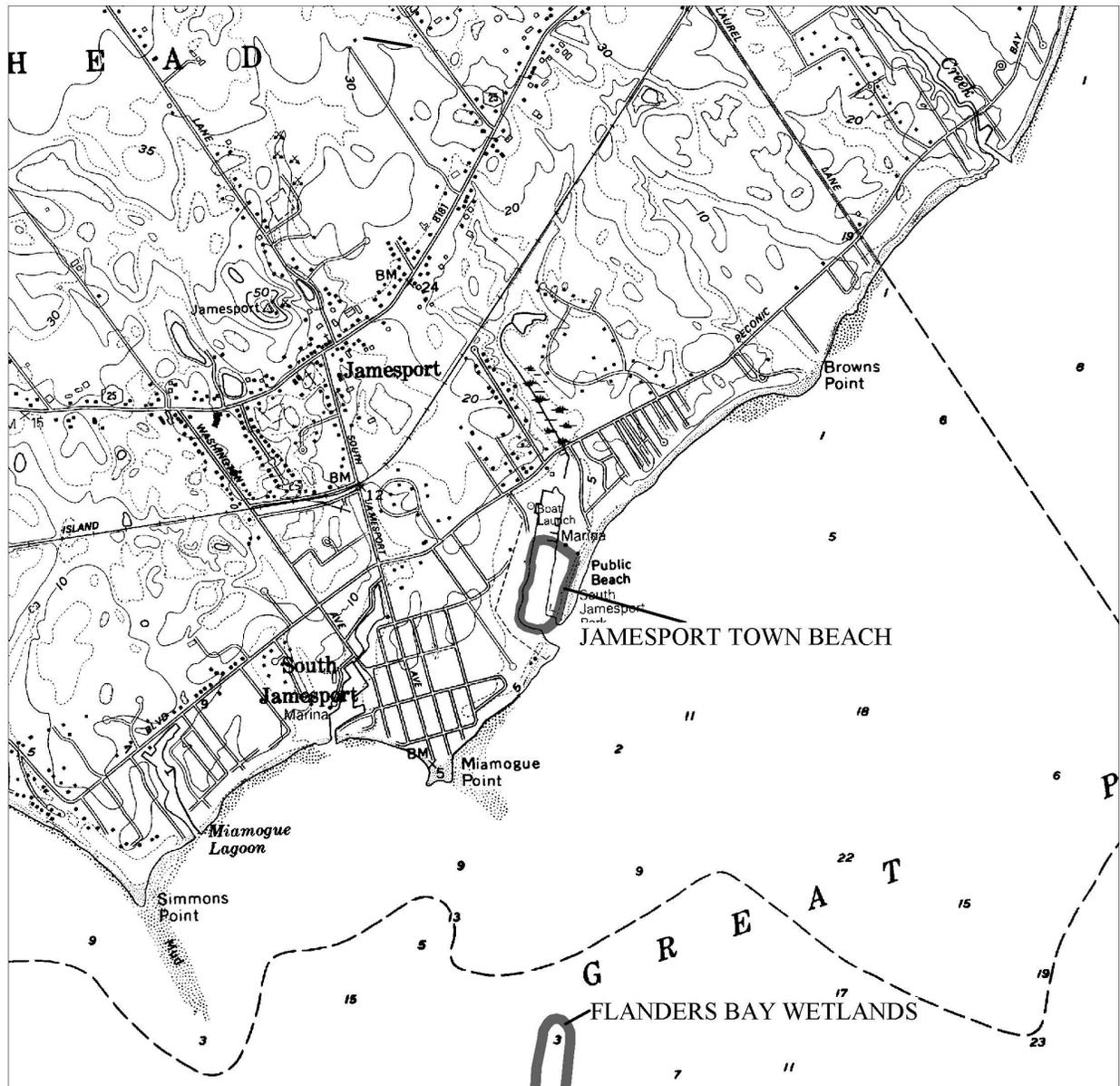
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Significant Coastal Fish and Wildlife Habitats

Jamesport Town Beach
 Flanders Bay Wetlands (In part)

